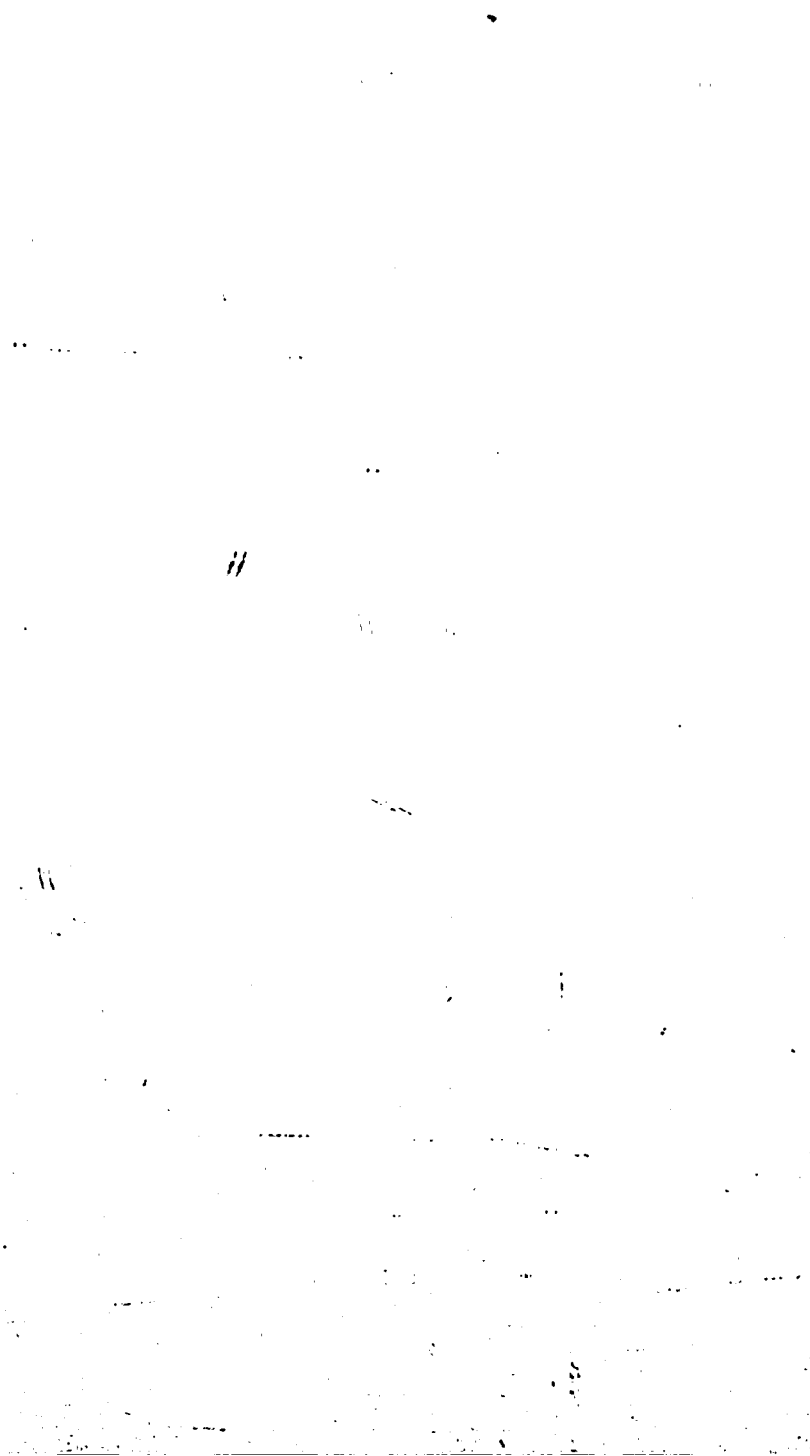


R. Kosolapov

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Socialism:  
Questions  
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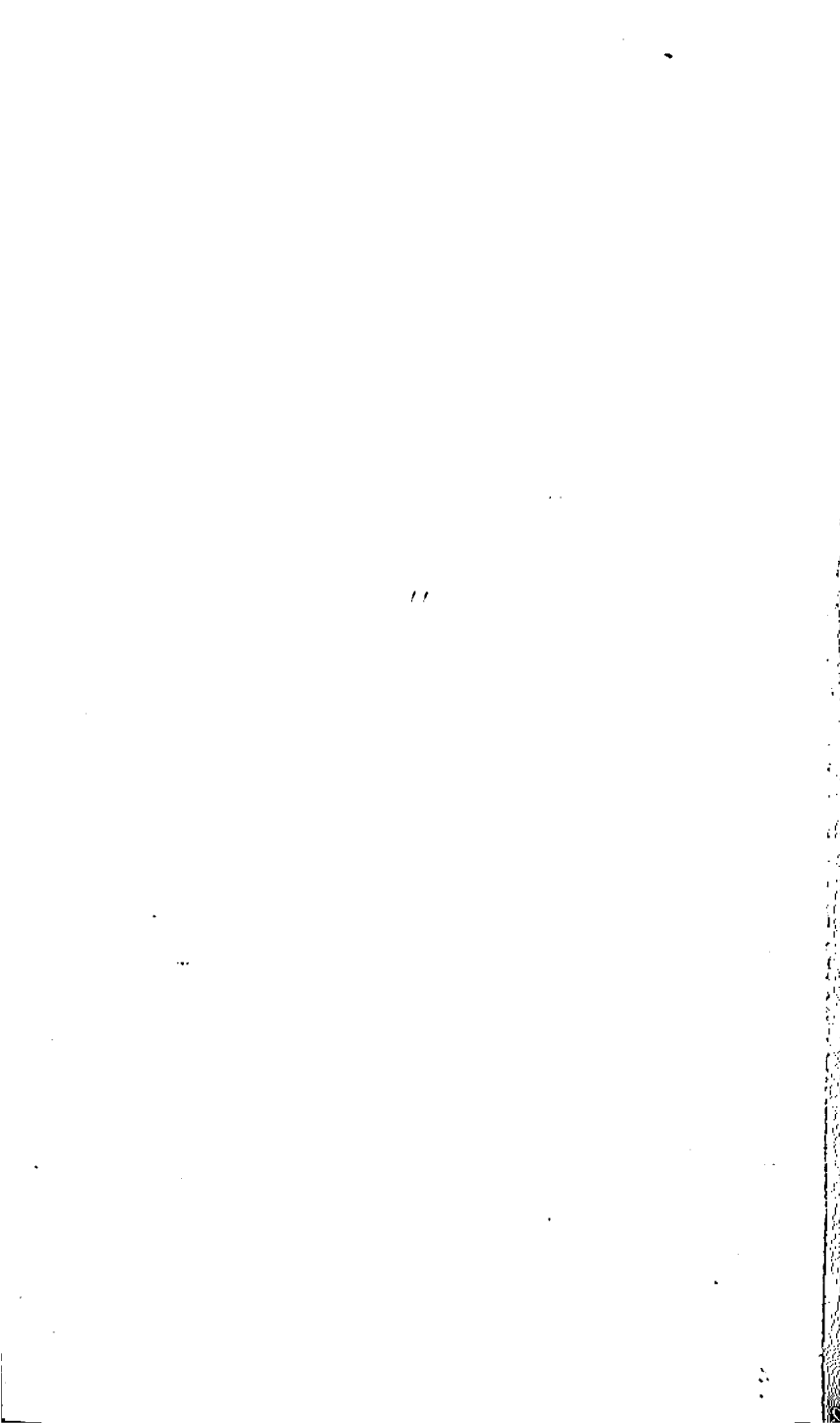


# Socialism: Questions of Theory

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R. Kosolapov

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# Socialism: Questions of Theory

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**Р. Косолапов**  
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## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Preface</i> . . . . .	7
<i>An Introductory Chapter.</i> . . . .	9
1. Definition of Socialism's Essence as a Social System . . . . .	9
2. Revolution and Democracy . . . . .	25
3. Socialism and the Present International Relations . . . . .	49
<i>Chapter I. SOCIALISM AS THE MEANS OF OVERCOMING ALIENATION OF LABOUR</i>	58
1. The Social-Economic Meaning of Alienation of Labour . . . . .	58
2. Expansion of the Sphere of Exploitation and Its Social-Political Consequences. . . . .	85
3. Marxism on Alienation . . . . .	114
<i>Chapter II. THE NEW NATURE OF COMMODITIES</i> . . . . .	141
1. From the Abstract Angle of 'Pure' Socialism . . . . .	141
2. The Fate of Value When All Means of Production Are Socialised. . . . .	162
3. Marx's Prognosis and Socialist Reality . . . . .	179
4. Complication of the Content of Commodity-Value Categories—a Sign of Their Dialectical Self-Negation. . . . .	204
5. Circulation of Material Elements in Socialist Production . . . . .	213

<b>Chapter III. THE UNITY OF THE LIBERATION OF LABOUR AND LABOUR'S CONVERSION INTO A PRIME VITAL NEED</b>	<b>234</b>
1. The Need for Labour and the Conditions for Its Spread. . . . .	234
2. A Concrete Sociological Analysis of the Vital Need for Work. . . . .	259
3. The Nature of the Creative Stimulus of Labour	269
4. The Transformation of Labour Into Use Value . . . . .	299
5. Will Free Labour Remain Purposeful?	313
6. Reduction of the Working Day, Gradual Elimination of Distinctions Between Working and Free Time . . . . .	327
<b>Chapter IV. ON THE ROAD TO A CLASSLESS SOCIETY . . . . .</b>	<b>335</b>
1. Analysis of the Social Structure of Soviet Society . . . . .	335
2. Class Education and Continuity of Generations . . . . .	378
3. The Political Factors of the Emancipation of Labour . . . . .	390
<b>Chapter V. SOME GENERAL PROBLEMS OF THE FIRST PHASE OF COMMUNISM . . . . .</b>	<b>424</b>
1. The Logical and the Historical. The Part Played by Socialisation of Production 'In Fact' . . . . .	424
2. Socialism as One Whole. . . . .	449
<b>Chapter VI. SOCIALISM IN THE SOCIAL-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE TRANSITIONAL EPOCH. . . . .</b>	<b>479</b>
1. Modern Forms of the Realm of Freedom	479
2. Types of International Relations. . . . .	510
3. International Relations and the Socialist Orientation . . . . .	530
<b>Summing Up. . . . .</b>	<b>538</b>



## Preface

Hardly anyone will deny that the twentieth century has altered the course of history. Its content has precipitated an interminable and bitter controversy, a clash between different, often diametrically opposite, points of view.

What is the world heading to,<sup>1</sup> to what new forms of community and organisation, to what new forms of intercourse and cooperation?

People of different class interests have different answers to these questions. Advocates of free enterprise stress changes in the technical basis of production, scientific and technical progress, the rapidly growing flow of information and the swifter tempo of life. They prefer to steer clear of problems that animate large sections of the working people and stand in the centre of the social struggle: exploitation of man by man, elimination of exploitation and class and racial discrimination, and every man's equal relation to the means of production and the sources of material and spiritual wealth.

The discussions raging over these problems are no longer confined to the purely conceptual realm. They are impelled by the rich experience of countries that have successfully built (or are building) socialism. To put it differently, the capitalist social system is contrasted by another system—a really existing socialist society marshalling and demonstrating its historical merits and advantages to an ever greater degree.

This book deals with some of the distinctive features of the new social system, its nature, development and prospects.

### **1. Definition of Socialism's Essence as a Social System**

These days the term socialism is used to denote three things.

1. The political and ideological doctrine of a just social system for the working people, that is, for the majority. Initially utopian—criticising the exploiting order and offering in its stead an ephemeral programme for an 'ideal' human society—it was superseded thanks to the discoveries of Marx and Engels by a scientific and realistic revolutionary socialist doctrine.

2. The social and political liberation movement of the masses, classes and organisations aspiring to socialist aims and finding its most consistent and victorious form in the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat headed by the Marxist-Leninist communist parties.

3. The system of real social relations that have resulted from the overthrow of capitalism and the abolition of private ownership of the means of production. It embodies the class interests of the industrial workers, who carry

along the entire mass of working people. First established in Russia, its emergence is associated with Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, the disciple and successor of Marx and Engels.

It is socialism in this sense that we examine in the present study. Our purpose is to give a concise exposition of a few important aspects of the theory of socialism as the first phase of communism.

The epoch we are living in was begun by the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia in 1917. Yet, as socialism becomes more mature and ever more diverse in form and rich in content, its continuously advancing practice gives rise to more new problems. The congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which devote close attention to the problems of existing socialism, bear this out. Now, at the stage of developed socialism, a tremendous contribution was made by the 25th Congress. No, it did not deal with any icon-like 'models' of the present and future artificially constructed, as a rule, to profit from the current political situation. The 25th Congress made a purposeful, exhaustive and fruitful analysis of developed socialist society, a fully formed social organism, and of its achievements, growing pains, problems and perspectives. The judgments and conclusions of the Congress are based on tangible revolutionary 'assets'—the economic, social, political and cultural gains of the Soviet Union, the pioneer of the world's passage to a new, communist social-economic system, a collectivist system that is now the fundamental principle of life for hundreds of millions of people.

In his Report to the Congress, L. I. Brezhnev

assessed all achievements in a long-range historical context, and singled out three decisive results.

*First*, a new society has been built, the like of which the nations of the world had not known before. Its main distinctive features show its radical advantages over capitalism and any other social system. First of all, Soviet society has a crisis-free, continuously growing economy, mature socialist relations, and true freedom. Its indisputable credit is that the dominant scientific materialist world outlook secures conscious, humanitarian principles. It is a society with boundless faith in the future. Vistas of further all-round progress lie open before it. Cumulatively, this makes developed socialist society a society of justified social optimism.

*Second*, the Soviet socialist way of life has taken shape, with an atmosphere of genuine collectivism and comradeship, the continuously growing unity and friendship of all Soviet nations and ethnic groups, and moral soundness of the individual. It is a way of life of 'class-conscious and united working people', as Lenin wrote, 'who know no yoke and no authority except the authority of their own unity',<sup>1</sup> an association of true masters of the wealth of society and of their own destiny, in which profound and all-permeating democratism is a habitual feature of social being.

*Third*, a new man has been moulded in the process of socialist development. Having won his freedom, he defended it in arduous battles.

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'A Great Beginning', *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 423.

He built his future unsparing of energy and ready for any sacrifice. He withstood all trials and changed beyond recognition, compounding ideological conviction with tremendous vital energy, culture, and knowledge. In short, it is a man of the Soviet mould—a free working man, devoted patriot, and consistent internationalist.

The Central Committee Report to the 25th Congress of the CPSU contains Lenin's definition of one of the most profound and most important tenets of historical materialism: 'As man's history-making activity grows broader and deeper, the size of that mass of the population which is the conscious maker of history is bound to increase.'<sup>1</sup> This has been proved by a variety of facts in what would seem dissimilar social, cultural, and historical conditions in dozens of countries on all continents, by the realities of the present epoch—the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale. *The fullest expression of the inevitably increasing role played by ever broader sections of working people all over the world in the development of society is seen in the historical creativity of the masses in the socialist countries, with socialism resulting from their long, persevering and purposeful efforts as their own, cherished cause.*

To cite Marx and Engels, people must be altered, as a mass, which is possible only in practical movement and through revolution, in order to cultivate communist consciousness among the masses, and likewise to achieve

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'The Heritage We Renounce', *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 524.

the communist aims.<sup>1</sup> The example of the working class and all other working people of the Soviet Union is confirming this.

Under capitalism the proletariat, which unites the mass of the oppressed and exploited, is the 'intellectual and moral mover and physical executor' of the revolutionary transformation of capitalist into socialist society.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the Soviet people and their leading social force—the working class headed by the Communist Party—are, in conditions of developed socialism, builders of the world's first communist society and executors of history's greatest revolutionary and peacemaking mission.

As a rule, people judge more freely and competently about the past and more audaciously about the future than they do about contemporary affairs. The substance of events which they observe at first hand or in which they are directly involved is often obscured by a mass of accidental or incidental circumstances or is distorted by particular or transient interests. The individual's involvement in an event predetermines a mainly empirical approach. Even adequately trained persons are in many cases unable to avoid this, let alone those who give little thought to the meaning of things and accept the realities as they happen to appear to them. This is also still the case in the socialist environment, despite the correctives introduced by the conscious organisa-

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<sup>1</sup> See Marx and Engels, 'The German Ideology', *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, Moscow, 1976, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'Karl Marx', *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 71.

tion of society and by the spread of the scientific socialist ideology.

Yet, any not entirely accurate reflection of the laws and regularities governing the workings and development of the new society is becoming less and less tolerable. Detailed elaboration of the theory of the first phase of communism is an increasingly vital condition for success in building the second phase. This makes it essential to define and resolve the new problems, to turn back to such old problems that may have acquired new meaning in the light of present-day experience.

The question of the essence of socialism, long since resolved by Marxists, is still being raised and variously interpreted. This is seen most distinctly in the extremes of right and 'left' opportunism, the slightly refurbished concepts of 'cooperative' socialism, the origins of which go back to the speculative projects of Dühring, on the one hand, and the concepts of 'barracks' socialism, first outlined in the programmes of Bakunin and Nechayev, on the other. Right revisionist writers gravitate, as a rule, towards the Kautskian eclectic combination of proprietary and collectivist structures in the economic basis of the new society. No economy reposing on these principles could ever lead to the spread and full victory of socialist principles. These and similar petty-bourgeois variations of the social-political alternative to the exploiting system are often exploited by imperialist propaganda. The bourgeois press maintains that nowadays the concept of socialism cannot be accurately defined and is therefore devoid of any definite contours.



By means of this ploy our class opponents hope to cause a gradual 'erosion' of the Marxist-Leninist world outlook. Anti-comunists declare its basic tenets either outdated or subject to arbitrary review, and demagogically refer to the authority of science. 'Words like "socialism", "communism", "capitalism" and "colonialism",' says Louis Fischer, 'are empty bottles into which one person pours poison and another wine; they are not scientific terms, nor are they unchanging terms. They change in time and space.'<sup>1</sup>

Here we have to do with one of the most wide-spread formulas of the ideological struggle. And though alongside positive results—a steady growth of the number of aspirers to restructuring life on socialist principles—there are also some negative ones, such as the spread of illusions foreign to scientific communism, these are no more than side-effects of the long global and diverse process of transition from capitalism to socialism begun by the October Revolution. Apart from the politically conscious proletariat the world-wide revolutionary stream washing away the pillars of imperialism is steadily drawing in hundreds of millions of people of non-proletarian origin, status and mentality. They are people burdened with all kinds of prejudices and often with distorted or utopian ideas about the aims of the struggle. It is therefore especially important for all sections of the communist, working-class, and also the anti-imperialist movements to work for a correct understanding of *everything that*

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<sup>1</sup> L. Fischer, *The Life of Lenin*, New York, 1965, p. 479.

*objectively determines the passage to socialism.*

We are helped to defend the true scientific understanding of the historical perspective and to repulse the designs of socialism's enemies by timeless theoretical tenets and principles, and notably the *objective law of the all-round socialisation of labour and production discovered by Marx*. It operates imperiously in the conditions of capitalist society, sharpening the irreconcilable contradiction between the social character of production and private appropriation, and bringing the proprietary system closer and closer to its downfall.

The law is expressed in centralisation of capital, the increasingly extensive spread of cooperative forms of labour, conscious use of science, planned use of land, development of labour instruments that have to be collectively operated, economy of means of production determined by the mode of their use in the system of combined social labour, incorporation of all nations in the world market, and internationalisation of the capitalist regime.<sup>1</sup> As all these processes unfold, the mass of proletarians, of exploited wage workers taught in large-scale industry to manage production by themselves, without capitalists, is growing physically and intellectually. The class struggle moulds them as a politically active anti-capitalist force. 'Centralisation of the means of production and socialisation of labour,' Marx writes, 'at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder.

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx 'Capital. Part VIII'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1977, p. 144.

The knell of capitalist private property sounds.'<sup>1</sup>

Growth of large-scale production makes the bourgeoisie socially redundant (and exploiting classes in general) as it is replaced in the production apparatus by salaried managers. Also, it tends to increase the number and heighten the skills of the working class, which absorbs new groups of manual and mental workers of new trades created by scientific and technical progress. A situation arises in which the working class becomes an entity dominating the heart and centre of the whole capitalist economic system and expressing the effective economic and political interests of the vast majority of the working people. It is thus not only able but also obliged to undertake the job of organising production on new collectivist principles, and simultaneously secure a revolutionary reconstruction of all society.

The working class, intellectual, moral and physical mover of this reconstruction, is locked in bitter class struggle with the bourgeoisie, winning to its side millions of other exploited and the broad democratic groups. Apologists of capitalism are mistaken when they say that this applies only to relatively backward countries. Many sections of the working class in economically developed capitalist countries, too, show a high degree of readiness to fulfil their mission of liberation. The exploit of the Upper Clyde workers who prevented closure of their shipyards by taking over and running them on their own for 14 months will not be

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

forgotten in the history of the working-class movement.

Tremendous theoretical and practical political significance attaches to Lenin's thesis that Marx inferred the inevitable transformation of capitalist into socialist society wholly and exclusively from the economic law of motion of modern society. Socialisation of labour and its thousands of ever more rapidly advancing and active forms seen in the growth of large-scale production, in capitalist cartels, syndicates and trusts, and likewise in the gigantically increasing size and power of finance capital, is the chief material basis for the inevitable advent of socialism.<sup>1</sup> The *aim* (and essence) of socialism formulated by Lenin in the wake of Marx and Engels is in total harmony with this—transfer of land and factories, and of *all* other means of production into the possession of *all* society, and replacement of capitalist production by production under a general plan in the interests of *all* members of society.<sup>2</sup> Hence the common programmatic approach and single orientation of Communists in all countries, put into effect by their own choice and in their own specific way with means and at rates best suited to the national historical and cultural conditions.

But Marxism did not confine itself to defining the aims (and essence) of socialism and to showing the way to it. A profound understanding of the historical tendency towards capitalist accumulation, and of the need for socialist revolution, enabled Marx and Engels scientifi-

<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'Karl Marx', *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 275.

cally to predict socialism's most salient features. The only 'limitation' of their prevision, and also its token of *universality*, is that it presupposes the *fullest possible operation* of the law of the socialisation of production and, therefore, a *conceptualisation of all its possible effects*. The theoretical portrait of socialism drawn by Marx in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* and by Engels in *Anti-Dühring* is not nominally associated with the concrete historical, national or geographic conditions of any country (though Marx based himself mainly on his analysis of capitalism in Britain). It contains no allowances for the varying levels of social-economic and cultural development. But this does not detract from—and rather augments—its *universal relevance*.

The most characteristic aspects of this general portrait are:

—conversion of the implements of labour into the property of society as a whole;

—direct fusion of individual labour with aggregate labour, and direct acknowledgement of the former by society without the medium of the market;

—collective appropriation of the aggregate social product;

—ownership by society of that part of the product which is required to replace the consumed means of production or to expand production, and also of the reserve and insurance funds, none of which are distributable to individuals;

—withdrawal from the part of the product set aside for consumer needs (before its individual distribution) of the general costs of management not immediately related to pro-

duction, of funds covering joint satisfaction of needs (education, health, public works, and the like), and also of funds for the maintenance of the disabled, and the like;

—distribution according to labour, that is, according to its quality and quantity (the producer receives exactly as much, less deductions, as he gives to society);

—survival in individual distribution of the same principle as that prevailing in the exchange of commodity equivalents: an amount of labour in one form is exchanged for an equal amount of labour in another;

—due to the dissimilar abilities, skills and labour productivity of individuals, and the like, there also survives some inequality in their material condition. 'This *equal* right is an unequal right for unequal labour,' Marx writes. 'It recognises no class differences, because everyone is only a worker like everyone else; but it tacitly recognises unequal individual endowment and thus productive capacity as natural privileges....'

'These defects are inevitable in the first phase of communist society as it is when it has just emerged after prolonged birth pangs from capitalist society. Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development conditioned thereby.'<sup>1</sup>

The progressive, in substance internationalist, socialisation of labour with production, oriented on its highest forms and including conversion of the means of production into

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'Critique of the Gotha Programme'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, pp. 18-19.

public property, plays the part of a, so to speak, 'fundamental' and 'constitutive' law in the destiny of socialism, and the working class is its living collective subject and promoter.<sup>1</sup> And the *optimum result*, according to the teaching of Marx, Engels and Lenin, is *socialisation of the means of production as property of the whole people*. Lenin described the enterprises of the whole people, as distinct from a cooperative enterprise, as 'a consistently socialist type of enterprise (the means of production, the land on which the enterprises are situated, and the enterprises as a whole belonging to the state)'.<sup>2</sup> Practice has also proved effective the cooperative forms of socialising

<sup>1</sup> No 'model' of socialism that neglects this law and the interests of the working class, that neglects the problem of the basis and is aimed mainly on seizing the existing bourgeois-democratic superstructure, has ever stood, nor is able to stand, the test of time. This is true of the past, the present, and the future. 'We are asked,' said Herbert Mies at the Bonn Congress of the German Communist Party, 'whether we have in mind any special socialism as a model for the Federal Republic. We declare for all to hear that we do not care for abstract speculation and refuse to waste time pattering about with any "models". There is only one socialism—that which Marx and Engels turned from utopia into science, the socialism which the Party of Lenin was the first to turn into reality and that is being successfully built today in the socialist countries, and that represents the future of the whole world' (Herbert Mies, *Bericht des Parteivorstandes der DKP an den Bonner Parteitag*, [*Unsere Zeit* (supplement), March 20, 1976]. Socialist theories that ignore the law of the socialisation of production and the historic mission of the working class are at best short-sighted attempts at changing socialism back from science to utopia, and at worst a deliberate falsification.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'On Co-operation', *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 473.

means of production where these were previously dispersed in small private enterprises based on the labour of their proprietors.

In the light of Marx's conception of socialism, Lenin censured Georgi Plekhanov, the first Russian Marxist, for describing the socialist system as planned organisation of the social production process to satisfy the needs of society and its individual members. Lenin said: 'That is not enough. Organisation of that kind will, perhaps, be provided even by the trusts. It would be more definite to say "by society as a whole" (for this covers planning and indicates who is responsible for that planning), and not merely to satisfy the needs of its members, but with the object of ensuring *full* well-being and free, *all-round* development for *a l l* the members of society.'<sup>1</sup> 'Socialism,' Lenin said soon after the October Revolution, 'is the society that grows directly out of capitalism, it is the first form of the new society. Communism is a higher form of society, and can only develop when socialism has become firmly established. Socialism implies work without the aid of the capitalists, socialised labour with strict accounting, control and supervision by the organised vanguard, the advanced section of the working people; the measure of labour and remuneration for it must be fixed.'<sup>2</sup>

In Lenin's own works socialism is presented as a *system of social relations consciously brought into line with the known objective laws of society's*

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Notes on Plekhanov's Second Draft Programme', *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Report on Subbotniks', *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 284.



*development, using the resources in the possession of this society with the aim of satisfying the growing material and spiritual needs of the working people.*

Pivot, heart and soul of this system is man as a creative and spiritually rich personality. First of all thanks to the collectivist organisation of socialist socialised production and its planned development in the interests of the mass of the people. The successive stages of movement towards this goal are naturally different in different countries. But in all countries they are the degree to which man's domination over his social relations increases on the way to the realm of freedom.

There are obstacles on this road: first, the imperialist attempts at hindering the consolidation and improvement of socialism as the historical alternative to capitalism (by blockade, outright aggression, imposition of an arms race, and so on)<sup>1</sup>, second, a certain historical

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<sup>1</sup> As Lenin noted in 1923, 'the West European capitalist powers, partly deliberately and partly unconsciously, did everything they could to throw us back, to utilise the elements of the Civil War in Russia in order to spread as much ruin in the country as possible. It was precisely this way out of the imperialist war that seemed to have many advantages. They argued somewhat as follows: "If we fail to overthrow the revolutionary system in Russia, we shall at all events hinder its progress towards socialism." And from their point of view they could argue in no other way. In the end their problem was half-solved. They failed to overthrow the new system created by the revolution, but they did prevent it from at once taking the step forward that would have justified the forecasts of the socialists, that would have enabled them to develop the productive forces with enormous speed, to develop all the potentialities which taken together would have produced socialism, and would have

backwardness of the material and technical basis, of economic resources and of culture, and outdated views and traditions, and, third, incomplete reflection in the functioning and development of the new society of the objective laws, with sometimes insufficient consideration of them in administration. Overcoming these hindrances is a necessary part of building socialism and communism.

Lenin conceived socialist society as an integral, dynamic and developing organism. He put it thus: 'Infinitely mendacious is the ordinary bourgeois' conception of socialism as something lifeless, rigid, fixed once and for all, whereas in reality *only* socialism will be the beginning of a rapid, genuine, truly mass forward movement, embracing first, the *majority* and then the whole of the population, in all spheres of public and private life.'<sup>1</sup>

Like Marx, Lenin regarded the growth of the new society out of the old as a natural historical process which acquired an essential-

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proved graphically to all people that socialism possesses gigantic forces and that humanity has now come to a stage of development with exceedingly brilliant possibilities' ('Better Fewer, but Better', *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 498). If these imperialist designs are overlooked, we will never obtain a full and truly objective idea of how socialism was built after Lenin's time, of the historic content of its clash with fascism, and then of how it coped with the cold war that was launched against it after World War II.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'The State and Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 477.

Cf. Engels' observations in a letter to Otto Boenigk, Aug. 21, 1890: 'The so-called socialist society, in my opinion, is not something given once and for all; like any other social system it should be seen as subject to continuous changes and transformations' (Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 37, p. 447).

ly new feature after the socialist revolution: it stopped being spontaneous and was increasingly determined by the scientifically organised and purposeful activity of the masses.

Also, Lenin defined socialism's main objective in the mature stage immediately preceding full communism as laying a modern technical foundation for all branches of the economy, converting farm labour into a variety of industrial labour, and assuring more complete satisfaction of the spiritual, cultural, social, material and physical needs of the people and every individual than under capitalism.

Lenin saw that in Soviet Russia the advance to this stage would take many years. 'Even the more developed generation of the immediate future,' he wrote, 'will hardly achieve the complete transition to socialism.'<sup>1</sup> Completing this transition had, in fact, been the object of the daily activity of several generations of working people brought up under Soviet power.

## 2. Revolution and Democracy

Ideologues of imperialism and 'theorists' of reformism and revisionism contrast revolution to democracy. They maintain that the two are incompatible. Nothing could be more absurd and nothing more untrue.

Revolution—if, of course, it is not a palace revolution or reshuffle in a capitalist governmental orchestra—is always a qualitative change

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Session of the All-Russia C.E.C.', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 301.

in the mode of life of the mass of the people. It is a revolution only if vast masses of previously passive people join in vigorous political activity. Revolution is always a break-up of the previous social connections that have become too narrow for contemporary social practice. It replaces them with new ones through the direct involvement of the masses. For a time, the country becomes a turbulent general meeting, a national forum seeking to resolve society's vital problems and to chart the country's future.

In other words, revolution is a period of direct democratic development full of content and varied in form of expression. As a rule, it raises economic, social and political problems that cannot be settled by other than revolutionary means, and therefore settles them radically and conclusively.

To be sure, the above applies mainly to socialist revolutions which put power into the hands of the working people, marking the end of the prehistory of human society and the beginning of its true history. But even revolutions that saw transition from one antagonistic class system to another (such as the bourgeois revolutions in Britain, North America, and France) are also a manifestation of the people's libertarian spirit suppressed at the time of evolutionary development and then released. Throughout the history of the exploiting societies, in which economic, political and ideological domination, no matter how 'democratically' fashioned, belonged to the propertied classes, it was revolutions that introduced truly thorough democratism, the strength of the 'commonalty' frightening even those

who stood to gain the most from the change of course. It is at times of revolution that the democratic mass is able to square its shoulders, to discover its own historical importance and make a visible step closer to political maturity. In the pre-socialist epoch only few generations were blessed with such an opportunity. Revolution is truly a 'festival of the oppressed and exploited' (Lenin).

Revolutions are democratic by nature. Their relation to democracy may be examined from at least two angles: the impact they make on the curtailed democratic norms, traditions and institutions of the previous regime, on the one hand, and the essence of the democratic forms created in the course of the revolution, on the other. The present revolutionary epoch puts these questions more bluntly than they have ever been put. Because at the centre of it stands the working class, and because it is essentially oriented on a radical shift to the collectivist communist system based on common ownership of the means of production and the participation of all citizens in the affairs of society. It was no accident that in the several weeks of direct preparation for the overthrow of the bourgeois dictatorship, Lenin, then working underground, wrote his book, *The State and Revolution*, summing up the views of Marx and Engels and national and international revolutionary experience concerning the future political pattern of society.

In this sense, analysis of revolution and democracy will always entail thorough study of available revolutionary practice, accentuating this or that side of it and, naturally, enriching it with new elements. But there is

no denying that in this treasure-house of experience that of the October Revolution in Russia, a timeless asset of the international revolutionary movement, will always retain its fundamental relevance.

Portraying the relation of the October Revolution to the Russian variety of bourgeois democracy, some Western writers try to create the impression that Soviet power arose on the ruins of semi-feudal political structures and shaped itself under their influence. These disquisitions carry the stamp of the old, once widespread semi-mystical contraposition of East and West and of Western snobbery, and, furthermore, betray reluctance to study the true course of Russian and, for that matter, of world history.

The growth of the capitalist basis and its corresponding superstructures in Russia did lag behind that of the foremost 'old' parliamentary democracies. But there were few such democracies. (Surely such countries as Germany, Greece, Spain, Italy, Portugal, or Japan, which were long ruled by feudal monarchies and had more or less long periods of fascist or militarist tyranny, had no special 'democratic' advantages over Russia.) Constitutional democratic ideas appeared in Russia in the 18th century. The first thorough literary expression of the anti-monarchist and anti-feudal ideology is associated with the name of A. N. Radishchev, a contemporary of the French Revolution, whom Catherine II declared a 'rebel worse than Pugachev'. In the early nineteenth century it was developed into a political programme, which the Northern and Southern Decembrist societies endeavoured to put into

effect. Though they failed, their attempts were a seed that fell on fertile soil. Libertarian traditions, perhaps richer than elsewhere in the world, accumulated. Like Western Europe, Russia had its town-republics and its community self-government. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was shaken by peasant wars of unprecedented dimensions, involving large numbers of people of many nationalities and engulfing vast territory, led by such men as Ivan Bolotnikov, Stepan Razin, Kondraty Bulavin and Emelian Pugachev. This left an ineradicable imprint on popular tradition and the people's psychology.

The history of Russian capitalism, short compared to that of the West but precipitous and abounding in social turmoil, explains why in the wake of the February revolution (preceded by the 1905-1907 revolution, the first people's revolution of the imperialist epoch and breeding-ground of Russian democracy) which overthrew the hated landlord-bourgeois tyranny, it became possible to establish a political system more democratic than any existing in bourgeois conditions.

This did not complete the process. With the epicentre of the world revolutionary movement shifting to Russia, where three revolutions had succeeded one another in a matter of 12 years, there rapidly developed forms of a democracy of a higher order than bourgeois democracy. Embodied in Soviets, it was a democracy of the working class and working peasantry. This mighty 'rival' exercised a tremendous moral influence on Russian bourgeois democracy. Some critics portray this fact as something next to a historical fault: they regret

that democratisation stimulated by the revolutionary situation had not been held in check. But, surely, revising past history, especially from a conservative angle, is anything but honest. The fact that proletarian democracy proved its advantages over the bourgeois variety, which it superseded, is a 'fault' tantamount to a virtue. One can only be proud of it.

Soviets were not a product of scientific thought or even of some political party's tactical manoeuvre. They were born out of the independent action of the working masses, a product of their amazing historical creativity and an outlet for their will, an organ of direct democracy. The working-class movement was their cradle and nutrient medium. Accordingly, its various currents and groups were represented on them—Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, and other parties, along with the unaffiliated mass. In this the Soviets resembled the Paris Commune of 1871—the first experience of proletarian political rule exercised by members of several left organisations—the 'majority' consisting mainly of neo-Jacobins and Blanquists, and a 'minority' gathered round the Proudhonists.

Soviets were not 'invented' by Bolsheviks. Bolsheviks had to fight for influence in them. The bolshevisation of Soviets (end of the summer of 1917) occurred precisely because the Communist Party, fighting for the vital needs of all toilers and for the interests of all nations in the country, was the firmest in facing the challenge of the counter-revolutionary mutiny of monarchist general Kornilov. While the bourgeois Provisional Government and the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshe-



vik leaders, who had boasted of their 'revolutionism' when this was safe, showed their cowardice. The gains of the bourgeois-democratic revolution were saved by the proletariat headed by Communists. Under the influence of the Bolsheviks, the Soviets proved to be 'the only popular force that put a final end to the monarchy'.<sup>1</sup>

From the point of view of their influence on the masses and mass participation in revolutionary reconstruction, the Soviets had the indisputable advantage, as noted by Gramsci among others, of having absorbed the deep-rooted democratic traditions of the people. Besides, they were not entrained by any old norms that in fact amounted to the will of the exploiting class enacted as law. In revolutionary Russia the Soviets compared favourably to all other political institutions (including those created after the February revolution), above all because the masses did not associate them with the old regime and because there were no other intermediate organisations between the masses and the Soviets, because the Soviets were not a petrified form of administration and had the requisite flexibility to act in the bourgeois-democratic stage of the revolution as organs of advanced worker-peasant democracy and grow into organs of proletarian statehood in the next, socialist stage.

The current discussions of ways of securing a peaceful, democratic, etc., transfer of power to the working people, paving the way to

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Proekt dekreta o rospuske uchreditelnogo sobrania', *Collected Works*, Fifth Russian edition, Vol. 35, p. 232.

socialist reconstruction later on, often lead to an aberration. Countering vulgar interpretations of the need for tearing down the bourgeois state machine, some hold that the well-known Marxist-Leninist tenet on retaining those parts of the old machine that can still serve the people applies to all the basic institutions of political power created by the bourgeoisie—created not for the working masses but for itself, for maintaining its domination. No other class, and doubly so one with directly opposite, anti-exploitative interests, must or can, much as it may wish, guarantee them immunity. Of this no thinking revolutionary can have any doubts.

A revolutionary in deed and not word knows perfectly well that, even given the loyalty of officials of the old state machine and of the gigantic executive apparatus of banks and monopolies, and even given absence of sabotage and incitement of the people, and the like, it is still too early to shelve the Marxist-Leninist tenets concerning the need for pulling down the bourgeois state machine. At the very least, it has got to be refurbished—until social practice and the new administrative staff remake it completely.

Certainly, the remaking should be as painless as possible. Certainly, there is no need to scrap norms of life created down the ages if they are no drag on the ongoing revolutionary change. The extremist disposition to retailor everything, to identify loyalty to revolution and the new morality with purely external attributes, may be wholly sincere, but being devoid of truly revolutionary content it can only discredit the revolutionary ideals.

Sooner or later, however, the principles of bourgeois democracy—which are not directed to changing the proprietary order—are bound to come into collision with the radical changes. This has got to be anticipated and taken into account, and the contradiction has ultimately got to be resolved. It would be simple-minded utopianism or deliberate acceptance of social-reformism to evade the issue and to tell oneself and others that the capitalist social system can be eliminated not despite, but by means of its own legal superstructure, which, in fact, is designed and adjusted to strengthening it. National historical or cultural specifics have nothing to do with this. Here we have a case of class and, therefore, international concepts.

The twentieth century abounds in revolutionary situations. They arise in many countries. Some have resulted in transfer of power to the working people, in the establishment of a people's democratic and, later, socialist system. Others, and some quite recent ones, petered out for various objective and subjective, internal and external reasons, with the result that a new upswing must be awaited, possibly in the lifetime of the next generation. The actions of socialist and democratic forces, even if initially successful, came to nothing because, among other things, they had failed to secure revolutionary self-organisation of the people such as the Soviets, which swiftly spread in 1917-18 across the vast expanses of Russia and proved unusually tenacious and viable in the intricate situation created by the overthrow of the exploiting classes, the civil war, and the imperialist intervention. Their tenacious hold on life is probably due to the

fact that the irrepressible Soviets were, as biologists say, 'points of growth' of true democracy for which the people itself discovered affinity in mind and heart. It was a democracy without reservations, a village democracy, a factory or city democracy, with close and trusted comrades delegated to further the people's aspirations and hopes, trusted with the future of a people endlessly proud that power no longer belonged to God, tsar and local headman, and conscious of its own power. In other words, the Soviets proved clearly and conclusively that the success of the revolution depended on the degree and nature of democracy in the revolutionary bodies representing the self-expression of the masses just as the achievements and consolidation of democracy depended on the strength and scale of the revolution.

This experience helps assess the arbitrary anti-Soviet and anti-socialist interpretations of the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in January 1918. Before passing any final judgement, it is essential to determine what stage of the revolution and whom the Assembly represented. Here we discover that the Constituent Assembly, a plenipotentiary legislature elected by the people, was supposed to have been a step forward compared to the Provisional Government that had resulted from a behind-the-scenes compact of the bourgeois-landlord upper stratum (which had, by the way, procrastinated with elections). It was supposed to have been that, but was not. Not because of any action on its own part, for, in effect, it had not done anything, but because it had missed the bus: by the time

it opened, the Provisional Government had already been swept out by the whirlwind of the October Revolution and a historically superior, no longer bourgeois-democratic but proletarian-democratic power had been established—that of the Soviets.

Nearly two months had passed from the day of the October Revolution to the opening day of the Constituent Assembly. Elections were completed in these two months under an election law drawn up in September. But these two months were also a time of triumph for Soviet power. The country—which could not wait—had already become a scene of democratic changes inconceivable by purely post-February revolution standards. And the Constituent Assembly, reluctant and unable to understand this, proved much more petty, egoistic and pedantic than could have been expected in view of all that had been achieved and, in effect, already assimilated by the people.

The conflict between the mass of the people and the Constituent Assembly erupted because the latter refused to consider and approve the Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploited People and to endorse the decrees on land, peace, and transfer of power to the Soviets. What is the alternative suggested by the advocates of Russian bourgeois democracy? Should the nation have given up its hope of long-awaited peace? Should tens of millions of peasants have given up the land, for which they had yearned for centuries of suffering and which they had finally acquired? Should the workers have repudiated the steps taken against exploitation of their labour? Is this

not too much to ask for the sake of illusory 'democratic' procedure? Could democratic gains be sacrificed to mere procedure?

The Constituent Assembly was dissolved after it had shown its complete inability to reckon with the compelling political realities of the times. Soviet power had had no previous intention to dissolve it. Far from it. The Bolshevik party had thought that the Constituent Assembly could blend with the Soviet Republic. 'Is it so difficult to understand,' Lenin wrote a week before the October rising, 'that once *power* is in the hands of the Soviets, the Constituent Assembly and its success are *guaranteed*? The Bolsheviks have said so thousands of times and *no one* has ever attempted to refute it. Everybody has recognised this "combined type".'<sup>1</sup> It could have existed for an indefinite time. Lenin objected to one thing only: that this 'combined type' of administration (a combination of the parliamentary system with bodies of mass democratic initiative) should be tantamount to a negation of the power of the Soviets.

The realism of a 'combined type' of statehood is a special feature of our transitional epoch. It is still realistic for some of the developed capitalist countries, provided the course of events is less precipitous and less dramatically tense than it was in Russia, and provided the circumstances depending on the sum total of concrete internal and international conditions are more favourable. Do the people who these days so categorically declare Lenin's

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Letter to Comrades', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 200.

concepts to be outdated, know of these Leninist tenets?

Unfortunately, the discussion about the relation of revolution and democracy is not always motivated by the wish to find the truth. Sometimes, the aim of obscuring the issue takes the upper hand. Even in some of the communist publications the debate is at times reminiscent of a terminological tournament. The subject is unclear, the concept dim, the class-political content foggy.

Often, bourgeois ideologues and reformists join in, introducing topics which they expect to breed strife in the communist and working-class movement. It is apposite, therefore, to recall Lenin's warning. 'More than any other,' he said, 'our revolution has proved the rule that the strength of a revolution, the vigour of its assault, its energy, determination, its victory and its triumph intensify the resistance of the bourgeoisie. The more victorious we are, the more the capitalist exploiters learn to unite and the more determined their onslaught.'<sup>1</sup> Following the bitter lessons of the counter-revolutionary explosion in Hungary in 1956 or that in Chile in 1973, which, by the way, were due among other things to a neglect of certain essential aspects of scientific revolutionary theory, there seems to be no need for proving the relevance of Lenin's warning.

The Marxist doctrine, according to Lenin, 'is a *summing up of experience* illuminated by a profound philosophical conception of the

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Ninth Congress of the R.C.P.(B)', *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 450.

world and a rich knowledge of history'.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, knowledge of the experience of class struggle in the present era is absolutely essential, though by itself insufficient, as the starting point for any truly revolutionary activity.

Revolution is, of course, a highly authoritarian thing because the main issue in it is that of power, and no class has ever conceded power of its own free will. Power is seized by use or demonstration of force. And in this respect a socialist revolution differs from all preceding ones only in that its idea of justice is so forcefully embodied in its sweeping popular imperativeness.

Opportunists never did see and refuse to see the organic unity of proletarian revolutions and democracy. Hence their pathetic concurrence with bourgeois ideologists in declaring Lenin's theory and practice of socialist revolution 'undemocratic'. Hence, too, the assiduously spread tale that a revolution which creates a workers' state stands not for an expansion of democracy, as should be the logic of things, but, on the contrary, for its curtailment or abdication. Even the centrists (like Otto Bauer) who acknowledged the necessity for socialist revolution and proletarian dictatorship, regarded the latter as a forced necessity, a temporary sacrifice of democracy in the interests of building socialism in the future. Even these 'best' of reformists did not see the essence of the worldwide historic assertion at long last of true people's power.

Of the Soviets that sprang up in the 1905-07

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'The State and Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 407.



revolution Lenin wrote: 'As the dictatorship of the overwhelming majority, the new authority maintained itself and could maintain itself solely because it enjoyed the confidence of the vast masses, solely because it involved the masses as a whole in the freest, widest and most resolute manner.'<sup>1</sup> This was something fundamentally new—different in quality from the democracy narrowly conceived as a synonym of parliamentarism, which latter, however, it did not entirely negate.

Marxists-Leninists are not opposed to parliamentary activity or bourgeois-democratic freedoms. On the contrary, it is the Communists who always were and are the foremost fighters against fascism and totalitarian regimes like the Pinochet junta. But their fight is not aimed at perpetuating the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, no matter what super-democratic garb it may wear, but at drawing ever broader segments of the people into active political life, into reconstructing society; they never forget that in the absence of organised extra-parliamentary mass action parliamentary activity *per se* will not take the people a single step closer to real power.

In the struggle for the new system, Lenin wrote, 'this is exactly a case of "quantity being transformed into quality": democracy introduced as fully and consistently as is at all conceivable is transformed from bourgeois into proletarian democracy.'<sup>2</sup> To transform quanti-

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party', *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 244-45.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, 'The State and Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 419.

ty into quality—here communist and workers' parties in developed capitalist states have gained extensive opportunities by virtue of the changed relation of world forces in favour of peace, democracy and socialism. Conditions make it possible to work for a new quality, going beyond purely quantitative achievements that may fluctuate one way or the other but not secure any fundamental change.

All communist and workers' parties in capitalist countries naturally devote themselves to working with electors, to election campaigns, and to work within parliaments. But they are always aware of the set of influential—sometimes much more influential than the representative organs—extra-parliamentary spheres of bourgeois power. First of all, the state apparatus, and the police and army. Then, the apparatus of banks and monopoly corporations. And lastly, the monopoly-controlled mass media with their colossal modern resources of manipulating public opinion for counter-revolutionary ends.

How do they differ from the parliamentary sphere? To begin with, they are closed, can keep down publicity to the minimum and impose rigid diktat, thus avoiding public interference and outside influence. And Communists are not as naive as to expect qualitative social change to come about if they merely win seats in parliament in the absence of a decisive and definite blueprint for democratising the extensive extra-parliamentary spheres where the main levers of the dictatorship of monopoly capital are usually concentrated.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'He who goes *all out*, who fights for complete victory, must alert himself to the danger of having

These factors inevitably bring us back to proletarian dictatorship as conceived by Marxists-Leninists, and not as a term of which so unjustifiably much is being said these days.

Imperialist ideologues still frighten people with it, drawing absurd and cynical comparisons with tyrannical and terrorist regimes of the bourgeoisie. Those who try to be more 'flexible' and 'subtle' refer to the 'undemocratic nature' of the socialist revolution in Russia, allegedly accompanied with mass violence. They contrast it to the 'respectable' bourgeois-democratic February revolution. In so doing, however, they forget that more than 1,500 people were killed in the February coup, while there were only six killed and 50 wounded during the October rising in Petrograd. Even the monarchist General Krasnov, who joined 'Socialist' Kerensky in a mutiny against the Soviet Government, was released from detention on his word of honour—though this should probably be considered a mistake. Breaking his promise, he escaped to the Don and began organising counter-revolutionary gangs; during the Second World War he was a faithful servant of the nazis.

Why was the greatest revolution of all time, a revolution that changed the face of the world, almost bloodless? Because Lenin and the Communist Party succeeded in uniting millions of workers, peasants and soldiers in one great political army. They were convinced

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his hands tied by minor gains, of being led astray and made to forget that which is still comparatively remote, but without which all minor gains are hollow vanities' (V. I. Lenin, 'Political Sophisms', *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 427).

that socialist revolution required the independent social initiative of the bulk of the people, the working people, and that, in other words, it was the most democratic action heretofore known in history.

Summing up the experience of revolution in Russia and drawing lessons from the defeat of the 1919 revolution in Hungary, where, by the way, Soviet power was constituted without an armed uprising and was later brutally suppressed by the local and foreign bourgeoisie, Lenin stressed again that 'the dictatorship of the proletariat is a specific form of class alliance between the proletariat, the vanguard of the working people, and the numerous non-proletarian strata of the working people (petty-bourgeoisie, small proprietors, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, etc.) or the majority of these strata,—an alliance against capital, an alliance whose aim is ... the final establishment and consolidation of socialism'.<sup>1</sup>

All working people in town and country have a stake in this alliance. For them the working class is that powerful social force which can defend them against reactionary trickery and against restoration of the exploiting order. They freely accept the hegemony of the working class and its dictatorship over reactionary elements. This, however, does not necessarily imply denial of civic rights to any social group. Whether or not restrictions are imposed on the bourgeoisie depends, naturally, on the specific conditions in the country, on the forms and degree of resistance of the

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Foreword to the Published Speech "Deception of the People with Slogans of Freedom and Equality"', *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 381.

exploiters, and the political awareness and organisation of the working people and their unity with their revolutionary vanguard. There can be no ready prescription on this score.

But irrespective of the concrete historical situation in which a communist or workers' party operates, we must always remember that power termed 'proletarian dictatorship' or by any other identical term, ceases to be necessary not when the general democratic majority is won and not in the early period of transition, but only after the stage of transition is over—with a natural, objective development of proletarian statehood and democracy into a state and democracy of the whole people.

Our class adversary has for many centuries spread the specious idea of an allegedly organic link between freedom and private property and man's incorrigibly 'egoistic nature'. Yet, there is no deeper, broader and more fundamental premise of democracy than common ownership, use, and disposal of means, objects, and products of labour. This is the essential premise of socialist democratism at the source of the real, collectivist democracy that transcends the accepted constitutional procedures and ultimately secures unprecedented social equality and involvement of an ever greater number of, and finally of all, citizens in the administration of the state and society (which, by this token, becomes self-administration).

None but the socialist revolution can end the antagonism between the state and civilian society, and compound democracy with state power. Defining the new type of state and the

new type of democracy that arose in October 1917, Lenin referred to the apparatus of Soviet power. He said: 'It makes it possible to combine the advantages of the parliamentary system with those of immediate and direct democracy, i.e., to rest in the people's elected representatives both legislative and *executive* functions. Compared with the bourgeois parliamentary system, this is an advance in democracy's development which is of worldwide, historic significance.'<sup>1</sup>

Our ideological adversaries refuse to accept this conclusion—the crucial conclusion that in a way summarises the historical controversy between bourgeois and proletarian democracy. They cannot refute it in substance and take a devious route, weighing the outward, purely formal qualities of the socialist political system against the Western variety. We, Soviet Communists, are being maliciously accused by them of incongruous dogmas that they later just as lightly deny.

Even professors of history tend to claim that the Bolsheviks had from the outset wanted a one-party government and one-party system. Yet, the government coalition of the Bolshevik Party and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries survived from October 1917, that is, from the 2nd All-Russia Congress of Soviets, until July 1918 when the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, seizing on the mood of the kulaks and the sharpening of the class struggle in the countryside, began a counter-revolutionary mutiny.

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 103-04.

The one-party system in Soviet Russia was not predetermined by Marxist-Leninist doctrine, as anti-communists maintain. It was shaped by the course of events. This should be remembered, and correctly understood.

It is absurd to accuse the CPSU of using identical methods of leadership throughout the country. This is impossible because of the typical and specific distinctions in social, cultural, climatic and geographical background. People living in the tundra and subtropics, in humid climate and arid desert, industrial workers, nomads, tillers and huntsmen were, in many cases, historically separated by one, two, even three distinct eras of social development. This was strikingly described by Yuri Rytheu, a Chukchi writer, member of an ethnic group that had not even had a written language before the Revolution. 'At the time of my childhood,' he wrote, 'a little boy stepping out of a yarang on the way to school each morning stepped without a thought across millennia.'

The Russian Soviet Republic, a proletarian state, was initially occupied in arranging relations with states of working people that had sprung up in Central Asia and which Lenin described as 'peasant Soviet republics'. Considering that before the revolution Russia was nearly three-quarters and some of its outlands totally illiterate, and that its multi-lingual population was influenced by religion, it faced a variety of formidable problems. No political party could hope to retain power, if only for a short time, in such a country if it were to try and impose a standard model.

In the polemics West European 'pluralism'

is being contrasted to East European 'monolithism'. But, alas, these terms are often meaningless. Nowhere is the diversity greater than in the Soviet Union, or for that matter a greater variety of 'pluralistic' practices. There is great diversity in the nature and forms of participation in government, to say nothing of the variety of parties which—given appropriate conditions—is not negated by working-class power. In such socialist countries as the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic and the Polish People's Republic several parties participate in building the new society and the political system.

The various stratagems of imperialist ideologues pursue one and only one purpose: to malign the Soviet Union, the experience of the most sweeping and the most deep-going revolution, to divert the masses from revolutionary search, or at least lead them onto a localistic, provincial path. And it is sometimes hard to understand why some left leaders in capitalist countries are taken in by them.

The Bolsheviks were victorious not least of all because they opposed the national exclusiveness propagated by Narodniks, the Bund, or national deviators. They triumphed because they drew on the lessons of the European and, for that matter, the whole international working-class movement. They could not have led the armed rising in Petrograd and laid the foundations for a socialist state if they had not verified their course of action with the history of the Paris Commune. 'In the present movement,' Lenin stressed, 'we all stand on



the shoulders of the Commune.’<sup>1</sup> This from a man who also knew the rich traditions of the Russian revolutionary movement of liberation.

The experience of the October Revolution in Russia is being studied from prime sources to lighten the tasks of revolutionaries of other countries, to minimise difficulties of reconstruction, to single out positive examples and avoid losses and mistakes, or, in short, to bring closer the worldwide triumph of the common ideals. The 60th anniversary of the October Revolution was one more reminder for the Soviet people that theirs had been the world’s first socialist revolution. They are proud of it, but their pride has no trace of national arrogance. On the contrary, for them the broad international recognition of the October Revolution only accentuates their revolutionary responsibility. And responsibility leaves no room for arrogance. Responsibility has to be justified by hard, persevering, tireless and good work.

There is no denying that many opponents of the existing socialism have learned to be flexible. No longer do they say outright that it is impossible and undesirable to build socialism. Instead, they call for its ‘democratisation’, ‘liberalisation’, ‘humanisation’, meaning a free hand for forces hostile to socialism, and turning the Communist Party, the only party through which true people’s power can be exercised consistently, into just one of many rival organisations, societies, unions,

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, ‘Plan of a Lecture on the Commune’, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 208.

and so on. Imperialists and their helpers know the significance, prestige and role of the Marxist-Leninist party in the political system of socialist society, and want to undermine them.

Stripped of its former political and economic dominance, the bourgeoisie is prepared to wait. It gathers strength slowly, patiently, using its old-time ties with international capital, its experience in politics and military affairs, the tenacity of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois outlook and morality, and especially the nationalist and individualist prejudices of the non-proletarian groups. It is out to erode the pillars of socialism where they are not yet consolidated, and to prepare the ground for a counter-revolutionary coup in the hope of outside aid. Only those who have but a vague notion of the watershed between democracy and anti-democracy can be indifferent to this activity, or be lulled by talk of abstract humanitarianism.

Is there any way other than revolution with proletarian hegemony to achieve true, not formal, democracy? History has given the answer: no, there is not.

The way suggested by social-reformists is not novel. It has been tested and proved barren. A social-democratic government has ruled Sweden for 44 years. In this long term it touched none of the pillars of the bourgeois system. Social-democratic governments administer the affairs of capitalists as conscientiously as the governments of bourgeois parties—often even more effectively because the working people trust them more than they do undisguised conservatives. In short, the barrenness of social-reformism leads naturally to the

downfall of what would seem to be a stable opportunist utopia, and thereby confirms Marxism-Leninism by its negative example.

### **3. Socialism and the Present International Relations**

In our time, the emergence and evolution of socialist societies is inconceivable outside the global relationships of nations and states. Therefore, no description of socialism's liberative essence can be complete if an examination of its effects in the domain of international relations is omitted. Why? The answer is contained in the Marxist-Leninist analysis of the changing correlation of internal and international relations in the present era. These days, the new society does not emerge and shape itself in isolation. It does so in the framework of a world system whose historical advance against the exploiting system is now world-wide.

Those who depict this global approach which Lenin introduced in the Marxist theory of socialist revolution as a 'revision' of substantive points in Marx's teaching, are either misled or are deliberately distorting the facts.

Arguing against the Russian Communists' orientation on socialist revolution, the leaders of the Second International referred mainly to the country's economic and cultural backwardness and alleged absence of objective conditions for its transition to the new system. The right-wing Social-Democrats tried to taboo working-class attempts at winning power

in countries that had not yet converted all branches of "their economy to large-scale machine technology. With Kautsky at their head, the 'omniscient' exponents of social-reformism rallied against Lenin and his comrades. They depicted the Russian Bolsheviks as dreamers, conspirators and Blanquists. They said the Bolsheviks were exaggerating the role of a restricted group of active revolutionaries, and accused them of giving precedence to the political over the economic, the subjective over the objective.

In the early twentieth century there was bitter and ceaseless contention between the revolutionary and the conciliatory opportunist wings of international socialism as an ideological and political movement. And Lenin turned out to be right all down the line. He was right from the standpoint of precisely those Marxist principles which the opportunists had tried to use against him. To see how right he was, we should look into the essential difference between Lenin's position and the nationalist outlook of the Second International doctrinaires.

The dogmatists that they were, the latter referred themselves to past history, when the antagonistic societies, including the capitalist, emerged in more or less closed social structures. The British, American and French bourgeois revolutions were opposed by contemporary feudal, semi-feudal and even bourgeois states. The internal progressive forces seeking to repattern social relations acted at their own peril, as it were, relying mainly on the maturity of conditions for an overturn in their country and with no serious hope of aid

from kindred social forces in other lands. The revolutionary capacity of classes in each country was of a *national* order. The effect of international factors was never ruled out, but could not be decisive. This was true for as long as the social organisation was one of almost exclusively local societies and had not consolidated into a form of broad community, a world system, due to the absence of that crucial economic precondition, a world market.

The first of the socio-economic formations that shaped gradually into a world system—the capitalist—differed from the previous ones in that the evolving worldwide division of labour and commerce changed its intrinsic economic laws from *laws governing the internal relations of peoples into laws of international relations*. Capitalist exploitation of workers and other labouring strata in each country was compounded with imperialist exploitation of backward peoples. Lenin described it as follows: 'Developed capitalism, in bringing closer together nations that have already been fully drawn into commercial intercourse, and causing them to intermingle to an increasing degree, brings the antagonism between internationally united capital and the international working-class movement into the forefront.'<sup>1</sup>

*The internal and international social relations became stably homogeneous and merged so closely that the abolition of, say, exploitation in one country became an impediment*

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'The Right of Nations to Self-Determination', *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 401.

to exploitative relations in the rest of the world. By injecting its built-in profit motive into all spheres of social relations, capitalism created a situation where a *local* setback assumed *international* significance. The revolutionary potential of the national contingents of the working class, peasants, middle strata, intelligentsia, and national-democratic forces, and the content, scale and rate of the social transformations in a country, have gained *international* relevance. This means that a revolutionary success scored by a nation causes immediate international repercussions and affects the system of international, as well as internal, ties. Furthermore, the revolutionary potential of individual countries merges unavoidably with that of other peoples, and is augmented by the example and strength of the socialist world system.

No depiction of the higher stage of capitalism will be complete if it centres on just the production of surplus value in individual countries and by-passes the monopoly profits derived from international economic ties. Similarly, no depiction of the preconditions for progressive social change in individual countries will ever be complete if based exclusively on the internal economic, cultural and human resources. If a narrow national interpretation of revolution during the emergence of the capitalist system was liable to lead to serious error, this is doubly so—and in fact totally absurd—in the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale. The talk about revolutionary struggle with exclusive reliance on one's own forces, typical of certain ultra-left elements, is out-

and-out poppycock. If only because it amounts to saying that socialism cannot be built in countries where capitalism is at a medium or low level of development, or that patriarchal feudal societies cannot, even given alliance of their progressive leading forces with the socialist countries, go over to socialism by-passing capitalism. In fact, this tends to write off the several dozens of years of experience on the European, Asian and American continents where countries with disparate social and economic levels have been developing on the basis of public property. It ignores the practice of hundreds of millions of people.

The principal difference between the Communists headed by Lenin and the leaders of the Second International over the practicability of socialist revolutions centered on Lenin's recognition and the latter's denial of the ability of the Russian workers, who comprised a minority in the country, to perform a socialist revolution. The dogmatic interpreters of Marx maintained that Russia was insufficiently developed in the industrial and cultural sense to set out immediately on the passage to socialism.

Did Lenin deny Russia's social and economic backwardness? Certainly not. Did he recognise large-scale production as the only possible material basis for socialism? Certainly. In fact, he held that anyone disregarding this Marxist principle could not be a Communist.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'Tenth All-Russia Conference of the RCP(B)', *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, pp. 407-08, 492, etc.

What was the new factor which led to the deduction that the imperialist system could be breached, and that socialist construction was possible, in other than a highly developed capitalist country?

To substantiate this deduction it is not enough to refer to just the unprecedented strength, scale and organisation of the working-class movement, the existence of a Marxist-Leninist party, the alliance of workers and working peasants, or to other factors of a subjective and political order. Certainly, they are all highly important. But what about that basic material factor, the productive forces that justify passage to the new social system?

They did exist, Lenin maintained, and it is immaterial whether or not *all of them* are at hand in a country that takes the road to socialism, provided it has reached a certain minimal level of capitalist development. *In the imperialist epoch the fusion of internal and international relations alters the method of approach to the socialist potential of the revolutionary masses.*

'Since large-scale industry exists on a world scale', Lenin said in December 1921, 'there can be no doubt that a direct transition to socialism is possible—and nobody will deny this fact.... And if, owing to the backwardness with which we came to the revolution, we have not reached the industrial development we need, are we going to give up, are we going to despair? No. We shall get on with the hard work because the path that we have taken is the right one.'<sup>1</sup> *Initially, the success*

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Ninth All-Russia Congress of Soviets', *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 160.



*of socialist transformations within national borders may depend on the state of the productive forces in the world.* And though given relatively less developed preconditions of an industrial and technical order than those of the developed capitalist countries, in our era this paves the way to relatively higher forms of social and political organisation dedicated entirely to the working people. Every nation building socialism must consolidate this success *after the revolution* by working within the country for a productivity of labour, and a scientific and technical potential higher than capitalism.

The connection between the internal and international relations of every nation is now particularly apparent. In the past, imperialism's ability to export counter-revolution lessened or wiped out the chances of a revolution winning in the smaller countries. Now, as the events of the fifties in Hungary, the sixties in Cuba and Czechoslovakia, and the seventies in Vietnam, have shown, this ability is in many ways reduced, if not entirely eliminated. This applies to military intervention, economic sanctions, blockade, attempts at eroding the socialist consciousness of nations, and the like. *When acting in unison*, the socialist community can halt the export of counter-revolution, compensate for the rupture of the country's traditional economic ties, render technical, economic and cultural aid, and exchange social experience.

More, the minimal capitalist development once necessary for the transition to socialism in, say, Russia's case, is probably no longer indispensable. The facts show that even

though, the country is one or two epochs behind, this can be compensated by a firm and consistent orientation on alliance with the countries of the socialist world system. The socialist countries' new type of international relations enable some peoples to by-pass whole stages of internal exploitative social relations already passed and replaced in other countries with relations of comradely cooperation and mutual assistance. These new-type international relations act as a transmission belt for the most advanced forms of social organisation and as a catalyst of social progress. If the difficulties of building the new society in a country were viewed 'by themselves, in isolation from the international situation,' said Leonid Brezhnev, 'they would seem insuperable. But the point is that nowadays the inception and victory of a socialist revolution occur in conditions where socialism has become the dominant trend in the development of humankind.'<sup>1</sup>

For this reason, the narrow national 'country by country' approach (based on the relation of forces in just one's own country) is giving way in Marxist social science to an approach based on *integration of the social relations within the country with the country's international relations*. This is the amendment that the present times have made in the methodology of the materialist historical analysis, because these days the determining role in all world events is played by the struggle of the two systems—socialism and capitalism.

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<sup>1</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, *Leninskim kursom* (Following Lenin's Course), Vol. 4, Moscow, 1974, p. 11.

Communist social relations are shaping not only within individual countries, but also between countries. And the ultimate result is a social homogeneity of national and international ties, a homogeneity of the internal and external social environments, their organic fusion, a consolidation of socialist national societies into a communist international community which could be described, to use Marx's phrase, as socialised mankind.

# SOCIALISM AS THE MEANS OF OVERCOMING ALIENATION OF LABOUR

## 1. The Social-Economic Meaning of Alienation of Labour

Socialism is the only social system that envisages a steadily increasing degree of freedom within society. For the first time in history, it creates equality in relation to the means of production and abolishes exploitation of man by man. This is an *essential* feature of the new system, testifying to the elimination of that oppressive social fact of centuries and millenia—*alienation of labour*. This is the feature that sets every truly socialist society, no matter what specific qualities it may have, apart from the society based on private property.

The first analysis of alienated labour was made by Marx in his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. The term 'alienation', it is true, had been in use before Marx. But he gave it a specific new meaning. We need only compare Feuerbach's (let alone Hegel's) conception of alienation with Marx's to see the complete dissimilarity of their methodological approaches. For Feuerbach, who examined

the causes of people's poverty, suffering, moral degradation and dehumanisation, the matter boils down to the spiritual estrangement of the finest human faculties in favour of an imaginary divinity. By yielding all his virtues, endowments and energy to this divinity man is ravaged and robbed of his own essence. Hence, he suffers. As Feuerbach saw it, the aim was to give these qualities back to people, to depose the divinity, and to make man god. All he did was to criticise the old religion and replace it with a new one.

The young Marx shows a new, more substantial approach. He sees man as an active factor that transforms nature through his practice; this leads him to the conclusion that oppression and suffering stem from the fact that division of labour ousts people from many varieties of activity, robs them of their universality, impoverishes the content of their labour. The results, and therefore the process of labour, are taken from them. The material conditions of subsistence are taken from them. In other words, people's principal life activity is materially alienated from them. It is not a matter of replacing one faith with another, but first and foremost a matter of returning to man the material conditions and products of his labour. And the only way to do so is to eliminate the middleman between the worker, on the one hand, and the means, objects and products of labour, on the other. This means eliminating the capitalist. Marx, as we see, did not centre his criticism on religion but on the existing relations between man and man. Feuerbach's idealist standpoint is here opposed by the materialist standpoint of the

young Marx. This alone is enough to qualify Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, along with his *Theses on Feuerbach*, as a work of genius, a brilliant exposition of the new world outlook.

The notion 'alienated labour' applicable in all antagonistic societies occurs but rarely in the works of the mature Marx, who, as we know, concentrated on a detailed study of the economic mechanism of the capitalist system.

Revisionists took advantage of the fact that Marxists had for a time neglected the question of labour alienation. Some Soviet philosophers exaggerated the terminological idiosyncracies in Marx's early works, and suggested that the concept of alienated labour should be altogether abandoned. They argued that the author had himself given up using it, that it was likely to cause misinterpretation of established Marxist principles. In the heat of the controversy they questioned some of the most valuable scientific conclusions of the early Marx, though experience had shown that no scientific or philosophical problem is ever prejudiced or devaluated by the fact of our opponents' trying to exploit it against us.

First, in Marxist use the term 'alienated labour' is a wholly established scientific concept, which could be mistrusted only due to its 'Hegelian' ring rather than in substance. Second, there was no sense in abandoning something already elaborated in Marxist philosophy and letting anti-communists and renegades arbitrarily distort our doctrine. Third, Marx's *Capital* contains a projection of the analysis of the alienation of labour.

Fourth, in the absence of this analysis it is harder to resolve certain questions of historical materialism, scientific communism and Marxist-Leninist ethics, in particular the problems of freedom and necessity.

Labour, the simplest basic aspects of which are purposeful activity and the means and object of labour, constitutes man's transformative influence on the substance of nature in order to give it the desired form. It is in labour that man shows his skill, knowledge, ability and, in one way or another, his essence and character. This effect, the transfusion of subjective ability into an object, its conversion from properties intrinsically rooted in the subject into properties of a thing, constitutes the common feature of all labour, for there is no other way to adapt the object to human needs.

If we take man's life activity as a *thesis*, the materialisation of his essence in labour, the dedication of his properties outside his self, his egress from his 'I', will to some extent seem a negation of subjectiveness—an *antithesis*.

The personal and productive consumption of the created product, the return to the producer of that which he had put into the object in the process of labour, man's continuously repeated assertion of himself as the active factor of production, may be regarded as the *synthesis*. In contrast to the second factor (objectivisation), this third amounts in character to appropriation or subjectivisation of the object, which is, in effect, an important precondition of objectivisation. In fact, there is the closest intertwining, interpenetration and mutual conditioning.

...  
Though they are closely connected and presuppose each other, these three factors of human activity are distinct from each other and often divided in space and time. There are people, in fact, who do not engage in labour, who do not objectify their essence. This is true of those who belong to the exploiting class. On the other hand, there are people who labour, who produce, but are denied the opportunity of consuming. The act of objectifying the subject through labour is distinct from the act of appropriation, of subjectifying the product of labour. This feature of labour—the objective division between manufacture and consumption, between giving and taking—delays the return of the object to the producer.

The objectification of man's faculties in the process of labour (the subject-object relation) will survive as long as there is social production. On the other hand, the withdrawal of the material embodiment, of the concretion of labour—the appropriation of a product—by someone who does not work (Marx refers to this social alienation in the man-to-man relationship) began at a definite stage in the development of society and is therefore, though it lasts a long time, no more than transient and temporary.

In the primitive community, for example, which had rudimentary implements and produced barely enough to sustain the people comprising it, there could be no question of alienating labour in the above sense. The poorly developed productive forces, the low productivity of labour and ignorance of the social and natural laws made man completely



dependent on nature. In addition, there was his dependence on the group without which he could not survive—a severe necessity and anything but idyllic. It was not a free association of harmoniously developed individuals but a group of weak and defenceless creatures who derived the modicum of strength to face nature through their alliance. There was no alienation there simply because there was nothing to alienate and nobody capable of alienating.

Private property and slave-ownership arose on the basis of a higher productivity of labour, which yielded a certain surplus product over and above the minimal vital need. This surplus became an alienated product. Besides, a group of persons also began to appropriate people as well for their own profit, reducing them to instruments of labour. Slavery meant that all the fruit of a slave's labour belonged to his master; it also meant complete subjection, denial of all human qualities, and did not let the slave belong to himself. The slave's time was assumed to belong to his master, though, in effect, part of his working time went into replacing the minimum means of life consumed by him.

The sole difference between the slave and the serf of feudal times was that the latter—the peasant dependent on the feudal lord—was allotted land and the means for cultivating it, and worked part of the time for his own benefit.

In the system of capitalist production the person of the worker is no longer dependent. He is no longer anybody's property. But he is deprived of the means of production. He is

given personal freedom, but denied its material foundation.

The bourgeois revolutions abolished alienation of the person. This was a step towards real freedom, but alienation of labour remained.<sup>1</sup> Personal freedom, too, proved a mere illusion, because there remained economic dependence on the owner of the instruments and objects of labour. The product of labour went to the owner of the means of production, not to the labourer, the producer. Thus, it confronted labour 'as *something alien*, as a *power independent* of the producer'.<sup>2</sup> In the circumstances 'realisation of labour appears as *loss of realisation* for the workers; objectification as *loss of the object and bondage to it*'.<sup>3</sup>

What the worker produces increases the power that dominates and enslaves him. As Marx observed in the initial variant of *Capital*, 'the emphasis is laid not on *objectification*, but on the state of *alienation* [*Entfremdet-, Entäussert-, Veräussertsein*], on the possession of enormous material power, which social labour had itself opposed to itself as one of

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<sup>1</sup> The Constitution of the French Republic of 1793, for example, said: 'No type of labour, activity or commerce may be excluded from the occupation of citizens. Each person may sell his services, his time. But he can neither sell himself nor be sold. The person is an inalienable property.' The point about 'selling his services, his time' meant that, while outlawing sale of a person, it permitted partial sale of his labour power, that is, alienation of his ability. This is the key to the half-baked nature of the bourgeois revolutions.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1975, p. 272.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

its aspects: ownership of this power not by the worker but by the personified conditions of production, i.e., capital'.<sup>1</sup> The product of labour—the object created by man, begins to dominate man: 'the more the worker spends himself,' Marx says, 'the more powerful becomes the alien world of objects which he creates over and against himself'.<sup>2</sup>

After studying factories in Russia in 1908, Lenin calculated the correlation of a capitalist's profit to the wage of a worker. There were then 2,250,000 workers in the country. Their earnings totalled 555,700,000 roubles. The capitalists' profit was 568,700,000 roubles. The average annual wage was something like 246 roubles. In other words, each worker yielded the capitalists a sum of 252 roubles, that is, more than he received himself. Lenin wrote: 'It follows that the worker works *the lesser part* of the day for himself and *the greater part of it* for the capitalist.'<sup>3</sup>

At present, the contrasts are still more staggering. In the mid-nineteenth century United States, for example, a labourer worked something like three-fifth of the day for himself and two-fifth of the day for the capitalist, whereas a hundred years later he worked as much as two-thirds of the day for the capitalist, and just one-third for himself. And since the end of World War II, according

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie (Rohentwurf) 1857-1858*, Berlin, 1953, p. 716.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 272.

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Workers' Earnings and Capitalist Profits in Russia', *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 257.

to Gus Hall in *Imperialism Today*, the rate of exploitation of the working class in the United States increased by more than 70 per cent as a result of the scientific-technological revolution.<sup>1</sup> Official figures show that in just the past ten years this indicator has risen by 17 per cent, and by as much as 29 per cent in the manufacturing industry where the effects of the scientific-technological revolution are more strongly felt and the proportion of skilled workers is higher.

The increase of real wages for some groups of workers seen in the sixties does not conflict with this fact. The concessions the monopolies are compelled to make are more than compensated by the swifter rising mass of profit obtained from the new technology, the inordinate intensification of labour, the super-exploitation of immigrant workers, the inflation, and so on.

The annual growth of profit of the 500 biggest US industrial concerns, *Fortune* reported in a 1976 review, was 18.9 per cent in 1972 and 39 per cent in 1973. Dropping to 12.8 per cent in 1974 and 13.3 per cent in 1975, it rose to 30.4 per cent in 1976. Citing these figures, the French weekly, *Le Monde diplomatique*, pointed to the decline of weekly wages in manufacturing in 1972-3, with no wage movement in 1974-6. 'At the top of the hierarchy things are different,' the journal said. 'The emoluments of directors-general increased an average 17-20 per cent last year (1976—R.K.). Stagnation of the real incomes of hired labour

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<sup>1</sup> See Gus Hall, *Imperialism Today. An Evaluation of Major Issues and Events of Our Time*, New York, 1972, p. 43.

in industry is accompanied with a high level of unemployment (7.7 per cent in 1976 against 5.6 per cent in 1972), which does not seem to be dropping despite changes of political course and economic animation. The million US workers who are out of work since 1973 and see corporation profits rising while they remain unemployed may ask if they will be needed again at least in the future.<sup>1</sup>

This question is doubly justified, since, according to *US News & World Report*, following the slight decline of inflation rates that began in mid-1977, the price curve is expected to go up. The journal estimated that prices would go crazy in 1978. 'Entertainment: Here's one place where the consumer may get a break,' the journal added wryly. "Admission prices are expected to remain stable in 1978," says Joseph G. Alterman, executive director of the National Association of Theatre Owners. And only half of the major-league baseball teams plan to raise ticket prices for their games in 1978, according to a survey by baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn.<sup>2</sup>

This speaks of reduced living standards of which the workers are not always aware. There is interesting evidence to this effect in a report by R. Guibert, a French journalist, in the weekly *La vie ouvrière*. Guibert visited workers' families in Chicago and described two typical cases—the family of highly-paid white toolmaker Joe Finocchio and low-paid black floorsweeper John Ross.

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<sup>1</sup> *Le Monde diplomatique*, July 1977.

<sup>2</sup> *US News & World Report*, January 9, 1978, p. 22.

The home of the former, a jack-of-all-trades, is 'the typical pretty American home', probably best qualified in the writer's caustic remark, 'one cannot imagine a more astonishing concentration of consumer goods known as "durables"'. Finocchio, his wife and two children wallow in their prosperity and are proud of their home. The following conversation ensued between the head of the family and his guest:

Joe, all this is magnificent—

Thank you.

It's magnificent, all this, but how can you afford it? What do you earn at Harvester's?

I get \$5.68 an hour. My take-home pay is about \$200 a week.

Is that enough to buy and keep up this house?

Certainly not. I have two other jobs. I'm at the factory from 7 am to 3.30 pm. That leaves me time for other things.

What other things?

I'm salesman in a liquor store, and Saturdays I tend bar.

How many hours a week do you work?

Forty in the factory and between 20 and 30 at the other places.

Guibert turned to the man's wife. She was ill and did not work.

How do you feel about all this?

He does it for me. He brings all the money home. So....

And you, Joe, are you contented?

I guess so. I have the house I dreamed of and everything that goes with it.

But not the time to enjoy it.

True enough.... A bit later maybe.

Do you have any leisure at all? Do you have a vacation?

We haven't been going out much because of the kids. Now they've grown, and the day before yesterday we went to a show and dined out. Two years ago we went on a vacation to Sicily where I have relatives. But I'm not sure we'll be able to afford a few weeks this year....

Guibert's last question:

Do you have many debts, was much of this bought on instalments?

No, practically nothing. When I want something, I prefer to pay cash. I don't want to be a prisoner of the system.

Joe is a good man, Guibert writes. The worst of it is, he adds, that he's a prisoner of the system all the same, though he does not know it.

In a certain sense, Guibert writes, John Ross's house is the very opposite of Finocchio's. Despite the cleanliness, everything is falling apart. The ceilings in the ground-floor rooms are badly cracked; water pours in when it rains. The bathroom isn't usable any more, and evidently hasn't been for a long time. The furniture and the kitchenware seem to have come from a second hand store. You see many of the gadgets that white families have, but they are like the cast-offs of another world, a wretched parody of the consumer society.

How much do you earn at the factory?

\$150 for a 40-hour week. But \$142 a month goes for the house. My 18-year-old son can't find a job. I get \$36 monthly from Welfare for my granddaughter, because my daughter

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isn't married. And it costs me \$300 a year to send the other children to school.

Do you ever go on vacation?

No. Once, I had two of the boys visit my sister in Saint Louis. Will they ever go again? I don't know. Who can tell? My wife and I have never been out of the Chicago ghetto.

I see you have a good car.

It's a 1966 Pontiac. I've got to have a car.... The factory is 15 miles away.<sup>1</sup>

Ross and his family feel all the social contrasts of US society, especially the racial discrimination (which is the antagonism between labour and capital that the bourgeoisie has shifted to the sphere of relations between people of different colour).

But Guibert's conversations with Finocchio and Ross do not mean that the former is prospering, while the latter is not. Finocchio's 60-70-hour week robs him of the chance to *enjoy* the comfort he has earned, whereas Ross is even unable to *earn* it. In a way, the realities of their lives wipe out the difference between *having* and *not having*. The effects are similar, though the causes are outwardly different.

The proletariat's state of alienation assumes a variety of forms, of which mass unemployment is most typical. In the United States in mid-1975 unemployment stood at something like eight per cent, and at nearly 25 per cent for blacks.

Certainly, this is the most obnoxious form of alienation from their life activity of people able and willing to work. Yet it is organically

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<sup>1</sup> *La vie ouvrière*, May 10, 1972.



implicit in the capitalist social system and is exploited by the ruling class in its economic offensive against the proletariat. A definite degree of unemployment, many bourgeois economists hold, is good for capital, helping to secure competitive, that is more severe, terms of employment (and hence of exploitation), and to avert inflation, which bourgeois scholars unjustly ascribe to rising wages and salaries, the militancy of the working people's political and professional organisations, and the like.<sup>1</sup>

Unemployment, some of them say, is no obstacle to prosperity for the employed. But that is an astonishing display of blindness. They under-rate the pressure unemployment is exerting on wage and salary earners. British economist F.W. Paish notes, for example, that there is a distinct relation between the growth rate of wages and the level of unemployment. His tables and diagrams show that between 1955 and 1959 unemployment in Britain rose from 1 per cent to 2.43, while the annual growth rate of wages declined

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<sup>1</sup> US economist G. Kenneth Galbraith is of a different opinion. 'It should not be forgotten,' he says, 'that conservatives consider unemployment an advantage: it furnishes hands for the most unattractive jobs. Besides, it may impose a certain discipline on society: the jobless are troubled, they ask themselves how they are going to find a job and survive, and hence behave quietly. Certainly, nobody ever says this in so many words. Euphemisms are used: in the United States people have been referring to a "natural unemployment rate" for the past two or three years. This is a formula *Fortune* magazine seized on happily. Its enthusiasm can be shared only by those who have never been out of work themselves. (*Le Nouvel observateur*, April 11-17, 1977).

from 8.2 per cent to 3.1. Between 1960 and 1963 unemployment increased from 1.53 to 2.47 per cent, while the growth rate of wages dropped from 7.4 to 3.6 per cent.

A summary calculation based on this correlation shows that a rise in unemployment from one per cent to two is accompanied by a decline in the growth rate of wages from 9 per cent to 3. An increase in unemployment by just one per cent would therefore mean a decline of the growth rate of wages by slightly over one per cent. In the early sixties, production growth in Britain per gainfully employed was a little below an annual three per cent. To avoid inflation, Paish maintains, the wage increases should have been only a bit over 2.5 per cent.

Calculations based on coefficients drawn from this correlation show that unemployment would have to amount to some 2.25 per cent. Those are the workings of the system based on alienation of labour—a system that owes its existence to the extended reproduction of this alienation.

Here are a few facts.

In 1953, one-fifth of US families with the lowest incomes received 4.9 per cent of the national income, and 4.5 per cent in 1960. The respective percentages in the case of one-fifth of the wealthiest families were 44.7 and 45.7 per cent. 'It is pointed out that the poorest 20 per cent of all families get only about 5 per cent of all pretax personal income—about the same proportion as ten or even twenty-five years ago,' Sanford Rose wrote several years ago. 'On the other hand the richest fifth get about 40 per cent, which

is not much different from what they received in 1947. And so, it is claimed, the US has failed to make measurable progress toward greater economic equality since the end of World War II.<sup>1</sup>

Still more striking contrasts are drawn by James D. Smith of Pennsylvania State University. The top one per cent of adult US wealth-holders, he says, own roughly 25 per cent or more of all personal property and financial assets. Using data collected by the University of Michigan's Survey Research Centre, study director Lewis Mandell estimates that the top five per cent of US families (that is one-twentieth instead of the one-fifth given by Rose) hold upward of 40 per cent of all wealth. The richest 20 per cent, Mandell adds, has three times the net worth of the bottom 80 per cent.

The concentration of wealth increased during the twenties, decreased somewhat from 1929 to the late forties, started rising again in the fifties, and remained fairly stable in the sixties. According to James D. Smith, 'the degree of concentration certainly did not decrease in the last decade. If anything, it increased slightly.' As usual, money continued to make money. Though only one in 20 Americans attributes the source of his prosperity to inheritance, it is a relatively significant factor in the case of the wealthy. Dorothy Projector and Gertrude S. Weiss observe that this is so for 'a substantial portion of total assets' held by 34 per cent of those with annual incomes of \$500,000 or more and

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<sup>1</sup> *Fortune*, December 1972, p. 90.

57 per cent with incomes of \$100,000. 'The clear implication of these findings', they say 'is that the gap between the poorest and the richest Americans continues to widen, even though the population in general has grown much richer since World War II.'<sup>1</sup> The prominent US economist, Herbert Aptheker, points out that in the first twenty years since World War II more than 57 per cent of the national budget was used for purposes of war or war preparations, and that only six per cent was spent on social needs. This ratio is a mirror-reflection of the inhumanity of the present social system in the United States.

Material poverty reigns in US society, Aptheker writes further, with 20 per cent living in appalling conditions and the living standard of another 20 per cent well below the official subsistence minimum.

Referring to obviously minimised official figures, *Time* magazine claims that at present 12 per cent lives below the poverty line against 22 per cent in 1959. It leads off its article, 'Destitute and Desperate in the Land of Plenty', with the words of James W. Compton, Chicago Urban League director: 'If the cities erupt again we will find no safe place on either side of the barricades.' Here is how the article begins: 'The barricades are seen only fleetingly by most middle-class Americans as they rush by in their cars or commuter trains—doors locked, windows closed, moving fast. But out there is a different world, a place of pock-marked streets, gutted tenements and broken hopes. Affluent people know little

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<sup>1</sup> *Business Week*, August 5, 1972.

about this world, except when despair makes it erupt explosively onto Page One or the 7 o'clock news. Behind its crumbling walls lives a large group of people who are more intractable, more socially alien and more hostile than almost anyone had imagined. They are the unreachable: the American underclass.<sup>1</sup>

A similar situation is seen in Britain. Two per cent of the British people, said the New Left's May Day Manifesto 1968, still own 55 per cent of all private wealth, and 10 per cent own 80 per cent. The top one per cent of the British people receive about as much income as the bottom 30 per cent put together.

'The class struggle in Britain sees new eruptions all the time,' writes the West German *Stern*. 'For many years politicians have been trying to moderate the grim social contradictions with more and more money out of the state treasury. There is a steady flow of allowances, benefits and relief money. But by doing this the state has involuntarily fathered a new class, against which all the bitterness is now turning—the prosperous unemployed.'

*Stern* quotes Edward Plimmer, a 45-year-old warehouse worker: 'Are you surprised our country is sick? Are you? But in our country it is better to have no job at all.'<sup>2</sup>

In other words, salvation of the capitalist system (or postponement of its downfall) is sought, among other things, through organised pauperisation of part of the working

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<sup>1</sup> *Time*, 29 August, 1977.

<sup>2</sup> *Stern*, January 27, 1977.

people, artificial inculcation of a parasitical psychology (reminiscent of the Roman plebs), and attempts at reconverting the proletariat from a 'class for itself' into a 'class in itself'. There is, indeed, no limit to the varieties of alienation.

'Selection by money remains pitiless, and is seen at all levels,' writes *Le Monde diplomatique* in 'Capitalism Against Democracy?'. It adds: 'Whole groups of citizens gain little or nothing from the progress of science and technology and from economic progress; even though their living conditions improve, the differential gap separating them from the others—inherent in the capitalist mode of production—is the same if not greater. And this applies to the majority of the working people.

'Their numbers are, in fact, swelled by "new paupers" continuously produced by the capitalist system. Lionel Stolérie estimates that half the persons over 65 (2,600,000), half the skilled workers (1,300,000), most of the unskilled (1,100,000), two-thirds of the service staff (800,000), and the majority of farm labourers (600,000)—a total of 7,200,000 have incomes well below the national average.' And this does not include those whom sociologist Rene Lenoir calls the 'excluded', meaning one Frenchman in five. Strange political rights these, which exclude their possessors from among the citizenry.<sup>1</sup>

The same Sanford Rose, though citing sharp

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<sup>1</sup> See *Le Monde diplomatique*, March 1977. The article by Maurice T. Maschino, from which this passage was taken, is based on research by a group of sociologists, historians, economists, and jurists.

discrepancies in income, endeavours to prove that there has been some progress in postwar US society towards greater economic equality. He refers, among other things, to the lack of consensus on the meaning of the word income, to statistical flaws, and the like. Some economists, he writes, 'contend that any work done by the family, including work done to save money or to avoid spending it, is logically a part of income too. This would include a number of non-market activities like painting and repairing one's home, growing food in the backyard, sewing and mending clothes, and general housework.... Ismail Sirageldin (Johns Hopkins University) found that in 1964 the value of "unpaid output" for the average American family was approximately \$4,000—equal to almost half of its disposable income that year. It is clear that a definition of income that includes this unpaid output results in less reported inequality.'<sup>1</sup>

The method of Sirageldin and Rose suggests, in other words, that working people in the United States should 'augment' their income by self-service.

Now, a few words about wage-earners' participation in the economic turnover of their enterprise through acquisition of shares. This was described in the bourgeois press of the fifties as auguring an era of 'people's capitalism'. But the facts have not been kind to those who believed in it. This 'social partnership' gives a doughnut to some and the hole in the doughnut to others. The working

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<sup>1</sup> *Fortune*, December 1972.

man's capitalist 'partner' can still lower wages and salaries or throw his proletarian 'partner' into the street (even though the latter may have several of the company's shares). The capitalist is still a member of the dominant class and the exploiter. And the income accruing to the worker as shareholder alters little or nothing in his situation. It cannot be the main source of his livelihood and cannot, therefore, relieve him of the need of selling his labour power. The worker remains a proletarian to whom a wretchedly small portion of his unpaid labour is returned—and by no means for altruistic reasons. If capitalists encourage the profit-sharing scheme, they must be benefiting from it. The fact that the worker is being drawn into it only accentuates—rather than eliminates—the abyss between the 'social partners'.

'His participation in a big enterprise undoubtedly *weaves* the small depositor *into the pattern* of that enterprise,' Lenin wrote. 'Who benefits from this link? Big capital does, which extends its transactions by paying the small depositor no more (and often less) than it pays any other lender, and by being *the more independent* of the small depositors, the *smaller* and the more scattered the latter are.... Yet in the event of a failure he loses even his miserable mite. What the abundance of these small depositors signifies is not the decentralisation of big capital but the *strengthening of the power* of big capital, which is able to dispose of even the smallest mites in the "people's" savings. His share in big enterprises does not make the small depositor more independent; on the contrary, he be-



comes *more dependent* on the big proprietor.<sup>1</sup>

Alienation remains. It increases. The workers are steered away from managerial functions, on the one hand, and their estrangement from the affairs of the enterprise is stimulated, on the other.

In the continuous alienation of the products of labour, of the main results, of the coagulum of man's activity, Marx saw a transformation of man's activity into a process that did not belong to him—an unceasing 'self-alienation' of the labour process. 'The worker', he wrote, 'therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself. He feels at home when he is not working, and when he is working he does not feel at home. His labour is therefore not voluntary, but coerced; it is *forced labour*. It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a *means* to satisfy needs external to it.'<sup>2</sup> This is why *the exploiting system tends to instil the attitude that labour is an alien and detestable obligation*. The loathing for working for an exploiter often spreads to work in general. And the worker's moral alienation from labour becomes a concomitant of the material alienation of the product and process of labour.

Production, Marx says, is a specific type of life activity inherent in none but the human species. It is a specific and generic way of life of humans as social creatures. Alienation of labour is therefore alienation

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'From the Economic Life of Russia', *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 95-96.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 274.

of generic life, of the social origin, while its coercive character turns the true human form of life activity into a means of sustaining physical existence. The life activity of humans, their labour, loses its independent significance and value if it yields no immediate utilitarian result. And this augments man's dependence mainly on his physical needs (animal in origin).

The installment-plan life style widespread in the Western bourgeois countries, which creates the appearance of prosperity, is, in effect, a form of such dependence. Most families caught up in this pattern of life become 'prisoners of the system'. In the early sixties the aggregate debt of the people of the United States (exclusive of farmers' debts) for consumer goods bought by installments was \$173,000 million, or \$3,300 per family. The average US family, government estimates show, spent as much as 18 per cent of its net income on paying monthly installments. And in the early seventies, wrote *Business Week*, '10% of all families ... actually have negative wealth—they owe more than they own.'<sup>1</sup>

The malaise is being driven inward, and is becoming chronic. Apart from the millions of unemployed and their families, hundreds of thousands of US citizens are hounded by a sense of insecurity and by the fear of losing property they have not yet fully paid for. Their labour, in the circumstances, is by its social purpose no more than a means of survival. But to perform this limited function, it must also be a means of enriching the

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<sup>1</sup> *Business Week*, August 5, 1972.

capitalist. In other words, it is an indirect function. Creating the riches of the capitalist society, the worker adds to the power of his oppressor, who uses and at once increases his need.

The facts show that Engels was perfectly right to object to the simplistic claim that 'the number and the *misery* of the proletariat increase continuously'. He wrote: 'The organisation of the workers and their constantly growing resistance will possibly check the *increase of misery* to a certain extent. However, what *certainly* does increase is the *insecurity of existence*.'<sup>1</sup>

Speaking of the economically developed capitalist states, which have the basic attributes of modern technical civilisation, we must bear in mind that the alienated character of labour does not rule out the recurrence of the former alienation of the human personality in spite of the traditions of bourgeois democracy. Take the enslavement by the nazis of hundreds of thousands of people during the Second World War. Reducing members of the 'impure' races to the condition of draught animals thoughtlessly performing hard labour was an 'ideal' that inspired the predatory campaigns of the 'master race', the fledglings of Hitler. A mere thirty-odd years ago German fascism set out to destroy millions of recalcitrants and undesirables, to purge the survivors of their human qualities, to sterilise them physically and to emasculate their spirit.

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'A Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme of 1891'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, p. 431.

The forced labour in nazi-occupied territories was a thoroughly considered system. It was envisaged in Goering's 'Green File', which defined the 'principles' of forced labour, that the problem of payment would be reduced to the question of providing the workers with food.

In another no less typical document—the Memo for the Treatment of Foreign Civilian Labourers in the Reich—it said that German labour laws did not apply to foreign labourers. And this: 'No claim to leisure time is given. Eastern women domestic workers may leave the household only when on duty connected with the needs of the household.... Visiting the theaters, restaurants, cinemas, and similar institutions is forbidden.

.. 'Eastern female domestic workers are enlisted for indefinite time.

.. 'Clothing as a rule cannot be supplied.'<sup>1</sup>

*From the standpoint of its historical social content, this attitude to human beings implies absence of an impassable borderline between the slave system and capitalist exploitation. The chances of a revival of slave labour, which can in many cases replace the relatively expensive wage labour, exist under any private property system.*

In effect, it is practised in some of the racist states and the colonial and dependent countries. The 1968 Land Tenure Act, for example, gives an equal amount of land to the black and white population of Rhodesia, although blacks outnumber whites by 21 to 1;

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<sup>1</sup> *Der Prozess gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vor dem Internationalen Militärgerichtshof, Nürnberg, 1947, p. 171.*

furthermore, the land held by the stock population is of worse quality. The Africans' annual cash income from farming dropped from just over £3 per head in 1958 to half that in 1970. The situation of the whites is entirely different, says the British journal *Economist* (March 4, 1972): 'Their half of the country not only comprises the most fertile land with the best rainfall, but also happens to embrace almost all the towns, railways and main roads. When a road passes from white to black land the tarmac frequently stops dead.' The *Economist* cites average annual earnings in the country. Its figures tell their own story: whites earn £ 2,785, Zambians £780, and the blacks of Rhodesia a mere £215.

We find the same in *Jeune Afrique*, a journal appearing in Paris. 'In 1975,' it says, 'the 278,000 whites, Indians and people of mixed ancestry had a total of \$605,900,000, while the 6,100,000 blacks received \$435,700,000. In the modern economic sector the salaries of whites were at least 10.8 times higher than those of Africans.'<sup>1</sup>

The postwar economic growth of another racist state—the South African Republic—has not benefitted the non-white population. Though in the early seventies African, Asian and other coloured workers constituted 77 per cent of the work force in manufacturing (including 58 per cent Africans), their share of the wage packet was less than 40 per cent (and less than 25 in the case of Africans). The correlation of the wages of whites and

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<sup>1</sup> *Jeune Afrique*, October 8, 1976.

Africans has, in effect, been almost the same over the years: it was 5.5:1 in 1960, and 5.4:1 in 1970.

Tony Clifton, an Australian journalist, offers this evidence: 'The most emotionally wearing experience of my life has come just in the last few days—among the aboriginal population of my native land. Now I have seen how we Australians are condemning a whole race of our fellow citizens to short, brutish and miserable lives.'

Clifton accuses the Australian Government in Canberra of responsibility 'for an oppressed minority whose plight is as desperate as any other in the world. Black Australian babies are dying by the hundreds. And most of those who survive their childhood end up being forced to live in despair—the men as drunks and the women as prostitutes.'<sup>1</sup>

*Newsweek* writes: 'More than half of all aborigines are currently unemployed and nearly two-thirds live in abject poverty. Their infant mortality rate is four times that of whites and their life expectancy is only 50 years.... Living mostly in urban slums or tin and tar paper "humpies" in the Outback, they suffer from malnutrition and a host of diseases. Only 4 per cent finish high school and in the entire country there are only 56 attending university. Even those that do get some education are effectively barred from many occupations and find housing in white neighborhoods "unavailable"....

"The blacks are a forgotten people", says Margaret Helman, a social worker in Sydney.

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<sup>1</sup> *Newsweek*, December 25, 1972, p. 20.

"Few whites even see an aborigine, let alone get to know one."<sup>1</sup>

Making the rounds of the capitalist 'paradise' with these Western observers, we see the range and variety of insecurity in bourgeois society, the luckless existence of the bulk of the people: prosperous as consumers, and destitute in spirit; poor materially and culturally; denied the ability to appreciate another individual as a human being; protesting but unable to alter things, etc. That is the reality of the *world of alienation* that so facetiously describes itself as the 'free world' and that is still to be transformed by revolution into a *world of freedom*.

## **2. Expansion of the Sphere of Exploitation and Its Social-Political Consequences**

There have been visible changes in the economically developed capitalist countries after the first, and especially the second, world wars. The example of nations on the socialist path exercises a growing influence on public opinion and on the consciousness and class attitude of the working people. Threatened by moral and political turmoil, the monopoly bourgeoisie is manoeuvring to create the impression that exploitation is becoming less oppressive.

Exploiters in many Western industrial countries have become more cautious in encroaching on the vital needs of the workers. Coupled with the strong influence of the socialist

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<sup>1</sup> *Newsweek*, February 21, 1977.

world system, this has been brought about by scientific and technical progress and the economic, political and ideological struggle of the working class which sees state-constituted socialism as a pillar of support. The relative improvement of the working people's condition—in physical terms—has encouraged bourgeois propaganda for the nth time to campaign against the 'validity' of Marx's theory of exploitation. Its contentions to this effect repose on the banal claim that the conditions of capitalist production in the final third of the twentieth century are not the same as those analysed by Marx over a hundred years ago. It is the old story all over again—a story our opponents prefer not to recall: their attack is much like the one mounted against Marxism after Engels's death by Eduard Bernstein, revisionist number one.

'Marx ... spoke of the growth of poverty, degradation, etc., indicating at the same time the counteracting tendency and the real social forces that alone could give rise to this tendency,' Lenin wrote, and amplified: 'Marx's words on the growth of poverty are fully justified by reality: first, we actually see that capitalism has a tendency to engender and increase poverty, which acquires tremendous proportions when the above-mentioned counteracting tendency is absent. Secondly, poverty grows, not in the physical but in the social sense, i.e., in the sense of the disparity between the increasing level of consumption by the bourgeoisie and consumption by society as a whole, and the level of the living standards of the working people.... Thirdly and lastly, the passage on increasing



impoverishment remains perfectly true in respect of the "border regions" of capitalism, the border regions being understood both in the geographical sense (countries in which capitalism is only beginning to penetrate and frequently not only gives rise to physical poverty but to the outright starvation of the masses) and in the political-economic sense (handicraft industries and, in general, those branches of economy in which backward methods of production are still retained).<sup>1</sup> This is borne out by the situation in capitalism's 'peripheral' regions, where capital is still as intemperate and has not given up its old methods of exploitation. The mechanism of 'impoverishment' in the economically developed capitalist countries is far more complicated and obscure. Mere examples are obviously insufficient to clarify it. The fairly high per capita consumption figures tend to disguise the fact that in mass terms poverty is growing not in the physical but in the social sense—an incontrovertibly new development that had not been in evidence when Marxism was still in its formative stage. That is *all* the apologists of capitalism have on the 'credit' side for 'demolishing' the monolith of Marx's doctrine. But it does not impair Marx in the least. On the contrary. The mounting radicalism of the rising generations in the 'old' capitalist countries proves it.

The progressive youth movement in the Western countries attained unprecedented di-

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Review. Karl Kautsky. *Bernstein und das sozialdemokratische Programm. Eine Antikritik*', *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 201.

mensions in the late sixties. And international Marxist-Leninist thought faced a set of problems requiring a prompt solution.

Not only the objectively inevitable conflict between the youth movement and the bourgeois way of life, but also the increasingly clear understanding of this conflict by even larger sections of the youth, their rejection of the exploiting order and the oppression of the spirit their fathers had been content to suffer, became an undeniable social fact.

This enlightenment of the youth of the sixties began in the absence of any close organisational and ideological ties with the Communists. Mostly, the so-called New Left acted autonomously, opposing the avowedly bourgeois organisations, and sometimes the proletarian parties as well.

Marxists-Leninists naturally welcomed the *'self-inception' of anti-capitalist radicalism among the younger generation.*

And yet Marxists who refused to jump to overly optimistic conclusions were a thousand times right. In the absence of joint work with communist organisations and a scientifically conceived world outlook, the New Left, despite its apparent success, was in fact stranded in an ideological vacuum. This exposed it to counter-revolutionary influences, to adventurist sentiment and 'leftist' rhetoric, leading to a senseless waste of physical and moral energy and discrediting the substance of the struggle.

It is useful to recall this, because German philosopher Herbert Marcuse, who had emigrated to Switzerland upon Hitler's advent to power and later moved to the United States,

tried to fill the afore-mentioned vacuum. And many 'left' student leaders associated their theoretical views with him, who is often described as a 'neo-Marxist'.

The point of departure in Marcuse's system is the present-day 'industrial society', with the United States as the classical 'model'. He depicts it as a society in which the individual is more oppressed than at any other time in history. Yet the hands of the opposition are tied, because technical progress has engendered an exceptionally high productivity of labour and a high standard of living. The modern mass media (press, radio, television, cinema, and all varieties of advertising), which Marcuse styles 'the opinion factory', create 'freedoms' and 'demands' artificially, while the existence of different political parties and of newspapers of different orientations turns all democratic gains into instruments of domination. Since guidance in society has been shunted more and more to a special group of managers, workers are oppressed first and foremost through the technical apparatus. The picture of the industrial society à la Marcuse is completed by the impact of automation, which gives precedence to psychic energy over physical and levels out workers and office employees, hindering the gauging of the degree of exploitation of either group.

The inevitable growth of consumption, Marcuse holds, predetermines the necessary disappearance of the forces of social protest. The resulting 'paralysis of criticism' that allegedly grips the 'industrial society' transforms it, in effect, into a 'society without

opposition'.<sup>1</sup> With the 'disappearance of social poverty', of which Marcuse has not the slightest doubt, the motives for class struggle are reduced to nil, and the revolutionary impulses of the working class diminish. The proletariat—not only the workers' aristocracy, but the whole class—is integrated in the 'welfare society'. The working class, Marcuse writes, ceases to be 'the historical subject of the revolution'. The 'industrial society' is opposed only by those who are in substance outside its pale (those who have not 'integrated'), i.e., the racially oppressed minorities and the deprived and rejected.

The decisive means whereby 'industrial society' is able to iron out all conflicts, Marcuse holds, is the 'repressive tolerance' engendered by the growing satisfaction of needs, on the one hand, and the technological and spiritual levelling of people, on the other. As he sees it, the only way to end this state of affairs is to produce an explosion, a 'total negation'. To accept the rules of the game is to integrate with the system. Marcuse rebukes the communist parties of France and Italy for allegedly acting as physicians by the bedside of the sick capitalist system.

Capitalism's structural changes, Marcuse claims, have brought about a situation in which the class contradictions are no longer essential, on the one hand, while the leaders of the socialist world occupy themselves with eliminating the lag behind capitalism, on the other. Hence, he concludes, the role of the

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<sup>1</sup> Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, Boston, 1964, pp. IX-X.

world proletariat has fallen to the peoples of the developing countries. But he does not take this Maoist contention at its face value and tries to align it with the Marxist precept that the socialist revolution has the best chances in the industrially developed countries. Who does Marcuse appeal to here? How does he disentangle this self-created contradiction?

He focuses on the necessary revolutionary potential of the black ghettos and the students, whom he describes as the catalysts of the future society. They are the only ones he considers capable of breaching the capitalist system at the present time. To their number he also adds a section of the intelligentsia.

Marcuse's reactionary orientation becomes more than apparent when he refers to the student movement's relation to other political trends. Indiscriminately, he accuses all the major communist parties in the capitalist countries of reconciliation with the existing 'industrial society', and urges the 'left' student radicals to dissociate themselves from the communist movement. The latter, however, must unquestionably find an approach to them and blend their 'revolutionary élan' with the working-class struggle. The negation of the leading role of the revolutionary vanguard (party, organisation) implicit in Marcuse's system, coupled with his accent on the important role of the 'active (intellectual) minority' and his 'total rejection' of the 'industrial society', is stimulating 'anarcho-communist' sentiment. This is clear even without a detailed examination of his views.

And yet this generally incontestable deduction will not obviate Marcuse's adverse influence. We must counter the basic points of his concept with scientific revolutionary Marxism and the facts of the present times.

Has bourgeois society undergone any substantial changes as a society based on gratuitous appropriation of part of the labour of the hired work force (the bulk of the people) by the bourgeois class (the minority) which owns all the basic means of production either directly or indirectly (through its class state)? It is this question concerning capitalism's most essential social relationship—the exploitative relationship—that provides the answer to the questions raised by Marcuse. Including these: Does social poverty disappear in the 'industrial society', and with it the stimuli of the working people's revolutionary struggle? Does the opposition diminish or grow? What social groups are the 'subject of revolution'?

Marcuse examines the consequences of the latest scientific and technical achievements as integrated in capitalist production. But a closer look at his analysis will show that he has overlooked the main point: What new elements does the use of the achievements of the scientific-technical revolution inject into the forms of capitalist exploitation? Here Marcuse refers only casually to the fact that scientific and technical progress augments the significance of 'psychic energy' as compared to physical, and this only to prove that exploitation becomes 'invisible' and consequently, to follow his logic, ceases to be the principal motive of the workers' revolutionary struggle. This fact, however, should be the

point of departure for an in-depth analysis of the new forms of impoverishment in the conditions of modern capitalism, and of the growing social base of the socialist revolution. The expanding use in production of the achievements of science and technology naturally impels a rapid growth of mental operations, an 'intellectualisation' of labour. Under capitalism this means that *not the physical, but the mental faculties of the worker are gradually becoming the main object of exploitation.* The emergence of this new source of profit has greatly extended the Marxist conception of the mechanics of capitalist oppression and of the alienation of labour. Nor has it altered in the slightest (and has rather reaffirmed) the conclusions drawn more than a century ago by the author of *Capital*.

The role and share of mental labour (the intelligentsia) as an object of exploitation is increasing. This means that *the labour of more and more groups of participants in production is being drawn into the sphere of exploitation.* On the other hand, opportunities are increasing in the industry of the developed capitalist countries for using forms of social enslavement based on a *re-orientation* of exploitation, which had previously tired chiefly the workers' muscles, to the less visible (for workers) but more productive (for exploiters) wearing of the nervous system. A study of this latter fact yields an essentially different answer to Marcuse's (for him no more than rhetorical) question: Does social poverty disappear in the 'industrial society'?

There are official US admissions that poverty survives in the literal or 'old' sense of the

word in the very society that Marcuse takes as the classical model of the 'industrial society'. But these may not be enough. Perhaps when claiming that social poverty has disappeared, Marcuse means that the working class in economically developed capitalist countries is in considerably better circumstances than before, that on the whole its living standard is higher than in the beginning of the century, and higher in some ways than in the socialist countries. But does that mean that economic need has ceased to be a pervasive and palpable fact of the working people's life and struggle?

Surely, no impartial observer will claim that most workers have the standard of life the modern productive forces should assure them. Here is evidence of conflict typical of all industrially developed bourgeois states.

The prosperity of wage workers has risen over prewar as a result of scientific and technical progress, the struggles of the organised working class, and the advances of the socialist world. That is a well-known and undeniable fact, and an indisputably positive one. But we should also see the other side of it: some groups of workers have become reluctant to cross swords with the capitalists. Does this mean the grounds for conflict have disappeared? Certainly not. Capitalist monopoly profits have risen incomparably higher than have the workers' living standards. And the conclusions flowing from this comparison torpedo Marcuse's notion that the causes for class struggle, and hence the revolutionary potential of the working class, have eroded. The first and simplest conclusion is that the



degree of exploitation in factories and other enterprises has increased, since this is the only possible explanation for the increased share of the social wealth appropriated by capitalists.

True, Marcuse does not dispute this. But mere acquiescence is much too little if the philosopher undertakes to explore present-day bourgeois society from a revolutionary angle.

Having 'discovered' a new, more effective source of profit in stepped-up exploitation of the mental energy of his work force, the capitalist becomes aware of the disadvantages to himself of depressing consumption. Besides, since modern technology yields higher profits from skill than from physical energy, the monopolist prefers workers of a relatively high educational standard.

The bourgeoisie may in some cases even have a stake in a widening of the standard needs of the masses, and in satisfying them. *Yet the new, rapidly growing demands impelled by the general rise of education and by the scientific-technical revolution are well beyond the range of these standard needs.*

The restrictions placed on consumption are not abolished any more than exploitation. But these days they are aimed mainly at limiting the *social* rather than physical development of the exploited, though social development is becoming an unavoidable consequence and condition of effective production. And it is only in the absence of a *direct quantitative* measure of the degree to which social needs are satisfied that the bourgeoisie can conceal the 'secret' of the exploitation prac-

tised in the latter half of the twentieth century. Bourgeois propagandists take advantage of this to argue capitalism's ability to raise the living standard. This contention they buttress with comparisons of the *physical volume* of commodities consumed in the industrially developed Western states and in some of the socialist countries. This tends to distract the attention of people in capitalist countries from *the increasing social-cultural under-consumption prevailing among the working people* and to obscure the considerable *lag in the development of individuals* behind the possibilities *already created* for this by modern production. It is strange that Marcuse, who claimed to be the ideologue of the 'rebellious' intellectuals, overlooked this point in his search of new impulses for revolutionary struggle.

*Some of the facts of the working people's social-cultural under-consumption are apparent, others are adroitly concealed.* Some have been given expression in political slogans and demands (take the actions against class discrimination frequent in higher schools in capitalist countries).

With substantial funds having been worked into the value of labour power to cover a wide range of new social-cultural needs, the conception of social poverty is bound to change. And none but Maoist rowdies of the 'cultural revolution' variety will maintain that social poverty vanishes once you have filled your belly, have put clothes on your back, and the like. *In some countries capitalism is now able to dispense with the profit it could derive from the undernourishment of the masses. But it will*

*not ignore the opportunity of profiting from their chronic cultural starvation. The form of alienation has changed, its essence is the same.*

The social-cultural under-consumption of the working people is no longer simply a problem of class discrimination against chiefly manual workers who are fenced off from cultural values. The needs of present-day capitalist production, the growth of science into a direct productive force, have given rise to a large stratum of intellectuals whose interests are being increasingly subordinated to those of capital, and whose social features distinguishing them from the main mass of hired labour are gradually being eradicated. And thus *the degree of satisfaction of social-cultural needs is becoming the chief and immediate criterion of the impoverishment or enrichment of these hired labourers*, whose essential value derives less from the value of their hands than from that of their brain. Yet capitalist production offers them neither material welfare nor real guarantees. First, because the intelligentsia has ceased to be a narrow social stratum that can be 'accommodated' at the expense of the workers. Second, and more important, because by enlarging the army of workers by brain in order to expand the production of commodities, capitalism is devaluating the human, spiritual content of intellectual activity.

Man lives not by bread alone may be an ancient dictum, but it is highly topical today. Apart from a measure of prosperity, the present state of the productive forces requires from the worker a high cultural and technical standard. The needs whose satisfaction the

capitalist restricted a century ago and those he leaves unattended today as the source of his profit, are disparate in origin, form, and the objects on which they are focussed. Yet they are equally vital for the personality *if it is to keep abreast of the present cultural-historical development*. The changed form and orientation of exploitation does not alter the Marxist concept of the alienation of labour. On the contrary, it provides new facts to confirm it.

The discontent and moral depletion of some sections of working people in the West, notably the intelligentsia, are so apparent and widespread that they have given rise to a literary trend represented by writers of divergent outlook but writing of the same thing: the impoverishment of the spirit of the intellectual parallel with a growth of the mass of inanimate objects created by the 'consumer society'. Their many novels express the mounting hostility even of those groups of intellectuals and near-intellectual middle strata which have only recently been bourgeois society's dependable if not always active supporters.

The protests issuing from these social groups round out the picture of the growing opposition forces in present-day capitalist society. As before, the main one of these forces is the working class. With the progress of the scientific-technical revolution and the development of farm labour into a variety of capitalist industrial labour the working class is gradually absorbing the non-exploiter section of farmers. Furthermore, with science turning into a direct productive force the bulk of the

engineers and technicians, the so-called technical intelligentsia or, as Lenin described it, the 'engineer proletariat' adjoins the contemporary working class as a force identical to it in its relation to the means of production, its manner of earning a living (salary), and its relation to the bourgeois class (as a source of surplus value). The working class is being reinforced by members of new trades and professions, by new groups of exploited engendered by the specific qualities of modern production and the economic divorcement of the bulk of society from the means and objects of labour.

Observers agree that the share of non-manual labour in the hired work force is growing steadily.

In the present conditions most of the engineers and technicians have practically no private property. Engineers sell their brain to capitalists like most workers sell their hands. And as a result of the changes in their social status there is a distinct tendency towards proletarianisation. At present, most engineers have no prospects of ever altering what is in fact their proletarian condition.

Thus, in the setting of the scientific-technical revolution capitalist production is begetting a mass of people of a proletarian status and engaged in mental labour. It derives ever greater surplus value from their intellectual power, but also objectively creates an immense and continuously growing mass of cultural needs. These are ceasing to be the privilege of a restricted and basically bourgeois minority, and are the vital purpose and aim of a new and numerous army of exploited. The opposi-

tion to the exploiting bourgeois social system is growing broader, for though it engenders new needs, it has failed in the case of the majority to create conditions for their satisfaction. The immediate aim of the capitalist mode of production—increasing value—is at variance with the absolute aim of production: the manufacture of goods to satisfy human needs. This means that *the crisis of the bourgeois mode of production is also directly becoming a crisis of intellectual production*. Discontent has spread not only among workers by hand, but also workers by brain. Capitalism's main contradiction is becoming universal not only in principle, but also in practice. Most students, who have grown into a conspicuous group in the social structure of modern society, are also being drawn into its orbit.

In the past, students, like intellectuals, were a small social stratum connected with the capitalist minority in origin and their future social role. In a way, they were an 'elite'. At present, capitalist production draws on the broad 'middle' and even 'lower' strata, whose future is insecure, to meet its great demand for intellectual workers. When they finish their education most students have no choice but to enter the ranks of 'intellectual proletarians'. And when they enter the labour market they feel as alienated as the worker, and as subject as he is, or even more, to the fluctuations of that market.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 'It's a bomb with a lighted fuse that could explode at any time,' said University of Catania sociologist Francesco Alberoni about what he described as the disillusioned (young) generation. According to European Community figures, 38 per cent of the

Sometimes the true meaning of the youth and student actions in the West was concealed by their outer resemblance to a conflict of generations. And it is quite true that under the impact of scientific and technical progress, the spread of new forms of exploitation, and the strong revolutionising influence of the socialist world on the internal life of capitalist countries, the social status and outlook of large sections of the petty and even middle bourgeoisie and intelligentsia from which the bulk of students originates, have changed substantially. But this only means that the conflicts erupting between different generations within this changing social stratum are of social origin and not necessarily traceable to age differences.

Marxists-Leninists trace the other reason for the sometimes very sharp social involvement of the younger working people and the relative indifference of some sections of older working people to the transformation of human needs. Satisfaction and non-satisfaction of needs has always been the mainspring of the movement of the masses.

The fact that they are now able to meet their 'old' needs, dating to the twenties and thirties, makes a far stronger impression on the relatively aged section of working people, who have experienced the hardships of wartime, than it does on the rising generations. Embarking on life at the level of prosperity attained by their elders, the younger generations react

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more than one million French unemployed are under the age of 25, 44 per cent in Britain, almost 30 in West Germany, and at least one-third in Italy (*Time*, December 13, 1976).

much more sharply to the restraints imposed on their development by the capitalist system. They are intuitively aware both of the steeply higher value of skilled labour power, and of the fact that the capitalist class does not reimburse the necessary cost of its reproduction (chiefly the cost of education). Hence, they angrily reject pleas for class reconciliation as expressed in the trite 'maxim' of the many-faced petty bourgeois: 'Be content with what you've got. When we were your age we had it much worse.'

The young are far less inhibited than their parents by the *workaday causes of political opportunism*—the refrigerator, TV set, motor-car, or house, often bought on the instalment plan. Like the revolutionary section of the proletariat of older age, the young worker or future working intellectual is aware that despite the high degree of economic growth, capitalism has resolved none of the acute social contradictions—those between labour and capital, luxury and poverty, and education and ignorance. On the contrary, he knows that it has engendered new conflicts, including conflicts in the sphere of mental activity. For him, the staggering scientific and technical progress achieved in the lifetime of one generation only accentuates the deformity, *obsolescence*, and reactionary conservatism of the capitalist social system.

The changing consciousness of the youth is visibly influenced by the massive political and ideological work of the Marxist-Leninist parties, on the one hand, and the experience of the socialist world system, which is repatterning social relations in the interests of the



working people and fighting to resolve the difficult problems created by present-day technical, scientific and cultural progress, on the other.

Determining and defining the needs of modern bourgeois society, coupled with analysis of their structure, is therefore indispensable if we want to know the conditions underlying the formation of the revolutionary consciousness of the worker of today. Marcuse's referring to these problems would have been more than welcome if he had not put the cart before the horse in defining them. He takes for granted that 'the industrial society' satisfies the 'vitally necessary needs' of the working class and other working people, and urges new needs to be cultivated which developed capitalism is unable to meet. But what satisfied 'vitally necessary needs' does Marcuse have in mind? The 'revolt' of students and a considerable portion of the intelligentsia against the old 'order' is clear evidence that their cultural and intellectual needs have not been met. And the cultural needs of the modern working class are either entirely ignored or reduced to the minimum essential for capitalist reproduction.

Perhaps (Marcuse wants to say) that bourgeois society satisfies all the material needs of the working people. But in that case he is reducing the wide range of human (individual and social) needs to a limited set of the most essential individual physical requirements. This approach would be understandable if it reposed on candidly bourgeois 'common sense'. But it is intolerable in theory, especially one coming from a man who professes

to be the modern interpreter of Karl Marx. It is therefore reasonable to ask if Marcuse himself hasn't fallen prey to the bourgeois 'opinion factories' which he himself has exposed and which tell people day after day that they have never had it so good in the capitalist paradise.

Exhaustive theoretical research is quite superfluous to pinpoint the wide range of material needs not satisfied by modern capitalism. Many of these needs are pointed up these days by the practical struggles of the working class, other sections of working people, and the students, by their actions for broader rights of the trade unions and other mass organisations, including participation in management and public control over the rates and patterns of production, over hiring and firing; for the owners' greater responsibility in meeting the social needs of their employees, in assuring the future of employees jeopardised in capitalist conditions by technical progress, and in retraining workers made redundant by retooling and modernisation; for a democratic reform of higher education, and the like. The working-class parties in the industrially developed countries cover these demands in their political programmes, which envisage democratic control over the economic and governmental social policies, and over national planning.

Another vital material need of every person—a need largely neglected in the bourgeois environment—is to be assured free and creative work. The technical conditions of production that could satisfy this need have already matured in the framework of modern

capitalist production under the impact of the scientific and technical revolution.

All these (old and new) needs ignored by the 'industrial' and every other variety of capitalist society, do not have to be 'cultivated', for they already exist. And it is up to all truly revolutionary forces to bring them to the notice, the *social consciousness*, of all sections of working people. As a *known reality* embedded in the consciousness of the revolutionary masses this constitutes the true, deep-seated and powerful impulse of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and its allies.

True, the understanding of many of the new needs as stimuli of revolutionary struggle against capitalism does not come either quickly or easily. It is obstructed, among other things, by the bourgeois demagogy that the physical and some of the cultural needs of working people are being effectively satisfied by modern capitalism. The other obstacles are youth, and the low degree of maturity of part of the new detachments of the modern proletariat and democratic intelligentsia. This makes the essentially class-oriented educational work of the communist and workers' parties, the political vanguards of the working people, all the more important and rewarding. And it is therefore doubly necessary to combat the influence on the revolutionary movement of workers, intellectuals and students of the half-baked, only slightly touched up 'left' and right opportunist theories that willy-nilly obscure the new forms of capitalist exploitation, and minimise the leading role of the proletariat as capitalism's grave-

digger and chief architect of the future of humanity.

The working class of today has a good knowledge of the objective laws governing the development of society. It is the beneficiary of the mature political leadership afforded by the communist parties, and in some countries plays a prominent role in social, political and cultural affairs. The present and future of the working class is anything but idyllic—it holds the prospect of grim day-to-day struggle. And that is the guarantee of its ultimate victory. Straining for victory, it is not inclined to give up any of its conquered rights and freedoms, already curtailed by the bourgeoisie, or to fall prey to despair *à la* Marcuse and plunge into a seemingly redeeming revolt of the disinherited.

The very substance of Marcuse's views contradicts the requirements of the scientific revolutionary theory and should be firmly rejected despite the pertinent attacks on present-day capitalism contained in his works. Marcuse's views should be rejected along with his claim to a critical revolutionary and socialist conceptualisation of the modern world. But this does not apply to the revolutionary section of students who, though holding erroneous theoretical views, are fighting might and main against the abominations of modern bourgeois society.

Though critical of the excessively impulsive radical youth, its impatience, political simplicity and utopianism, which often make it the victim of provocations, it is farthest from the Communists' mind to repulse it. They stand by the youth to the finish in the con-

sistently revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie. They encourage its selfless dedication, knowledge and energy, orienting it on the final destruction of the private-property society, social inequality and alienation. In their attitude to opposition and revolutionary movements in the capitalist society of today, Marxists-Leninists are as devoid of sectarianism and dogmatism as they were at the birth of scientific communism.

We know from the history of the revolutionary movement that 'ultra-leftism' does not usually as a rule come alone. Opportunism has always been a two-faced game. Ultra-leftism is either a reaction to rightist tendencies or, conversely, the breeding ground for rightist deviations. It is not surprising, therefore, that the other side of the coin with Marcuse's likeness bears the characteristic profile of right revisionist Roger Garaudy.

This prolific man of letters who had long been a member of the French Communist Party, and was expelled from it, has gone through a cosmic evolution from dialectical materialism to attempts at blending Marxism and Kantianism, from professions of scientific atheism to attempts at blending Marxism with clericalism.

Garaudy's excursions into theory under the 'modest' signboard, as he put it himself, of re-orientating the history of mankind could not, of course, fail to touch on the social structure of modern capitalist society, particularly the relationship of the working class and the intelligentsia. More, this aspect of the matter was central to his anti-Marxist disquisitions.

Garaudy's books, *Pour un modèle français du socialisme* (1968), *Le grand tournant du socialisme* (1969), *Toute la vérité* (1971) and *Reconquête de l'espoir* (1971), do not lack in declarations about the working class being the hegemon of the world revolutionary process in the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism and the scientific-technical revolution. But they also contain ambiguities and reservations that betray their elitist, technocratic and anti-proletarian petty-bourgeois orientation laced with virulent anti-socialism and anti-Sovietism.

On the surface Garaudy's concept is incompatible with Marcuse's. In his own way, Garaudy acknowledges that the structure of the working class has broadened, that it encompasses persons of new trades and professions engendered by scientific and technical progress—workers by brain. 'In our time,' he writes, 'the concept "working class" extends to the new vital forces of the nation, and notably to those sections of intellectuals who are organically begot and developed by the very development of science, technology and economy, and who constitute a more and more important element of the "collective worker". The working class is thus at the head of what Gramsci described as "a new historical bloc", and within its Party these new sections should feel "at home" and play their specific role just as they play a specific role in the "collective worker" who is the motor of development in our societies.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> R. Garaudy, *Pour un modèle français du socialisme*, Paris, 1968, p. 22.

But to what 'new vital forces of the nation' does Garaudy extend the concept 'working class'?

First of all to the students, for whom he displays a special predilection. Garaudy asks how to define their class status—by the past (their social origin) or the future (their prospective occupation)—and chooses the future. For some reason he overlooks the most essential point, namely, the present. This is contrary to Garaudy's own reminder that 'Marx does not define class status by the original background, but by the place one occupies in the process of production'.<sup>1</sup>

Whatever they may become in due course the students do not, as a rule, occupy any place in the process of production. But for Garaudy this is evidently a 'trifle' compared to his wish of 'integrating' the students into the working class.

Garaudy's own philosophical remark sheds some light on this type of 'methodology'. In the human reality, he holds, the possible is part, and moreover the chief and characteristic part, of the real. One can only wonder why Garaudy fails to reckon with the Marxist distinction between *abstract* and *concrete* possibility, and between *possibility* and *reality*. By so doing he only creates a philosophical fog. Lenin wrote: 'Marxism takes its stand on the facts, and not on possibilities.

'A Marxist must, as the foundation of his policy, put *only* precisely and unquestionably demonstrated *facts*....

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<sup>1</sup> R. Garaudy, *Op. cit.*, p. 272; *Toute la vérité* p. 32.

'In my opinion, *you* are confusing the possible (about which it was *not* I who began talking!!) with the real, when you think that the recognition of a possibility allows us to alter our tactics. That is the height of illogicality.'<sup>1</sup>

This is the explanation Lenin gave to one of his correspondents. And it is hard to exaggerate the value of these principles when examining social relations and determining kindred social forces that could act as a single political force. Yet Garaudy is at loggerheads with this approach. For him the wish is father to the thought. Blithely, he turns his back on Marxism-Leninism.

Speaking of the prospects of his 'new historical bloc' in the United States, Garaudy shows whom he has in mind apart from the students as the 'new vital forces of the nation' and thereby the 'working class'. Since 'the ruling class and the middle classes have lost confidence in their own values, as evidenced by the conflict in the universities where their children are studying', Garaudy says, 'engineers, technicians, administrative staff and a large number of intellectuals doubtless play the prevalent role in this assemblage. This has its objective reasons: the new structure of the productive forces and the predominant role played by the organised intelligentsia.'<sup>2</sup>

This interpretation of the present social scene is really a cautious attempt almost imperceptible to the uninitiated to infer by

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'To N. D. Kiknadze', *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 242.

<sup>2</sup> R. Garaudy, *Le grand tournant du socialisme*, Paris, 1969, pp. 80-81.



references to 'the new structure of the productive forces' the transfer of the vanguard role in society from the working class to the growing contingent of engineers and technicians. Garaudy is unconcerned by the problem of implanting the proletarian consciousness in this milieu, and fusing it with the organised working class. He is more concerned with the 'organised intelligentsia', on which he pins all his hope. This is where he converges with Marcuse, relegating to the background the main nucleus of the proletariat and elevating the growing stratum of technical specialists and even the middle strata. 'The radical change in the United States will not be brought about by the victory of one of the two parties over the other (one of the parties implied is evidently the US working class—*R.K.*), but by the combination of social forces aspiring to give the system (the existing system?—*R.K.*) a new goal.'<sup>1</sup> No bourgeois liberal would hesitate to subscribe to these words.

Among those on whom Garaudy lays his bets are the administrators, 'a large part of the managerial staff in public and private industry'.<sup>2</sup> He does not delve into the specific aspects of their place in the bourgeois production machine, and the difference between their functions and interests and those of rank-and-file engineers and technicians, much less those of the workers.

The fact that Garaudy ignores the antagonism between personal identification with the enterprise (in the case of the albeit hired but

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 243.

privileged minority) and the sense of tenuous ties with it (in the case of the bulk of the workers by hand and brain) only points up the fact that he has abandoned the class standpoint. His ideas of fraternisation between those who faithfully serve monopoly capital and those whose nervous and muscular energy is exploited for profit, looks novel in word only. It is plagiarism pure and simple, repeating the old talk about labour-capital harmony with just the one difference that the capitalist situation of the administrator (with his bourgeois way of life) is adroitly camouflaged by the form of his employment, which is the same as that of the proletarian. They do not own the means of production, says Garaudy of capitalist administrators, but does not say that they *own money*. Yet in the capitalist environment ownership of money does not differ in social effect from ownership of the means of production and is, in substance, only its *converted form*. False throughout is Garaudy's claim that irrespective of living standard and mentality, this owner of money 'has no objective interests differing' in principle from those of the working class'.<sup>1</sup> Not surprisingly, Garaudy was driven to the wall in the polemics over this point.

In his later works, *Toute la vérité* and *Reconquête de l'espoir*, Garaudy makes 'corrections' in what he wrote in *Pour un modèle français du socialisme* and *Le grand tournant du socialisme*. Out of a thousand varieties of intellectuals,

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<sup>1</sup> R. Garaudy, *Le grand tournant du socialisme*, p. 243.

he writes, some have completely integrated with the ruling class, and its directors-general and big-shot technocrats. Among persons belonging to the liberal professions, he adds, there are those who belong to the middle strata. But this does not alter the concept as a whole. The albeit wavy line of substituting a *strategic alliance* of the working class with indefinitely broad strata of intellectuals and employees for the *tactical alliance* with non-proletarian strata, remains the same.

Garaudy does not go back on his concept of 'unity' with non-proletarian strata which, he says, 'may today be considered in terms of a direct fusion of social strata, since there are no stable and well constructed parties to be their conscious representatives'.<sup>1</sup> In short, he still repudiates proletarian class partisanship in the Marxist-Leninist sense. And that, Lenin says, is tantamount 'to completely disarming the proletariat *in the interests of the bourgeoisie*. It all adds up to that petty-bourgeois diffuseness and instability, that incapacity for sustained effort, unity and organised action, which, if encouraged, must inevitably destroy any proletarian revolutionary movement. From the standpoint of communism, repudiation of the Party principle means attempting to leap from the eve of capitalism's collapse ... not to the lower or the intermediate phase of communism, but to the higher'.<sup>2</sup>

Opportunist 'contortions' are typical of the transitional epoch. Sometimes they originate

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "'Loft-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder', *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 43-44.

from incorrect estimates of incipient social change in capitalist countries, sometimes from under-estimation of specific social changes in the socialist world. Often, they are due to the fact that principles applicable to countries of one social system are applied in analyses of processes in countries of another social system. As a rule, they are not purely academic miscalculations and have class interests behind them or recurrences of petty-bourgeois thinking, which must be promptly detected and exposed.

### 3. Marxism on Alienation

'An immediate consequence of the fact that man is estranged from the product of his labour, from his life activity, from his species-being is the *estrangement of man from man*,' Marx wrote. 'When man confronts himself, he confronts the *other* man. What applies to a man's relation to his work, to the product of his labour and to himself, also holds true of a man's relation to the other man, and to the other man's labour and object of labour.'<sup>1</sup>

The reproduction by modern capitalism of the basis for alienation and the evolution of bourgeois society, which go hand in hand, create an endless succession of new contradictions. Alienation has many faces. It occurs between old and young, between educated and semi-literate, white and 'coloured', between persons in creative and non-creative

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Collected Works, Vol. 3, p. 277.

occupations, between managers and workers, civilians and servicemen, doves and hawks, etc. The ruling elite makes the most of this. It has just two remedies for the malaises of bourgeois society—local anesthesia by means of minute economic injections or psychological processing, on the one hand, and diverting public attention to those parts of the diseased body that are the least associated with the causes of the disease, on the other. This is done to avoid a far-reaching surgical operation.

On the face of it, alienation of labour has a pernicious effect on just the working people. It appears as though the exploiters who appropriate the product are thereby enriched, and have every opportunity for self-improvement as personalities. But it is the dialectics of the process that since the prosperity of the propertied classes reposes on alienated labour, this cripples and dehumanises them as well. Appropriation of another man's labour engenders flaws in the psychology of the exploiter and rouses aversion to the real human life activity. On this plane, the bourgeois as a type is often an inferior personality. 'The self-increase of capital—the creation of surplus value—is consequently the determining, dominant and over-riding purpose of the capitalist, the absolute motive and content of his activity,' wrote Marx. 'In fact, it is only the rationalised motive and purpose of the treasure-hunter, a wretched and abstract content, which lets the capitalist appear from one angle in exactly the same bondage to capitalist relations as the worker, even though from another angle he appears to be at the

opposite pole.<sup>1</sup> The capitalist, too, in other words, is not free to manifest the creative human potential.

But it does not follow from this incontestable fact that all classes are equally interested in eliminating alienation, though this is claimed by bourgeois ideologists and right opportunists in order to rob the working class of its class purpose and disorganise the political struggle of the masses. It may be useful to recall Engels's observation on this score in connection with the new edition of his book, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, in 1892.

He described the book, one of his earliest works, as a phase in the 'embryonic development' of scientific socialism, created 'chiefly and almost exclusively through the efforts of Marx'. He amplified: 'And as the human embryo, in its early stages, still reproduces the gill-arches of our fish-ancestors, so this book exhibits everywhere the traces of the descent of modern socialism from one of its ancestors, German philosophy. Thus great stress is laid on the dictum that communism is not a mere party doctrine of the working class, but a theory compassing the emancipation of society at large, including the capitalist class, from its present narrow conditions. This is true enough in the abstract, but absolutely useless, and sometimes worse, in practice. So long as the wealthy classes not only do not feel the want of any emancipation, but strenuously oppose the self-emancipation of the working

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<sup>1</sup> *Marx and Engels Archives*, Vol. 2 (VII), Moscow, 1933, p. 35.

class, so long the social revolution will have to be prepared and fought out by the working class alone. The French bourgeois of 1789, too, declared the emancipation of the bourgeoisie to be the emancipation of the whole human race; but the nobility and clergy would not see it; the proposition—though for the time being, with respect to feudalism, an abstract historical truth—soon became a mere sentimentalism, and disappeared from view altogether in the fire of the revolutionary struggle. And today, the very people who, from the “impartiality” of their superior standpoint, preach to the workers a socialism soaring high above their class interests and class struggles, and tending to reconcile in a higher humanity the interests of both the contending classes—these people are either neophytes, who have still to learn a great deal, or they are the worst enemies of the workers—wolves in sheep’s clothing.’<sup>1</sup>

This tears to shreds the supra-class interpretation of the alienation of labour. The only one to profit from it in politics as a basis for relations between different, including antagonistic, classes, as a justification for the false concept of class collaboration, is the bourgeois. For the exploited it augurs nothing but continued movement in everlasting insecurity within the vicious circle of alienation.

Marx rejects the idea that the ability of materialised labour to turn into capital, ‘that is, to transform means of production into means of dominating and exploiting living

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, Preface to *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 444.

labour',<sup>1</sup> is inherent in things as things, as use values, as means of production. Capital, he writes, expresses 'a *definite relation of production*, a definite social relationship which the owners of the conditions of production enter into within production with the living labour power.... The capitalists' domination over the workers is in fact nothing but the domination of individualised *conditions of labour* independent in relation to the worker (which apart from the objective conditions of the production process—the *means of production*—also include the objective conditions for support and effectiveness of labour power, i.e., the means of livelihood).... The *functions* performed by the capitalist are only the *consciously* and willfully performed functions of capital, that is, of value that increases itself by absorbing living labour. The capitalist functions only as *personified* capital, capital as a person, just as the worker functions only as personified *labour*—for him only a torment and strain while for the capitalist it is the substance creating and multiplying wealth, as it indeed appears as an element incorporated in capital through the production process, as capital's living and variable factor. The capitalist's domination over the worker is, therefore, domination of the thing over the human being, of inanimate over living labour, of the product over the producer, because the commodities that become means of domination over the worker (but only means of domination by *capital* itself), are

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<sup>1</sup> *Marx and Engels Archives*, Vol. 2 (VII), Moscow, 1933, p. (30) 31.



in fact only the results of the production process, the products of that process.... Viewed *historically*, this transformation appears to be a necessary stage for securing the creation of wealth as such by and at the expense of the majority, that is, the creation of the unconstrained [*rücksichtslosen*] productive powers of social labour that alone can form the material basis of a free human society.<sup>1</sup>

Marx added: 'The objectified conditions necessary for the materialisation of labour are therefore *estranged* from the worker and, moreover, act as *fetishes* endowed with their own will and their own soul,... *commodities* figure as buyers of *people*.... It is not the worker who buys the means of subsistence and means of production, but the means of subsistence that buy the worker in order to integrate him with the means of production.'<sup>2</sup>

In his *Economic Manuscripts of 1857-1859* Marx examines types of dependence, the evolution of the alienation of labour, and the question of its elimination. Here are its main phases:

1. Relations of personal dependence (initially completely primitive) are the earliest forms of society, in which the human productivity develops to only a small extent and in isolated points.<sup>3</sup> Marx is referring to the slave and feudal systems, in which alienation of labour goes hand in hand with alienation of the person.

2. Personal independence, based on *material* dependence, is the second major form in

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33, 33-34.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. (58-60), 59-61.

<sup>3</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse...*, *Op. cit.*, p. 75.

which a "system of universal social exchange of goods, universal relations, all-sided needs and universal potentials first takes shape."<sup>1</sup> This system is the distinctive feature of capitalist society. Here, Marx wrote, 'the worker leaves the capitalist to whom he leased himself whenever he wishes, and the capitalist dismisses the worker whenever he sees fit, dismisses him the moment the worker ceases to yield advantages or does not yield the advantages on which the capitalist has counted. But the worker for whom sale of labour power is the sole source of income, cannot abandon the *whole class of purchasers*, that is, the *class of capitalists* without consigning himself to death from hunger. He does not *belong to any individual capitalist*, but to the capitalist class; it is entirely his own affair to find himself a master, i.e., a buyer among the capitalist class.'<sup>2</sup>

3. 'The free individuality,' Marx writes, 'based on the universal development of individuals and the subsumption of their collective, social productivity as their social potential is the third phase. The second creates the conditions for the third.'<sup>3</sup> This last begins with socialism.

This clear exposition of Marx's standpoint shows the connection between alienation of labour and emancipation of the individual.

Can there be any question of social freedom where the bulk of the products of labour are claimed by the non-working element and where they serve as a means of augmenting the

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 6, p. 401.

<sup>3</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse...*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 75-76.

worker's dependence on the capitalist? Can a person be free if his activity belongs to another? Can a person be free if labour is a burden for him and the only time he feels free is at home, in his family, on holiday, and the like? Can a person be free if he is slavishly dependent on the products he makes? In the light of the aforesaid, the only possible answer to these questions is negative. 'The whole character of a species—its species-character—is contained in the character of its life activity; and free, conscious activity is man's species-character,'<sup>1</sup> Marx wrote in 1844. But there can be no question of freedom if the individual's life activity is alienated from him and is opposed to him as a hostile force. Later, Marx wrote: 'The social ties of individuals among themselves as a force that has become independent and that rules over the individuals, no matter how it is pictured—as a force of nature, an accident, or in any other form—is the necessary result of the fact that the point of departure is not a free social individual.'<sup>2</sup> Marx added: 'The state of estrangement and independence in which he still exists in relation to these ties only proves that people are still in the act of constructing the conditions of their life in society, instead of beginning this on the basis of these conditions.'<sup>3</sup>

Neither the substantial progress of science (i.e., cognition of necessity) and of the pro-

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 276.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse...*, *Op. cit.*, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

ductive forces nor the high degree of labour productivity reached in some capitalist countries, can assure social freedom. The crucial condition for social freedom to turn from a possibility into a reality is to eliminate the alienation of labour, and first of all private ownership of the implements and means (and hence also of the results) of production, which is one of the economic components of alienation. They must be transferred into the direct possession of the producers as represented by the working-class state or socialist cooperatives. This is the main content of the proletarian revolution, the transitional period from capitalism to socialism, the first stage of freedom.

One of the effects of the simultaneous passage to a planned economy is that the social ties come to an increasing degree under the control of the associated working people and gradually lose their 'mystical', fetishistic aura.

In the socialist society the product belongs to those who produce it. No longer is it an instrument for the enslavement of man by man. The manner in which it is appropriated and used is clear evidence of the sovereignty of the working people. Labour becomes labour for oneself. It turns from forced into voluntary and conscious labour that develops into an understood necessity, into the prime and vital need of free people.

The universal obligation to work means that all must engage in a socially useful activity, that none may shirk that life activity, labour, which makes him or her a human being.

Some ascribe the origin of alienation exclusively to the division of labour, the progres-

sing specialisation, the individual's confinement to a narrow professional sphere, and his inability, therefore, to assimilate and subordinate the universal wealth of social practice. They conceive elimination of the alienation of labour as elimination of constraints on the active potential of the individual and as creating conditions in which his activity would reproduce the entire content of that which society as a whole has produced during its long history.

Is this viewpoint acceptable? It is unacceptable, we hold, because it makes elimination of the alienation of labour (without which there can be no other 'alienation') conditional on elimination of the division of labour as a whole.

Division of labour, from its simplest forms (division by sex and age in the primitive community) to the unavoidable differentiation of the productive and all other functions in a communist society, is a property of the social productive forces and a necessary condition for the effective organisation and continuous growth of the productivity of social labour. There will always be a variety of specialised fields in the modern economy. 'The *division of labour* as the aggregate of all the different types of productive activity,' Marx wrote, 'constitutes the totality of the physical aspects of social labour as labour producing use-values.'<sup>1</sup>

Division of labour seen as a social relationship in the activity of social groups and individuals does not necessarily engender aliena-

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Moscow, 1970, p. 51.

tion of labour. There was no alienation of labour in the tribal community where women attended to the home and grew crops, while men hunted and attended to the livestock. Neither will there be any alienation of labour under communism, though communist society, too, is inconceivable without a division into more or less clearly defined professional groups in a state of continuous mutual exchange of activities.

Alienation of labour is not an eternal companion of the division of labour. It originates from the division of society into antagonistic classes, a state of society in which 'division of labour and private property are, after all, an identical expression: in the one the same thing is affirmed with reference to activity as it is affirmed in the other with reference to the product of the activity'.<sup>1</sup>

The sole fact that they own the means of production enables members of the ruling class to alienate in their favour both the labour and the time of the worker, i.e., his life activity. This is what social slavery is to be deduced from as a system. And abolition of this state of affairs is the beginning of the leap to the realm of freedom.

The concept that associates the end of alienation, and social emancipation, with an end to the division of labour in general, presumably under communism, resembles an abstractionist canvas: a dark blot, 'alienation', is contrasted by a bright spot 'communism'. But the viewer is not allowed to see their contours. By all evidence, socialism is not

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1976, p. 53.

excluded from the period of alienation. How otherwise to explain why its exponents, who continuously refer to classical literature and the future, tend to sidestep the following crucial abolition, of private ownership of the means of production of exploitation of the labour of others, and of conditions for the existence of parasitical classes, that is, abolition of the *material core* of the alienation of labour as conceived by Marx.

This is an important point, because coming to grips with all varieties of opportunism, Marxists have had to combat attempts at denying the specific features of socialism as the beginning and the first phase of communism. The attacks will not be effectively countered by abstract promises that the alienation of labour will be eliminated in the indefinite and distant future. To fight bourgeois ideology and opportunism we must give a *concrete exposition of the real contradictory process of deliberately and purposefully eliminating the alienation of labour*, and show how the constructive activity of working people is thereby liberated in the present, socialist stage.

It would never occur to us to suggest that the maximum freedom has already been achieved under socialism. To do so would be to set a limit to development. The liberation process continues unintermittently. In the economic sphere it is directly dependent on the progressive socialisation of production—meaning not only consolidation and development of public socialist ownership of the implements and objects of labour in its two forms—ownership by the whole people and

group ownership—but also convergence of these two forms or, in other words, emergence of an absolutely identical relation of all working people to the means of production and the methods and rates of building the classless society.

To eliminate alienation and its consequences we must eliminate all factors preventing labour from becoming a free act of self-expression. Apart from economic relations, this applies to things of a purely technical order that may make the labour process unattractive regardless of the social system—such as fatigue, monotony and difficulty, accompanied by sensations such as cold, heat, sharply changing temperatures, humidity, noise and smell, all of which the German Marxist philosopher Georg Klaus describes as 'technical alienation' acting as a kind of last-ditch ally to social alienation.<sup>1</sup> This is probably the sole material factor liable to slow up the emergence of the communist attitude to labour in a socialist society. But its ultimate elimination is assured by the growth of large-scale socialist machine production, especially in the stage of its automation when, to use Marx's expression, 'labour no longer so distinctly appears as something locked into the production process, but rather as something in which the human being is related to the production process directly as its controller and regulator'.<sup>2</sup>

It is inevitable that elimination of the moral alienation of labour should accompany

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<sup>1</sup> See Georg Klaus, *Kybernetik und Gesellschaft*, Berlin, 1964, p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse...*, *Op. cit.*, p. 716.



the progress to freedom, though it may survive for some time after its economic causes are abolished. The main thrust here is to eliminate the negative attitude to labour inherited from the exploiting system. It should be borne in mind, however, that this is only a part, and by no means the major part, of the emancipation of labour.

Man's final emancipation depends on the fullness of his development. But one should not expect that in a communist society the individual will be able to master the entire wealth of social practice. So, to predicate the fullness of his development and the fullness of his freedom on this is to cast doubt on both. The working man will be fully developed, because he will have mastered all the essential *aspects of labour*, but certainly not all the types of labour, for this is beyond the capacity even of a genius.

This means that given continuously advancing technology, each and everyone will be able to function successfully a) in both the sphere of *physical* and *mental* labour or, more precisely, in labour that will harmoniously blend elements of physical and mental activity; b) in *execution* and in *management* and *organisation*; c) in *mechanical* (routine) and *creative* operations; d) in *material* and *intellectual* production.

The *basic* characteristics of labour as listed above *will cease to be the characteristics of the activity of different social or professional groups*. In this sense, there will no longer be any social division of labour, for these characteristics will be inherent in the labour of all workers, who will be proficient in more than one trade

or profession in the present meaning of the words.”

But does this mean that division of labour will be *completely* eliminated?

Certainly not from the standpoint of the technological process on the scale of the whole society. But it will cease to exist, in a relative sense, from the standpoint of individual activity. The individual will belong to several professional groups at once, and will be proficient in all the different specific types of activity. He will *pass* freely from one type of labour to the other. But there will have to be a highly advanced technical division of labour for him to do so. This has nothing in common with the incongruous idea that the worker of the future will be able to produce literally the entire range of material and intellectual goods.

If a person is one-sidedly developed, he is alienated, says the simplistic formula suggested by certain authors. Alienated from what? From the types of labour he has been unable to master? Did Marx ever approach the matter from this angle? There is reason to believe that he did not. He did not go into any extended, vague or unprecise interpretations of alienation. He used the word to designate alienation of labour, to show the economic fact that labour is exploited and how this is reflected in the superstructural sphere.

Furthermore, one-sidedness in development is a concrete historical concept. The ‘one-sidedness’ of the capitalist living at the expense of the ‘one-sidedness’ of the proletarian is one thing. And the certain amount of one-sidedness of persons of different profes-

sions, subordinated in socialist conditions to the principle of the universality of labour, is quite another. Thus, one-sidedness can mean different things. To measure them with the same gauge, that of division of labour, and thereby sidestep the imperative of destroying the former one-sidedness, is to take an objectivist approach, for unless the former one-sidedness is destroyed there can be no question of social freedom and no all-round development of the individual (professional narrowness, too, will not be eliminated in that case).

Certainly, Marx's earlier works may be variously interpreted. But none of the interpretations will make sense unless it fits into the context of everything else the founder of scientific communism has produced. Furthermore, we must reckon with the projection of Marx's ideas in the works of Engels and Lenin, and also with the practice of socialist and communist construction in a number of countries. People are not particularly concerned about the division of labour as such. During the transition from capitalism to communism they are far more concerned with eliminating the 'division of labour' between exploiter and exploited, for this weighs very heavily on social freedom. Consequently, the matter centres on ending the alienation of labour, which, in the full sense, can exist only in a society divided into those who work and those who live off the work of others.

In a socialist society the product of labour is by nature non-alienable. It is no longer a means of exploitation, and is the property of its collective producer—the working class or members of an agricultural cooperative. Labour

power ceases to be a commodity. Its sale by workers or farmers to the owners of the means of production is meaningless, because it would be selling to themselves. The nature of the relationship between the working individual and the state or work collective has changed accordingly. The individual rightly regards himself the co-participant in production and co-owner of all society's material and cultural wealth. It is this that constitutes the crucial social condition for freedom.

Marx proved many years ago that alienation of labour cannot be eliminated in the framework of private property relations. But can all its forms be eliminated after the revolution wipes out private property relations?

In the economic sphere elimination of the alienation of labour and restitution to the working people of the process and material results of their activity are the cause and effect of the socialist transformation of production. But eliminating from the consciousness the distorted ideas imparted by alienation is a much slower process. It takes time to reconcile the individual with labour, to overcome the oppressive prejudice that labour is an annoying necessity and a heavy burden, a divinely imposed expiation of his sins. The communist principle on this score is that the *negative attitude to labour has its origin not in the intrinsic essence of labour as such, but in the historically conditioned and therefore transient fact of labour exploitation, and must consequently sooner or later go the same way as exploitation.*

The universality of labour proclaimed by the proletarian revolutions amounts to its

recognition by society as the most essential type of human activity from which man had in various ways been priorly estranged. That is the starting point in the massive remoulding of people, in their active appropriation of values created by preceding generations. The transformation of individuals exploited by the capitalist into equal members of society who recognise labour as their inalienable quality is, in fact, the essence of the socialist revolution.

People respond differently to the universal obligation of working. The working people, who are the vast majority, consider it the legalisation of their status of capable citizens, of persons with full rights. The obligation to work is consonant with the nature of their life activity. Their now no longer alienated labour is free both by virtue of the new economic conditions and their labour habit, which shapes the moral and political outlook of workers and peasants.

Speaking theoretically, the *universal obligation of working* would be unnecessary if, after the revolution, the new authorities were dealing only with the politically-conscious working class. It would then have been quite enough to proclaim the *right to work*, that is, to provide each and everyone with a realistic opportunity for applying their intellectual and physical faculties to socialised production. In fact, however, there is a considerable parasitical stratum and a definite section of working people corrupted by the bourgeois society and afflicted by a private property psychology. This is why it is not enough to proclaim only the right to

work, because it implies that acceptance of labour is voluntary.

In a socialist society, a society which does not *rise* upon its own foundation but '*emerges* from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birth-marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges',<sup>1</sup> *the right to work must for a fairly long time be inevitably compounded with the obligation to work.*

Is this a contradiction? Yes, because here we have a unity of seemingly mutually exclusive ideas. For someone who is accustomed to working the obligation to work does not exist. For him the wish to work is an intrinsic moral quality, a habit, an inner urge. Nothing but the right to work has meaning for him. Labour is extraneous and an obligation only for those who either have never worked before or worked only when the whim seized them, or have failed to acquire an enduring habit of working. In this case compulsion is an external necessity, an obligation imposed by society, is an essential addition to the opportunity for exercising one's ability. In the transitional period and, with appropriate correctives, also under socialism, labour is therefore a unity of opposites—a *right* and an *obligation*.

Certainly, some individuals and groups retaining the habits and traditions of the old society see the universality of labour principle as a negation of the freedom of the individual. But this view is wrong. It reposes

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'Critique of the Gotha Programme'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 17.

on an unscientific understanding of man's social nature. It imposes notions engendered by the alienation of labour in the exploiting society. It prevents people from understanding and appreciating the gains of the revolutionary masses, from accepting the objective and tangible conditions of freedom. *People may consider themselves unfree not due to the absence of conditions for free activity, but due to incorrect ideas about freedom.* This does not apply to the masses, of course, but to isolated individuals or groups, and is a classic example of the consciousness tailing behind being. This is why we feel it is useful here to examine cultural and intellectual, as well as economic problems.

There are those who think that in socialist and communist society, too, social consciousness as a whole is bound to tail behind social being. They take it for granted that since consciousness reflects being, is secondary to being, it must necessarily and inevitably tail behind being. But they are wrong. Reflecting the material conditions of the life of people, consciousness not only follows in the wake of changes in society, but also, by virtue of its relative independence, is able to *anticipate them in theory*, to scientifically predict the future social patterns, to outstrip being. The categorical claim that consciousness always lags behind being misses at least two points: first, that social consciousness is heterogeneous and, second, that after the socialist revolution the relation of social being to social consciousness is of a specific nature.

For quite some time Soviet authors failed to reckon with the division of social conscious-

ness into social psychology and social ideology. Just as there is a complex interaction of the sensory and the rational in any consciousness, there is in the social consciousness an intertwining of feelings, emotions, habits and morals, on the one hand, and formulated views and interests forged into a more or less consistent system, on the other. The former belong to the sphere of social psychology, the latter to ideology. Both are class-motivated.

Psychology differs from ideology in that, among other things, it directly reflects and anchors in the consciousness even relatively small changes in the being of people and that it also tends to retain outdated views for a longer time. Outdated views are enduring, because even inconsiderable survivals of the past are enough to feed them. In content, psychology is far less active than ideology, for it follows in the wake of empirical being, adapting itself to every new phenomenon or development.

Ideology leans on psychology, expresses but does not imitate its chief features, and, the main thing, summarises the interests of a class. The advanced ideology is associated with science, as well as psychology. It is that part of the public consciousness which, faithful to society's needs and material conditions, is able to foresee future development, to anticipate social being *not in origin* (genetically it will always be secondary), but *in content*. It reflects not only the already existing, but also that which *has grounds* to exist but is so far absent.

Along with these properties of ideology and psychology we must consider the situation



of the class to which they belong. Here is an interesting point: the ideology of the exploiting class anticipates events and separates from psychology only on those rare occasions when that class acts as a revolutionary force on behalf of the entire society. Take the views of the French eighteenth-century Enlighteners who are head and shoulders above most of the bourgeois thinkers of later times (because on becoming the dominant class, the exploiters were satisfied with the prevailing conditions of social being and shifted their efforts to safeguarding the existing social and political order). This is why, following the collapse of feudalism, bourgeois ideology did not even try to anticipate history, and has been content to drift along with the proprietary psychology. This may be illustrated by the present crisis of bourgeois social science and the devaluation of 'free world' ideas.

The Marxist ideology is different. The true scientific expression of the interests of the foremost class, whose mission in history is to destroy all forms of the exploitation of man by man, it has its roots in the working-class movement and the achievements of science. The lead that it holds over the proletarian psychology, which, especially in a capitalist society, contains an admixture of the petty-bourgeois psychology, is neither temporary nor transient. More, the Marxist political ideology, historical materialism, economics, the theory of scientific communism, generally anticipate the conditions of being. Lacking this, it would be impossible to plan ahead for the long term or, in other words, to comply with the objective law of the planned

(proportional) development of the socialist economy.

'The notion that *the ideas and conceptions of people create their conditions of life* and not the other way round,' Engels wrote, 'is contradicted by all past history, in which results constantly differed from what had been desired and in the further course of events were in most cases even the opposite. Only in the more or less distant future can this notion become a reality in so far as men will understand in advance the necessity of changing the social system (*Verfassung*) (*sit venia verbo*), on account of changing conditions, and will desire the change before it forces itself upon them without their being conscious of it or desiring it.'<sup>1</sup>

This should not be taken to mean, of course, that in the socialist countries social science cannot in principle fall behind the needs of life. Some branches of science, and some of the problems, may be held back by some objective or subjective factor. But the main point is that this is as rare as anticipation of social conditions is in the case of bourgeois ideology. One of the principal tokens of the scientific nature of the Marxist ideology is that it anticipates the general trend of further development. This is confirmed by the programme documents of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

As for the social psychology, under socialism it depends on the conditions of being, and also largely on the Marxist ideology. But the substantial distinctions between the two re-

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1975, p. 395.

main. While socialist ideology reigns undivided in our society, survivals of the proprietary mentality belonging mainly to the sphere of social psychology, live on in people's minds. Though the social psychology keeps rising gradually to the level of the social ideology, it is never able to coincide with it in all respects. And it is important for ideological workers to promote the process, banishing the survivals of the past from the consciousness of working people, from the social psychology.

Changes in the economy are swifter than assimilation of the communist ideology. The latter is swifter than changes in the social psychology. The psychology of individuals changes the slowest of all. In its initial period, the revolution makes what may be described as a rough cast, moving giant layers of soil and creating the objective basis for social freedom. The remoulding of men's minds occurs simultaneously. They embrace communist ideas, whose materialisation is consonant with the finest aspirations of humanity. Yet the final touches are applied to people's consciousness over a far longer period. The reasons for this are many. One of the main ones is the relative conservatism of the social psychology, which prevents many people from seeing the boons of the achieved freedom and joining in the job of all-round improvement. The level of the consciousness of members of socialist society must be continuously raised. It is not enough to raise the level of their theoretical knowledge. What must be also altered is the system of emotions and reactions to a wide range of social pheno-

mena... *Only those in whom the communist ideology blends harmoniously with the communist psychology may be regarded as fully politically conscious.* And it could not be more obvious that in this case the individual thinks and acts in freedom.

Is it right to assume that freedom is wholly dependent on consciousness? Could it be that the role of communist education is being exaggerated? Not at all. Take a worker who knows he is working for himself, yet does his work half-heartedly. Though a member of socialist society, he is under the spell of old ideas and still, to some extent, conceives labour as alien, as a burden. What is here at the root of the trouble? Having grown accustomed as a partner in public ownership to regarding the product created by all the working people as his own, he fails to spread this positive concept to the sphere of his labour. This is a duality, a contradiction in the thinking of some members of the socialist society which has historically only just emerged from the womb of capitalism. It is the subjective element of non-freedom, because survival of the old attitude to labour is damaging to the building of communism, inhibits activity, and acts as a force antithetical to social freedom. This is why survivals or effects of the former alienation of labour, an aversion to labour engendered by the system of capitalist exploitation and the example of the class of capitalists, are intolerable in socialist society as an obstacle to the universal human freedom.

There is no trace of idealism in the above. The effect of the subjective factor on the life

of people is an acknowledged fact. To underestimate it is harmful for both theory (leading to recurrences of vulgar materialism) and practice.

It is not enough to create the social prerequisites of freedom. People have to learn to see it. Not in theory alone. Books will not change the psychology. But through the individual's immediate participation in production, in public pursuits, in constructive activity, which breed a committed and conscious attitude to the causes and affairs of society. Since combating the attitude to labour as an alien activity is a projection to the consciousness of the battle against the alienation of labour, the cultivation of the communist attitude to labour is a projection of the battle for the true freedom of every individual.

In the Soviet Union, the objective of securing the maximum involvement of the masses in creative labour has been tackled from different angles and in different directions under guidance of the Communist Party by the Soviets, the public organisations, and the masses. A recapitulation of this process would cover many pages. The far from complete list includes nationalisation of land, banking and industry; obligatory labour by the bourgeoisie; elimination of unemployment; industrialisation and collectivisation of farming; the cultural revolution, the Stakhanov movement and the many front-rankers' campaigns, and the movement of innovators. Each of these items occupies a specific place in the birth and growth of social freedom.

The new attitude to labour is rooted in the

economic condition of the working people and arises in the wake of changes in social being. But it would be a mistake to reduce the whole thing to just these factors. Uniting the masses in a bid for the common goal, giving them a common Marxist ideology, the revolution generates irrepressible enthusiasm, a new psychology, a psychology of innovation that visibly alters the people. The emotional impact of the historic overturn is tremendous. Growth of political activity helps purify people, who fling off the spiritual legacy of the past. The purifying winds of change create a favourable environment for the emergence of new moral standards, the main one of which is work for the good of society.

The new attitude to labour is also shaped by the political activity of the revolutionary masses, with hundreds of thousands of rank-and-file workers drawn into the business of administering the country. Often this is the prime mover in drawing people into socially useful, frequently unpaid and unrecorded labour. For some people social work is the first school of communist labour. This means that political freedom helps many to become aware of economic freedom and to shake off the remnants of a negative attitude to labour. Political freedom is thus the intermediate link between economic and moral freedom.

Under the influence of the educational work of the Communist Party, the state, the trade unions and the youth organisations, through personal participation in mass organisations and in active social work, people often perceive economic freedom as their own personal freedom.

### THE NEW NATURE OF COMMODITIES

#### 1. From the Abstract Angle of 'Pure' Socialism

What we have discussed in the previous chapter does not mean that we can turn our backs on the economic side of things. On the contrary, we are now able to see it in an essentially new light.

Production becomes capitalist, Marx said; when labour power is at long last drawn into the sphere of commodity circulation. The conversion of money and commodities into capital, he wrote, 'can only take place under certain circumstances that centre in this, viz., that two very different kinds of commodity-possessors must come face to face and into contact; on the one hand, the owners of money, means of production, means of subsistence, who are eager to increase the sum of values they possess by buying other people's labour power; on the other hand, free labourers, the sellers of their own labour power,

and therefore the sellers of labour'.<sup>1</sup>

Conversely, *socialism begins where and when the capitalist economic system is replaced by the kind of economic organisation that makes such contact and such selling impossible and unnecessary*—an economic organisation of associated labourers who run the economy without and despite the capitalists under a general plan drawn up to accord with the determined needs of people.

The conversion of the means of production into public property, abolition of the economic grounds for the estrangement of labour, the deliverance of human faculties, of labour power, from being an object of sale, a commodity—all these are in a certain sense equivalent expressions. The inalienability of labour power, the sovereignty of the labourer's personality and, consequently, the end to the exploitation of the labourer—these are the fundamentally new points of departure for the development of all economic relations. They are also the starting point for the whole system of values, principles and standards of the socialist society, and for the socialist and communist education of the people. It is not surprising, therefore, that hostile propaganda goes out of its way to distort this essential fact.

The late John Foster Dulles, the architect of brinkmanship, once described the Soviet social system as state capitalism. This ploy of obfuscating the basic distinction between the two opposite social-economic systems is not novel. It is typical of those who reject

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1974, p. 668.



socialism in substance but, fearing the reputation of retrograde, heap their objections on the forms in which socialism was built in the Soviet Union, the first socialist country, and later in a number of other countries. The same idea was voiced long before Dulles by Kautsky, ideologue of the Second International, by Trotsky, and by many other foes of Bolshevism. In 1927, the Menshevik *Sotsialistichesky vestnik*, published outside the country, lamented speciously that in Soviet state-operated industry 'the participation of workers in management has been reduced to mere fiction; the mass of workers in the enterprises are nothing but sellers of their labour power'.<sup>1</sup>

These contentions keep resurfacing from time to time, and are strongly amplified by the modern bourgeois propaganda media. Milovan Djilas won 'repute' chiefly with his concept that the state-operated socialist enterprises in the Soviet Union were 'state-capitalist'. The Soviet worker is supposedly compelled to sell his labour power and is exploited by the functionaries in the Party apparatus and the administration, who, to believe Djilas, have become a special class.

The untruth here is obvious: people working in the managerial apparatus are kin to the workers by virtue of the *common* state property and do not differ from them in *class orientation*. The reappearance of the same old arguments is meant to attest that socialism has in substance retained the system of

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted from *XV syezd VKP (b)*, Stenographic Record, Vol. I, Moscow, 1935, p. 331.

exploitation, that it alienates labour. They are meant to sow doubts as to the realness of socialist freedom.

A conclusive reply (the idea was advanced in the USSR by the Trotskyites) was given in the political report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party to the Party's 15th Congress in December 1925, dispelling doubt and confusion among a section of Soviet Communists. The state-operated industry in the Soviet Union, the report said, cannot be identified with state capitalism because under the dictatorship of the proletariat state capitalism is a form of production representing *two* classes—the exploiting class owning the means of production, and the exploited class not owning the means of production. Whatever specific form state capitalism may assume, it can be nothing but capitalist in substance. Anatomising state capitalism, Lenin referred mainly to concessions, which do represent two classes—the class of *capitalists*, i.e., the concession holders, who exploit and temporarily control the means of production, and the class of *proletarians*, who are exploited by the concessionaires.<sup>1</sup>

The state enterprises are not capitalist state enterprises, the Central Committee report pointed out, because only *one* and not two classes are represented in them—the class of workers who own the means of production

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<sup>1</sup> This is distinct from the form of state capitalism where the proletarian state is the co-owner of the means of production and gradually buys out the capitalist.

through *their own* state, and are *not* exploited because most of the revenue of the enterprise over and above the payroll is reinvested in industry, i.e., used to improve the condition of the working class as a whole.

The 14th Communist Party Congress amplified: the view that this is incomplete socialism due to the remnants of bureaucracy still present in the management of Soviet enterprises does not contradict the fact that state industry is socialist *in type*. There are two types of production: *capitalist* production, which also includes state-capitalist, where there are two classes and where production is motivated by capitalist profit, and *socialist* production, where there is no exploitation, where the means of production belong to the working class, and where the enterprises are not motivated by profit for an alien class but by the aim of expanding industry and improving the condition of the workers as a whole. The report referred itself to Lenin, who had specified that Soviet state enterprises were consistently socialist in type.<sup>1</sup>

Regrettably, people dealing with some problem that is not, on the surface of it, associated with the question of alienation of labour, sometimes fail to reckon with this basic conception. As a result, their conclusions may pervert the substance of the matter.

Take the fairly widespread notion that

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<sup>1</sup> See XIV *syezd Vsesoyuznoi Kommunisticheskoi partii (b)*, Stenographic Record, Moscow-Leningrad, 1926, pp. 31-32.

distribution in a socialist society is of *necessity* commodity distribution in character, and that all consumer goods sold through the distributive outlets are real commodities. By overlooking the concrete class situation of the 'buyer', the exponents of this view often miss the logical effects of this premise.

1. Let us suppose a worker acquires in a state-operated shop some object which in the economists' opinion is a real commodity. If this is so, a purchase-and-sale transaction is performed by the worker and the state, money-commodity (M-C), with the worker getting a product in exchange for money. But where did the worker get the money? Engels wrote in his notes to Marx's *Capital*: 'C-M implies that the owner of M (if not a producer of gold) received his M beforehand in exchange for some other C; thus, for the *purchaser* the deal is not only a reverse deal, i.e., M-C, but also presupposes a previous sale by him....'<sup>1</sup> In order to have money it is essential to sell something.

In our case, however, the worker has sold nothing. He received the money *from the state for his labour*, that is, for the function of his labour power. And if we were dealing with *real* money, labour power would *necessarily* be a commodity. That is all it can be because if the commodity nature of distribution is postulated, it revives the idea that 'labour power is a commodity' and that alienation

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<sup>1</sup> Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 16, p. 249.

of labour survives under socialism.<sup>1</sup> Yet, this is absurd in the conditions of proletarian dictatorship, which is growing over into a socialist society of the whole people.

2. Frequently, a worker buys in a shop a product made at *his* enterprise, by *his* mates, through the fusion of their labour powers with the state's (the whole people's) means of production. This product, the result of collective labour, is collective (state) property, of which all working people, including the worker buying it, are co-owners.

And yet, if we are to accept the aforementioned idea, in the act of distribution this product confronts the worker as a commodity, i.e., as someone's property that does not belong to him (the worker). One of two things—either the product is a commodity and the worker is not its co-owner, or the worker is the co-owner of the product and it is not a commodity.

Let us suppose the first is true, as many authors maintain in works on commodity

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<sup>1</sup> The problem is still influenced by some conflicting utterances of Joseph Stalin. While he noted correctly that a) 'there is no system of hired labour' in our country and 'labour power is no longer a commodity' [see Stalin, *Ekonomicheskiye problemy sotsializma v SSSR* (Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR), Moscow, 1952, p. 15.], he still assumed that b) 'consumer products essential to cover the outlay of labour power in the process of production are produced and realised in our country as commodities subject to the law of value' (*Ibid.*, p. 20). The latter passage may lead to the conclusion that labour power restored through the consumption of the said products is also subject to the law of value, which is obviously contrary to the first passage and to the actual state of affairs.

production under socialism. Then confronting the worker with the product as a commodity, that is, as something not belonging to him, is tantamount to confronting the producer and his labour power with the means of production. If the fruit of their labour does not belong to the producers, then the means and objects of labour do not belong to them either. In that case they confront the working people as a material force standing over them. It follows that the worker ceases to be the owner of the means of production and that socialist state property is a variety of state-capitalist property.

3. The contention that the relations of distribution are commodity relations by nature leads to the ultimate conclusion that public ownership of the means of production is state-capitalist rather than socialist. This, however, is liable to blemish the image of the socialist state of the whole people. In any case, as we see it, it is not likely to stand up against Djilas's concept of a 'new class' or to dovetail with the Marxist-Leninist concept of a gradual integration under socialism of the labouring strata in a classless society.

Those are the main logical effects of this concept of the nature of commodity and value under socialism. The whole thing revolves on man's relation to his most essential activity, not on some special, purely economic principle. Is this activity alienated or not alienated? Does the maker of the product relate to it as owner or is he held in some intangible dependence by some mysterious and anonymous owners of the material elements of production? Does he dominate the

conditions of his life activity or do these conditions dominate him? To produce scientifically valid answers to these questions we must refer to the Marxist method of analysis.

What is at the root of the above-mentioned misconceptions? Why haven't we been able so far thoroughly and conclusively to determine the nature of commodities, and their peculiarity and distinctions under socialism?

*First*, because of the complexity of the problem. In socialist conditions the exchanges of activity between, say, state enterprises, between the worker and society (the proletarian state or the state of the whole people), between the farmers and the state, or between the state and the *kolkhoz*, all look alike, and the act of acquiring products at the *kolkhoz* market is outwardly almost identical to a similar purchase in a state-operated shop. And yet all these relations of exchange are different, as different, in fact, as the social-economic nature of the persons, organisations, or collectives participating in them, as different as the class situation of the sellers and buyers, etc.

*Second*, because the simplistic method of analysis used by some is at cross purposes with the complexity of the social reality. Setting out to analyse the nature of the socialist commodity, some draw their conclusions from the results of daily practice, from what is on the surface of the ongoing economic processes. They do not look into the essence of things, do not attempt to determine what is behind the visible facts, giving precedence to form over content. More, claiming that it was impossible to foresee the concrete

features of socialism in the mid-nineteenth century, people pass deliberately one-sided judgements about the 'disparity' between the practice of socialist construction and the profound observations of Marx and Engels on the future of commodity production in the new society.

As for analysis of Lenin's highly valuable observations on this score, it was begun a relatively short time ago and is often affected by the drawn-out controversy between different schools and groups, each of which accentuates only that which argues, if only outwardly, in favour of its own viewpoint.

*Third*, because of the deplorably uncritical acceptance in the recent past of a number of inaccurately formulated postulates in Stalin's *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, on the one hand, and then the hasty rejection during the criticism of the personality cult of its correct elements, including the repetitions it contained of what is in effect the ABC of Leninism.

Since direct study of the nature of commodities under socialism will complicate our examination and is liable to lead to a dead end, it is wiser, as we see it, first to abstract ourselves from the existence of commodity-money relations and examine the socialist relations of production in, so to speak, their pure form as treated in Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. This is entirely legitimate, provided the connection with the temporarily abstracted factors is borne in mind. Once the analysis of the 'pure' socialist relations of production is completed, we may add the previously dropped factors one after



another until we get a faithful picture of the real nature of the phenomenon.

Using this method, we propose to examine socialist society as one in which all means of production have been socialised and all people act as a single collective of labourers fused by common property, common aim, and common working conditions.<sup>1</sup>

The means of production that only the effort of many people can set in motion are here the property of all labourers joined in an integral collective. Management of this property is the right of the collective as represented by its administrative organ (the state); the individual members of the collective are equal participants in the property and free members of the association of labour.

While the socialistically socialised means of production are permanently in the possession of the collective and always constitute *common* property, the labour power of every producer remains *individual*, belonging to just one person due to the distinctiveness of his or her bodily constitution.

But this does not mean that labour power is not affected by the fact that the means of production are publicly owned. Being co-owners of this property, every worker and his mates set in motion the means of labour with their own hands. The individual labour powers joined with the socialised implements

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<sup>1</sup> It is often said that this kind of socialism does not and cannot exist. Why? Must the fusion of the socialist property of the whole people with the kolkhoz or cooperative form of socialist property occur necessarily *after*, and not before, the advent of the second phase of communism?

and objects of labour blend into *one* labour power of the association, which, to use Marx's expression, acts as the *aggregate worker*. Hence, the *individual* labour power applied to socialised implements becomes one of the components of the social labour power. The action and functioning of the personal labour power becomes a direct element in the functioning of the social labour power.

In the socialist society the owner of machines is not contrasted to the owner of the hands that run them, as is the case under capitalism. The worker, who is *one* of the *many* owners of the *common* means of production, has neither the need to sell his labour power nor anyone to sell it to. The *particular* and inalienable ability of the individual to produce products, labour power is *simultaneously* endowed with a new quality by *directly* joining the common power of the collective and *directly* constituting the *social* labour power. In sum, collective ownership of the means of production makes the owner-society a collective labourer composing the social labour power out of a mass of individual labour powers. This capacity of the individual labour power to be social and of social to be individual is an example of the dialectical unity of opposites. The common labour of the whole collective results in a product that is divided by use value into two large groups: *means of production* and *objects of consumption*. The moment they are produced these two parts of the social product are the property of the association that owns the raw materials and the labour. When in production and *before* reaching the consumption sphere these products *do not*

*differ from each other* as the property of one and the same collective of labourers. But when we pass from producing them to their distribution and use there arises a substantial difference.

1. The implements and raw materials remain in the hands of the collective and are productively consumed, but *remain* public property; this includes objects of consumption that are part of the social funds and are collectively consumed by the working people irrespective of the results of their own labour.

2. Another, far greater portion of the objects of consumption passes out of the hands of the collective into those of individual consumers, thus *becoming* the personal property of the labourers.

Is the distribution of the first group of products opposite in social essence to that of the second group? Certainly not. Given the premises cited earlier, the means of production are social in character and as public property are set in motion jointly by all the working people. There is no need to transfer them to some individual for their productive consumption, though it is individuals who put them to use. The bigger portion of the means of production consumed over a long term does not and *must not* pass out of the possession of the entire collective throughout the period of their productive utilisation. The same applies to the collectively used goods.

Not so in the case of objects of consumption that replace *not the material, but the personal* element of the productive forces—the labour

power. Since the labour power of the association is nothing but the joining of the labour powers of individuals, its replacement occurs through the consumption by individual labourers of products necessary for their life activity. Hence, the expenditure of labour power cannot be replaced only by products that remain in public ownership and do not pass into anybody's personal possession. The need for reproducing social labour power requires that objects of consumption pass into the hands of the individual producers. The passing of part of the product out of the hands of society into those of its members, i.e. of part of the social product into the sphere of consumption, amounts to a *transformation of public into personal property*.

This personal property of socialist labourers has very little in common with private property in societies of antagonistic classes. In the latter relations of production set apart the private owners of the means of production and thereby predetermine private appropriation of the results of labour. The individual character of distribution is wholly determined by the dispersal and dissociation of the producers: the implements of production, raw materials, and objects of consumption do not become the property of society and are sold in the market by their private owners. Individual disposal of products follows here from the private character of production. Under socialism, on the other hand, personal property is based on a diametrically opposite principle, because it is brought into being not by private, but by socialised means of production.

This essential difference may be described as follows: *private property in the implements and means of production conditions private appropriation of the product.* Objects of immediate consumption pass out of the private possession of their owner (producer or merchant) into the *individual (also private)* possession of the consumer not by virtue of the individual nature of consumption, but owing to the domination of proprietary commodity-money relations.

*Public ownership of the means of production,* on the other hand, *determines public appropriation of the product,* regardless of its natural form. When this product enters the sphere of consumption it *either* remains in the use of society as a whole (as a means of production) or is transferred into the personal possession of the labourers (as objects of consumption). In contrast to capitalist society, where private owners confront each other as independent (mostly nominal) owners of the means of production and consumption, under socialism the transformation of part of the social product into the personal property of a labourer does not make him either nominally or factually independent of society and the collective to which he belongs.

In socialist society a labourer's personal property does not oppose him to the collective (the state) as bearer of public property. On the contrary, it ties him closer to the collective, because personal property cannot be an independent form of property. It is *a derivative from public property, a conversion of public property to the sphere of individual consumption.* Hence, in the setting of complete socialisation

personal appropriation is determined not by economic factors (these only determine the volume or quantitative aspect of personal appropriation) but by the natural properties of consumption.

This follows from the theoretical picture of socialism drawn by Marx. Marx's picture, we hold, does not diverge from practice, and explains the nature of the appropriation of the means, objects and products of labour in the new society as built in the Soviet Union and as is being built in other socialist countries. This is why the anti-Marxist contention that the truly highest form of socialist property (of the whole people) amounts to 'state-capitalist' property should be firmly rejected. Some revisionist theorists put just two types of property—group and collective, on the one hand, and personal, on the other—under the head of 'socialist'. Property is collective, they maintain, if the direct producers are allowed to administer matters related to the making of the product and to its general distribution. By personal property they imply private landownership, which they unjustifiably describe as a component of large-scale socialist agriculture. By so doing they proclaim the smallholder a part of the socialist social-economic forces. This conception gives the group principle precedence over the centralised planned economy of the whole people, and portrays the small producer running a small private farm or business—essentially capitalist in type—as a socialist social force. Here personal property is not the citizen's ownership of objects of personal consumption, a derivative of public property,

but independent private ownership of means of production by the small commodity producer. In method, this approach is doubtless closer to the petty-bourgeois socialism criticised well over a century ago in the *Communist Manifesto*, rather than to Marxism-Leninism.

Take the 'new' interpretations of individual labour based on means of production in the personal ownership of individuals. On the face of it, their exponents merely want to utilise the potential of petty private proprietors who do not exploit anyone else's labour for the purpose of, say, improving the services or to secure their more rational conjunction with the socialist economic system. But closer scrutiny of the various expositions of this viewpoint reveals a far more 'radical' thrust. Falling back on the debatable inference that artisan trades based on personal means of labour that cannot become a source of exploitation are part of the socialist economy if the artisan produces or renders services by his own personal labour, they draw very far-reaching conclusions.

Individual labour based on personally-owned means of production is proclaimed a 'socialist principle' inasmuch as the working man engaging in it subsists exclusively on the results of his own labour. Idealising this individual labour, which has in fact existed for millennia and has served as the starting point for relations of exploitation, the authors are also impelled to deny that individual labour based on personal means of production is a remnant of past social relations and that it will disappear with the growth of socially-organised production. This latter idea is

clearly set out by Marx, notably in his criticism of Proudhonism.

Some theorists even contend that individual labour *based on personal means of production*, being the condition for the existence of people subsisting on such labour and affirming its social usefulness and value in the setting of socialist commodity production, is part of social labour and is of the same character (sic!) as the individual labour based on *socialised means of production*. This is so glaringly wrong that it hardly needs to be challenged.

As we have said, in the socialist society personal property originates from public property and is the property of people who are immediate co-owners of socialised property. And since in the socialist society there are no proprietors other than the collective of producers, and individual producers do not distinguish themselves from the collective, there is no such thing here as commodity exchange. 'Within the cooperative society based on common ownership of the means of production,' writes Marx, 'the producers do not exchange their products; just as little does the labour employed on the products appear here *as the value* of these products, as a material quality possessed by them, since now, in contrast to capitalist society, individual labour no longer exists in an indirect fashion but directly as a component part of the total labour.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'Critique of the Gotha Programme'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 17.



Dealing with the matter in his *Économic Manuscripts of 1857-1859*, Marx compared the capitalist relations of production of his time with the future socialist relations. The labour of an individual viewed in the act of production, he wrote, is the money on which the worker directly buys the product, the object of his particular activity; but this is *particular* money on which he can buy only this *definite* product. To be *universal money*<sup>1</sup> the labour should not have been *particular labour*<sup>2</sup> but *universal* from the outset, that is, should have been put in as an element of *universal production*.<sup>3</sup>

*Given this premise, it would not be exchange that first imparted universality to labour, but the priorly given collective nature of labour that would determine the labourer's participation in the distribution of products.* The collective nature of production would make the product collective and universal from the very beginning. And exchange, which originally takes place in production (it would not be an exchange of exchange values but an *exchange of actions* impelled by collective needs or collective aims), would *from the outset* include the *participation of the individual in the collective world of products*. It is on the basis of exchange values that exchange for the first time treats labour as universal la-

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<sup>1</sup> That is, replace ordinary money as the universal equivalent and become a universal measure of value, putting an end to the existence of money as such.

<sup>2</sup> As under capitalism due to the division of labour and the economic segregation of the producers.

<sup>3</sup> Possible only if *socialised* socialist property and economic planning are dominant.

bour.<sup>1</sup> On the given different basis labour would be treated as universal prior to exchange, that is, the exchange of products would not be an intermediate operation<sup>2</sup> serving as a medium for the individual's participation in common production.

Naturally, mediation is unavoidable. But Marx shows that in the first case, which follows from the independent (partial) production by individuals, mediation occurs through the exchange of commodities, of exchange values, of money—all of which are expressive of one and the same relation. In the second case, the *very premise is mediated*; in other words, we presuppose collective production or collectivism as the basis of production. The labour of the individual is treated as social labour from the beginning. No matter what particular material form of the product the individual creates or helps to create, *he buys with his labour not a definite and particular product, but a definite participation in collective production*. He does not, therefore, have to exchange any particular product. His product *is not an exchange value*. It does not have to be converted beforehand into any particular form in order to acquire universality for the individual.

So, in place of the division of labour<sup>3</sup> which is inevitably engendered when the exchange is of exchange values, there would in this case appear an organisation of labour<sup>4</sup> securing

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<sup>1</sup> Under capitalism.

<sup>2</sup> Which, in fact, it is not in the planned socialist economy.

<sup>3</sup> Capitalist.

<sup>4</sup> Socialist.

the individual's participation in collective consumption. In the first case the social nature of production is *only subsequently* secured by converting products into exchange values and by exchanging values. In the second case, the *socialised nature of production is a premise*, and participation in the world of products, participation in consumption, is not mediated by any exchange of inter-dependent work operations or products of labour. It is *mediated by the social conditions of production* in which the individual is active.

Therefore, to treat the labour of an individual (and hence its product) directly as *money, or a realised exchange value*, it would have to be defined *directly* as universal labour, and this means denying the very conditions in which labour must necessarily turn into money and exchange values and which make it dependent on private exchange. *This demand may be met only in conditions in which it can no longer be made.* Because, as Marx concludes, 'labour based on exchange-values presupposes precisely that neither the labour of the individual nor its product are *immediately* universal, and that it acquires this form only through *objectified mediation*, through a *money* that is different from it.'<sup>1</sup>

Taking note of this fundamental difference between the new society and the old in the matter of economic relations, Marx does not deny vestiges of an outward resemblance between the two, and the existence in the new of 'birthmarks' of the old. 'Accordingly',

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse...*, *Op. cit.*, p. 89.

he writes, 'the individual producer receives back from society—after the deductions have been made—exactly what he gives to it. What he has given to it is his individual quantum of labour. For example, the social working day consists of the sum of the individual hours of work; the individual labour time of the individual producer is the part of the social working day contributed by him, his share in it. He receives a certificate from society that he has furnished such and such an amount of labour (after deducting his labour for the common funds), and with this certificate he draws from the social stock of means of consumption as much as costs the same amount of labour. The same amount of labour which he has given to society in one form he receives back in another.'<sup>1</sup> The social relations become perfectly clear and subject to control by the associated individuals.

## **2. The Fate of Value When All Means of Production Are Socialised**

Referring to this passage of Marx and to the existence of commodity production under socialism, some authors argue that he had not been thorough, that some things had escaped his vision, and that all he had produced was an abstract outline of socialism.

But this is untrue. Marx clearly and accurately defined the features of the new system when all means of production were socialised.

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'Critique of the Gotha Programme'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 17-18.

More, he anticipated the situation where following the socialist revolution the proletariat would have to convert to socialist principles not only large-scale industries but also the small peasant farms, and to draw petty commodity producers into building socialism. 'Wherever the peasant en masse exists as a private proprietor, where he even forms a more or less substantial majority,' he wrote some hundred years ago, 'as is the case in all countries of the West-European continent, where he has not disappeared and has not been replaced by agricultural day labourers, as in England, the following may happen: either he prevents and wrecks every workers' revolution, as he has up to the present done in France, or else the proletariat (for the peasant-owner does not belong to the proletariat, and even where his position makes him belong to it, he thinks that he does not) in governing must take measures which lead to a direct improvement of his conditions, and which, consequently, win him over to the side of the revolution. From the very outset these measures must facilitate the transition from private to collective land-ownership, so that the peasant himself comes to it through economic means; care should, however, be taken not to antagonise him, for example, by proclaiming the abolition of the inheritance right or of his property. The latter can be done only where the capitalistic tenant has ousted the peasant, and where the actual cultivator is just as much a proletarian, a wage-worker as the rural worker and, hence, has *directly*, not indirectly, identical interests with him; much less should land-

ownership be strengthened by enlarging the parcel through the simple handing over of large estates to the peasants.<sup>1</sup>

Marx rejects Bakunin's nonsense that workers' rule implies enslavement of agricultural labour. For the proletariat 'to have any chance of success', he shows, 'it must be able *mutatis mutandis* to do directly for the peasants at least as much as the French bourgeoisie did for the then existing French peasants during its revolution.'<sup>2</sup>

Engels put this in still more specific terms. 'Our task relative to the small peasant,' he wrote, 'consists, in the first place, in effecting a transition of his private enterprise and private possession to co-operative ones, not forcibly but by dint of example and the proffer of social assistance for this purpose. And then of course we shall have ample means of showing to the small peasant prospective advantages that must be obvious to him even today.'<sup>3</sup> Engels goes on to outline measures whereby peasant associations will find that 'their economic position is improved and simultaneously the general social directing agency is assured the necessary influence to transform the peasant co-operative to a higher form, and to equalise the rights and duties of the co-operative as a whole as well as of its individual members with those of the other

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'From Comments on Bakunin's Book "Statehood and Anarchy"'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 411.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 412.

<sup>3</sup> Frederick Engels, 'The Peasant Question in France and Germany'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 470.

departments of the entire community. How this is to be carried out in practice in each particular case will depend upon the circumstances of the case and the conditions under which we take possession of political power.<sup>1</sup>

The founders of scientific communism are sometimes portrayed as maximalists who deduced the emergence of the new system not simply from the contradictions and tendencies of capitalism, but from their necessary development to the culmination point. Certainly, if we take the *theoretical* deductions, this opinion is not entirely groundless because Marx's thinking was remarkably logical and consistent, pinpointing all the possible effects of a discovered law. But did he equate methods of thinking with *political* methods which deal not with abstract scientific notions, but with the fate of millions of living people?

The answer will be found in Engels. Anticipating, as it were, the rebukes later addressed to Lenin, Plekhanov and other Russian Marxists for allegedly wanting to put the entire working population through a factory grinder, Engels wrote: 'The greater the number of peasants whom we can save from being actually hurled down into the proletariat, whom we can win to our side while they are still peasants, the more quickly and easily the social transformation will be accomplished. It will serve us nought to wait with this transformation until capitalist production has developed everywhere to its utmost consequences, until the last small handicrafts-

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 470.

man and the last small peasant have fallen victim to capitalist large-scale production.’<sup>1</sup>

This shows the concepts of Marx and Engels about the post-revolution period to have been as realistic as they were definite. Along with socialised ownership of the means of production (expropriation of the expropriators), they also envisaged a voluntary institution of associated property and associated enterprises, which would survive until conditions ripened for their conversion to the higher form. ‘Marx and I have never been in doubt,’ Engels wrote to Bebel in January 1886, ‘that in the transition to a completely communist economy we shall have to resort to cooperative production as the intermediate link.’ But this has to be done in a way that society—and consequently in the beginning the state—should retain ownership of the means of production and, hence, the particular interests of the cooperative should not take precedence over the interests of society as a whole.’<sup>2</sup>

When referring to a fully developed communist economy Engels obviously meant *socialism* and not the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, because only the economy of the second phase of communism may be described as completely communist, as distinct from the incompletely communist, the less developed, economy.

What, then, was the sketch of socialism presented in Marx’s *Critique of the Gotha Programme*? Evidently, it was the goal to be

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 471-72.

<sup>2</sup> Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 36, p. 426.



attained at some intermediate point in society's advance to communism following the period of transition from capitalism to socialism and resulting from socialism's development on its own basis. Marx and Engels did not presume to elaborate on the specific ways and concrete forms of the process. They always emphasised that this would be the business of the immediate participants. Yet they spoke unambiguously about its essence. This is why references to what was really their modesty in order to prove that they had no definitive opinions about the laws and regularities of the new formation are, in effect, entirely groundless.

We have deliberately inserted long passages from the works of Marx and Engels to show how Marx's prophetic ideas agree with the subsequent practice of proletarian revolutions in countries with large peasant populations. Don't these passages contain the germ of Lenin's future peasant policy? Would someone who allowed for the existence of a substantial section of small commodity producers after the proletarian revolution *unconditionally* insist on the immediate abolition of commodity exchange and of money on the next day after the socialist overturn?

That Marx never departed from concrete and practical ground even when he looked into what was for him a distant socialist future, is borne out by yet another passage from his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. Showing that the principle of distribution according to work would prevail under socialism, he wrote: 'Here obviously the same principle prevails as that which regulates the

exchange of commodities, as far as this is exchange of equal values. Content and form are changed, because under the altered circumstances no one can give anything except his labour, and because, on the other hand, nothing can pass to the ownership of individuals except individual means of consumption. But, as far as the distribution of the latter among the individual producers is concerned, the same principle prevails as in the exchange of commodity-equivalents: a given amount of labour in one form is exchanged for an equal amount of labour in another form.<sup>1</sup>

Marx points to the cause of the change in content and form. But he does not describe the change itself, or its effects, or how it would reflect on social relations. For him this was not important; he referred to the matter in passing. For us, however, it is a central issue because the content of economic relations may at times be wrongly understood if all attention is concentrated on just its integumentary form. What we want to know is the change which the relations of distribution, those that have a commodity nature in capitalist society, undergo under socialism.

Marx says in so many words that the products which society issues to the labourers for their work are not commodities, and that the vouchers issued to them to certify to their participation in social production are not tokens of value. Still, commodity and value remain. Anticipating the practice of

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'Critique of the Gotha Programme'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 18.

socialist construction after October 1917, Marx calls attention to this in Volume 3 of *Capital*. 'After the abolition of the capitalist mode of production, but still retaining social production,' he writes, 'the determination of value continues to prevail in the sense that the regulation of labour-time and the distribution of social labour among the various production groups, ultimately the book-keeping encompassing all this, become more essential than ever.'<sup>1</sup>

In sum, *there is no commodity and no value* because all goods belong to one owner—to society—and there is no one with whom to exchange them, and yet *commodity and value exist*, as Marx points out and as the practice of socialist economy, which we leave aside for the moment, bears out. And that is the contradiction, the antinomy that we must resolve before we go any further.

Let us first take the matter of commodities.

When Stalin's *The Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR* appeared in the early fifties, the following passage in it was taken as the definition of commodity: "A commodity is the product of production which is sold to any buyer, with the owner of the commodity losing the right of ownership through the sale of the commodity and the buyer becoming its owner who may re-sell it, pawn or mortgage it, or let it rot."<sup>2</sup>

This statement is tautologous. All it really says is that a commodity is something that

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 851.

<sup>2</sup> J. V. Stalin, *Ekonomicheskie problemy sotsializma v SSSR* (The Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR), Moscow, 1952, p. 52.

is sold. Therefore, it is not a definition at all. Its other flaw is that it treats movement in only one direction—from seller to buyer—and overlooks the fact that the buyer is *also a seller*. Finally, concentrating on the fact that a commodity is a product, the exponents of this definition sidestepped the *main point*—the social relation that constitutes the essence of a commodity. It is only to be regretted that this formula had for a time obscured Lenin's concise and accurate definition: 'A commodity is, in the first place, a thing that satisfies a human want; in the second place, it is a thing that can be exchanged for another thing.'<sup>1</sup>

It could not be clearer that a product becomes a commodity only under specific conditions. What we want to know, therefore, are the criteria of commodity production. 'By commodity production,' wrote Lenin, 'is meant an organisation of social economy in which goods are produced by separate, isolated producers, each specialising in the making of some one product, so that to satisfy the needs of society it is necessary to buy and sell products (which, therefore, become commodities) in the market.'<sup>2</sup>

It follows that commodity production occurs when and where there are at least these three conditions: a) independent producers are separate and isolated; b) each producer specialises in making some one or a limited range of products; c) mutual exchange of

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Karl Marx', *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'On the So-Called Market Question', *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 93.

products (purchase and sale) is always effected through the alienation of the product from its producer (seller) and its appropriation by the consumer (buyer).

Marx's description of socialist society as the sole and single owner of the means of production and the sole and single producer rules out the *first* and *third* of the above-mentioned features of commodity production. The territorial and administrative separateness of various enterprises does not make them owners of their product which, like the enterprises, belongs to society. The specialisation that necessarily survives under socialism causes products to be exchanged in the manner of metabolism in one and the same social organism. But this exchange is not a transfer of the product into the hands of another owner, which is *characteristic* of commodity relations.

Trying to explain the existence of commodity-money relations in the Soviet Union even between state enterprises coming under the head of socialised property, some economists suggested that a product can become a commodity in the act of exchange without changing its owner by merely changing places in the framework of one and the same form of property. At best, this is inaccurate. There are all kinds of exchange. *In one case*, independent proprietors producing different products confront one another, each interested in selling his produce and acquiring the produce of another. As a tendency, the exchange between them is of an equivalent nature, though allowances either way are possible and inevitable. This type of exchange is necessarily *an*

*exchange of commodities. In the other case there is exchange within the limits of one household belonging to one proprietor.*

In *Capital* Marx identified the cell in which there occurs exchange of the second type as the 'patriarchal industries of a peasant family, that produces corn, cattle, yarn, linen, and clothing for home use. These different articles are, as regards the family, so many products of its labour, but as between themselves, they are not commodities. The different kinds of labour, such as tillage, cattle tending, spinning, weaving and making clothes, which result in the various products, are in themselves, and such as they are, direct social functions, because functions of the family, which, just as much as a society based on the production of commodities, possesses a spontaneously developed system of division of labour. The distribution of the work (and hence exchange of the products of work—*R.K.*) within the family, and the regulation of the labour-time of the several members, depend as well upon differences of age and sex as upon natural conditions varying with the seasons. The labour-power of each individual, by its very nature, operates in this case merely as a definite portion of the whole labour-power of the family, and therefore, the measure of the expenditure of individual labour-power by its duration, appears here by its very nature as a social character of their labour.'<sup>1</sup>

The same should apply to the socialist society, which is 'a community of free individuals, carrying on their work with the

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 82.

means of production in common, in which the labour-power of all the different individuals is consciously applied as the combined labour-power of the community.<sup>1</sup> Here there are no commodities because the individual labour of each is directly an element of the collective labour, and exchange occurs in the frame of one community associated by common property. It follows that exchange is *commodity exchange* not simply when it occurs between producers separated in space or belonging to different organisations (as this occurs under socialism and will also occur in the second phase of communism) but when it occurs *between different economically separate proprietors-producers* who are divided by distance and sphere of activity and also by absence of common property and joint economy.

According to Lenin's definition a commodity has two features: first, it must satisfy a human need, that is, it must possess use-value and, second, it must enter the process of exchange between different owners. The first feature does not give it the specific nature of commodity. Use-values were made before commodity production ever began and will be made after it disappears. It is the second feature that turns a product into a commodity: *the substance of a commodity is not its usefulness, but its 'exchangeability'* in the social relationship arising over the given object between independent owners. It follows that once the system of exchange relations between independent commodity owners is abolished (under social-

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

ism), the product ceases to be a commodity and becomes a *non-commodity*.

But what, according to Marx, remains of the commodity nature of the product in a socialist society? Marx maintains that what remains is the 'determination of value', tracing this to the need for recording and regulating labour time and material values in the conditions of social production.

Why then does value, which, as we know, is an all-important element of commodity production, survive in the new society? We know from Marx that with the introduction of common ownership of the means of production and the products of labour, commodity exchange will disappear, as will value and money. Under capitalism labour and wealth were measured by value and its various forms, whereas in the new formation the measure of value should be replaced by direct measurement in units of labour time. But the facts show that for a long time after the victory of the working class the new society lacks a thorough system of accounting. It cannot be devised overnight. And so, according to Marx, in order that production is not interrupted while a new system of accounting is being shaped, use must be made of value forms. Certainly, these value forms are something entirely different in the changed conditions.

The concept 'value' is usually held to include labour objectified in a commodity. Value is first of all the outlay of socially necessary labour time for the manufacture of a given product. This *first* feature of value is necessary but not specific, because the outlay of labour, essential in every phase of social production,



does not *per se* create any value. *Second*, value is the proportion in which the given object is exchanged for some other object on the basis of the equivalence of labour outlays. But this, too, is not all. In order *finally* to become value, the proportion based on outlays of labour must regulate *effective commodity exchange* (not exchange in general), i.e., *it must be a relation between independent (individual or collective) commodity-owners* who mutually alienate and appropriate each other's products. Thus, value may be briefly defined as a proportion based on outlays of socially necessary labour time in which use values of one kind are exchanged in the commodity market for a certain amount of use values of another kind.

It follows that the different properties of value play dissimilar roles; some determine value only from the standpoint of *form*, while others express the content of the social value relation. By content dialectical materialism designates the sum-total of elements and processes comprising the intrinsic *basis* of the existence and development of a thing, i.e. as some say, *that of which* the given object consists. Examining the different forms of value in *Capital*, Marx singles out the principal element in the content of the value relation: *the manifestation in commodity exchange of the social nature of the labour of private producers*, the social relation characteristic of production based on private ownership of the means of production. The content of value as an economic relation of commodity production is the labour expended on making a product *plus the exchange relation* through

the medium of which it manifests itself in things that are exchanged.

Form denotes the other aspect of the object or phenomenon. Form is the structure or constitution of the content, the means of connecting its separate parts. The content of value is 1) social labour and 2) the relation of exchange in which it manifests itself, while form is the *manner* in which these elements of the content are *connected*. How do outlays of labour manifest themselves in the process of exchange, and how are these separate factors connected?

The answer is provided by the daily practice of commodity relations. Exchange reveals the socially necessary labour-time embodied in a commodity by comparison of all commodities to one commodity which is set apart from the world of commodities and acts as a universal measure of value. Down the ages a variety of commodities was used for this purpose, until the final choice fell on precious metals. Hence, the form of value is an *indirect expression of labour outlays not in time but in the comparison of the given product with gold*, which serves as the embodiment of social labour time. This indirect expression enables us to determine the value relation through commodity exchange, and identify the relative quantity of labour put into an object.

Summing up, we may briefly outline the specific features both of the content and form of value: the former is the outlay of average labour time put into the manufacture of a product and manifesting itself in exchange; the latter is a means of manifesting this outlay through the indirect expression of labour

time not in hours but in gold or some other money-commodity. Content is *that which* is manifested, and the form is *how, by what medium*, this content is manifested.

The above refers to value in conditions of capitalist production. In socialist society value is something different. The content of value—in the capitalist context a manifestation in commodity exchange of the social character of the labour of private producers—changes radically because in the socialist environment, first, the labour of socialised (not private) producers is immediately social in character and does not, as a rule, need any market evaluation of its social significance, and, second, there is no exchange of commodities because there are no independent owners of products to confront one another. The content of value vanishes. The only thing that could be put in its place is the direct social labour expended in making the given object. But that is something entirely different from the private (or, in any case, separate and isolated) labour on which the value relation is based.

What remains of value? *Its form is what remains*, that is, determination of the outlay of socially necessary labour time by indirect means, through gold, for as long as the new society is unable to measure this expenditure directly in hours. In short, *directly* social labour objectified in material goods is for the present measured through the *medium* of gold, by comparing it to gold, that is, through its antithesis. That is the dialectics of socialist production in which the new content is sometimes seen in the old form adapted to the new conditions.

To sum up, value has acquired a new content—directly socialised labour—and has therefore in substance ceased to be value. The form, the integument, that amounts to a quantitative determination of labour time through comparison of products with gold is all that is left of value and may be described as *conventional*, or *formal* value.<sup>1</sup> Marx had anticipated the survival of this formal value (though he uses no such term) in the socialist society after all means of production would have been *completely* socialised. This value, Marx held, would initially be used in the system of accounts in socialist production. Later, 'value' accounting is expected to be replaced by recording labour in new units corresponding to its directly social character—working hours or some other mean units of labour time. According to our method of approach the content of 'formal value' and the working hour must be the same: the directly social labour of the producers of socialist society. In formal terms, it is true, these types of accounting are very different, and the identity of their content may be questioned. But despite the dissimilarity and seeming incompatibility of the value form with collective production, Marx's genius spotted formal value as the prime category of accounting under socialism.

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<sup>1</sup> Stalin saw value as a devious, roundabout means of measuring the quantity of labour expended in making products (see J. V. Stalin, *Ekonomicheskiye problemy sotstalizma v SSSR*, p. 23). As we see it, this pertains not to value but to formal value typical under socialism. By overlooking this difference we are liable to under-rate the distinctive qualities of socialist relations of production.

The product of socialist production is in formal terms the bearer of value and expresses the labour time contained in it through gold. This gives it the form of a commodity, making it a conventional or formal commodity. Non-commodity content combines with commodity form, which combines the product's use value with its formal value. That is how the contradiction—no commodity and no value: commodity and value—is resolved. Commodity and value have both lost their content, have become formal, and have thus ceased to exist. But the commodity form and value form used in practice have not ceased to exist, and will not fall into disuse until a further advancement of socialist relations of production. Yes and no, existent and non-existent—that is the answer Marx suggested.

### **3. Marx's Prognosis and Socialist Reality**

So far we have dealt essentially with Marx's theoretical elucidation of the substance of socialist society. Understandably, this can help us determine none but the principal and the most substantive features of the new system, but not analyse the practice of a social system that appeared three and a half decades after his death. Though Marx anticipated more than just the principal conditions in which the proletarian revolution would come about, including such details as use of the old form of value accounting for a certain time, he did not and could not set out to predict the individual features of the transition to socialism in all countries.

The proletarian revolution won first in a country where the working class, associated with the capitalist mode of production, did not constitute the majority. It was the small-scale mode of commodity production, the economic basis of the many millions of peasants, that predominated in Russia then. In economic status the small and medium peasants were, like the bourgeoisie, private owners of the means of production. But the peasant's nature, as we know, is a dual one: personal labour on the farm and threat of ruin in the course of capitalist economic development bring him closer to the proletarian and make him the latter's natural ally. This is what communist parties rely on in their policy towards the non-proletarian sections, assuring success of socialist revolutions through skilful leadership of the masses and winning the support of the majority for the proletarian state.

The most crucial action of Soviet power was to nationalise (that is, make state property of the proletarian dictatorship) the land, banks, capitalist industry, and the like. This was the beginning of the socialised economic sector. But this action, which replaces capitalist production relations with socialist, is not taken at once and not on the scale of the entire society. Following the inception of a state sector there still remains small-scale peasant and even capitalist production, especially in villages, in the consumer industries and trade. And this for a fairly long time. It takes some years to convert the peasant to socialism, to change his private property into public, while restricting and pushing

out the bourgeois elements. This involves building an industrial base for agriculture and showing to the peasants the advantages of large-scale socialist farming. Besides, there must be intensive ideological and organisational work among them.

Following the revolution in Soviet Russia, there simultaneously existed socialised industrial production, dispersed small-scale private farming, artisan production, and private commerce. The many private enterprises—whether peasant farms or capitalist enterprises—did not change their social substance and could not exist without commodity exchange, commodity circulation, and market relations. Hence, the commodity nature of the economic links survived. So did the law of value. Nor did this exclude the socialist sector. Constituting what may be described as a single enterprise, the state industries could not operate without regular and close ties with agriculture. The state deliberately organised commodity exchange between town and country. In these circumstances products of the worker's labour alienated by the state in exchange for the products of peasant labour, were a commodity. As a result, large-scale social production, as well as small-scale private production, was commodity production.

'More thought,' Lenin wrote, 'must be given to the conditions of the transition epoch (and the relevant facts studied in greater detail).

'There is no doubt about switching from money to the exchange of products without money.

'To make the switch a success, there must be an *exchange of products* (not *exchange of commodities*).

'So long as *we are unable* to carry on the exchange of commodities, i.e., to give the peasants industrial products, the peasant *has* to make do with the *remnants* of commodity (and consequently of *money*) circulation, with a substitute for it.

'It is *economically* wrong to abolish the substitute (money) before the peasantry has been given that which eliminates the need of a substitute.

'This must be given very serious thought.'<sup>1</sup>

The entire output of state enterprises was still recorded as an aggregate of values. Some authors took this to mean that the commodity nature of production was inherent in socialist state enterprises, that it was predicated by the nature of socialist relations of production. This is, in effect, contrary to Marx's postulate that the nature of socialist economy is essentially non-commodity, and wrongly likens socialist with capitalist production.

The survival of commodity-value forms in the socialist economy of that time was due much less to intrinsic causes than to the outward conditions in which it arose—the economic nature of the other sectors.

The *first* of the conditions imparting a commodity nature to collective production was the preeminence in the Soviet Union at that time of commodity production, which necessarily implies spontaneous market exchange.

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Letter to S. Y. Chutskayev', *Collected Works*, Vol. 45, p. 58.



The state produced part of its output for sale to other proprietors. This necessitated treatment of all products as commodity values, which introduced a few additional facets to Marx's vision of socialism. In its dealings with private producers, the state acted as a separate proprietor engaged in a definite economic field and entering the market to exchange manufactured goods for raw materials and food products. Here, there are all the criteria of commodity production enumerated by Lenin. The *second* reason necessitating the commodity form even for products that were not put on sale was the use of value forms of recording outlays of labour time and, consequently, the social wealth mentioned by Marx. This, as we have said, was not due to any intrinsic quality of socialist economics, but because there could be no other system of accounting as long as commodity production continued to exist.

The relations of exchange of goods in the transitional period may be put into the following *three groups*: a) exchange between private producers which comes under the head of commodity exchange; b) exchange between the socialist state and private producers, which is also commodity exchange, but different because it involves a collective producer and commodity owner; c) exchange within the socialist sector between enterprises, between the state and enterprises, between workers and the state. The first two groups are incontestably of a commodity nature, while the third is not equivalent to them and must be treated separately.

A note Lenin wrote on this score in March-

April, 1921 is of unquestionable value. Here it is:

'The question is of theoretical interest too:

'the proletarian state power  
holds a material base { factories  
railways  
foreign trade.

'Consequence: in its hands is a *commodity stock* and its *wholesale* (railway) transport.

'What is the proletarian state power doing with this stock?

'*Selling it:*

(α) to the workers by hand and brain for money, or for their labour without money;<sup>1</sup>

(β) to the peasants *for grain*.

'How does it sell? Through whom?'<sup>2</sup>

The main question Lenin raises here refers to the forms and methods of Soviet trade. But he also separates commodity relations within the state sector from those outside that sector. Lenin shows that the workers' state sells the commodities at its disposal in *different ways* to *different* classes and social groups—in exchange for money or labour to workers and salary-earners, and in exchange for corn to the peasants. This concrete differentiated approach is the only possible method of approach and can help disentangle the web of opinions and standpoints woven in the long controversy over the nature of commodities under socialism.

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<sup>1</sup> It would be interesting to analyse the social-economic content of the *sale for labour*. It is doubtless a novel thing.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'To N. I. Bukharin', *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 539.

That the sale of state-made products in exchange for peasant corn is exchange of commodities is self-evident, because it amounts to mutual alienation and appropriation of products by different owners. But is the product sold by the state to workers and salary-earners, that is, to persons employed in the state sector who can give nothing in exchange save their labour, also a commodity? Marx thought otherwise. Yet in so doing he postulated complete socialisation of the means of production. But what if socialisation is initially *incomplete*? Would the socialist state, compelled to trade and to produce commodities, enter into commodity-money relations with the proletariat? Does the domination of market ties affect the relationship of proletarians and their state, making Marx's outline of socialism inapplicable in practice?<sup>1</sup>

To get our bearings we must first determine the factor from which Marx deduced the non-commodity nature of the distribution of products under socialism. It is *socialised property* that shapes the nature of the relations of production. By uniting people socialised property *rules out* commodity relations between the state, i.e. society as a whole, the collective, on the one hand, and the individual labourer, on the other. Because it rules out any mutual confrontation as independent owners between the collective and the individual.

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<sup>1</sup> This question also concerns the character of the state. What kind of a proletarian dictatorship is it if it confronts the proletariat as a proprietor? Seen in this light, the state is, as it were, divorced from society, above society or, as the revisionists say, 'alienated' from society.

Can the commodity relations prevailing in other sectors of the economy, or between these sectors, affect this relationship? Certainly not, because commodity relations are extraneous and are not conditioned by the distinctive qualities of socialist property (the artificially invented 'predisposition' must not be taken seriously); they cannot therefore influence the nature of the ties between worker and collective within the state sector.

Due to the commodity nature of social production one may get the impression that the relations within the socialist sector are at odds with Marx's view of the future socialist society. But this impression is wrong. True, the state of society as a whole does not entirely correspond to what Marx had said, because non-socialist economic forms and commodity exchange survive for some time. But, certainly, the economic relations between working people within the state sector of social production do coincide with Marx's vision in every way.

Take a product made in a state enterprise and the relations that arise over this product between different owners. In its natural form it is a means of production, on the one hand, and an object of consumption, on the other. The product is not a commodity until it enters the sphere of distribution. All the same, it is an aggregate of goods possessing the form of commodities, that is, recorded as formal values. Each product of socialist industry has the integument of a commodity and possesses *formal* value. The products are manufactured for the *seeming* purpose of exchange with other commodity producers. In certain

conditions they may be converted into *real* values, into actual commodities.

But this occurs only when the product is taken outside the given form of property and passes into the possession of another owner. Almost all the means of production made in state enterprises remain in the possession of the state. They do not change owners, merely passing from one industry to another, from one enterprise to another. There are mutual settlements by enterprises supplying equipment and enterprises receiving it. The settlements are made in terms of money. And this creates the illusion that means of production are commodities. Yet in substance this sort of transfer is not alienation from one owner and appropriation by another, but merely, as Lenin put it, 'transfer of *management*'<sup>1</sup> from one economic field to another. Here the commodity-value integument is just a *form of accounting* and is in no way a characteristic of the exchange of activities between state enterprises. It is entirely correct to say, therefore, that determination of the value of the means of production that remain in the possession of the state 'is essential for calculating, for settling accounts, for determining the profit or loss of enterprises, for checking and controlling enterprises'—merely the 'formal side of the matter'.<sup>2</sup>

It is different in the case of the relatively small portion of state-manufactured means

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'To D. I. Kursky on the Question of Leases and Concessions in Agriculture', *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 551.

<sup>2</sup> J. V. Stalin, *Ekonomicheskie problemy sotsializma v SSSR*, p. 52.

of production that enters the sphere of commodity circulation. It includes farm machinery, implements and tools sold to farmers, and raw materials exported to foreign markets. Here, the formal value of the product becomes real value, and commodity in form becomes commodity in fact.

Apart from means of production, a substantial portion of the social product consists of objects of consumption. To perform their social function, these products must enter into the individual possession of separate persons. This creates the impression that the transfer of a product from the hands of the state to the hands of the individual has the same content in all cases. In fact, however, the state's realisation of objects of consumption must be analysed in each separate case as to *who* is the 'buyer', to *what* class he belongs, and *in what sector of the economy he is employed or whether he works at all*.

The state's 'sale' of objects of consumption to the worker is, in effect, issue to the worker of his share of the social product proportionally to the labour he has put into the common undertaking less the appropriate deductions for common national needs. *As co-owner of social property and employee of a state enterprise* the worker receives only what is potentially his own as a member of a work collective. Here, individual distribution according to labour is, first, a means of maintaining the active condition of the social labour power and, second, a means of securing the aim of social production, namely, the maximum satisfaction (at the level achieved in production) of the needs of the working people—this latter

being a substantive and distinctive feature of socialism.

No matter that the product acquired by the worker possesses formal value and has a commodity integument. In essence it is not a commodity because it lacks the main characteristic of a commodity—its being transferred outside the given form of property, its being alienated. In this respect objects of consumption placed at the personal disposal of workers do not differ from the state-owned means of production which, though turned over by one enterprise to another, are not alienated to *another* owner.

This social, in substance non-commodity, relationship is obscured by the existence of cash wages and salaries, which impart a commodity form to the relations of distribution, causing some scholars to suggest that labour power, too, is a commodity inasmuch as money is being paid for it. These false ideas impose themselves when only separate 'purchase-and-sale' transactions are examined, rather than social relations as a whole. Then it may really appear as though the worker deals not with a collective to which he is related by common property, but with an independent commodity-owner. In such cases we must bear in mind that as an owner the socialist state cannot be conceived apart from the workers. The socialist state is the proletariat organised as the dominant class. Hence the working class is the organised collective owner of the means of production and of the product who precludes any contraposition of the interests and the property of society to the interests and property of individual

members of society. Given this collective ownership, money disbursed to workers as wages ceases to be money and, though retaining the form of money, performs a different function.

Demonstrating the fallacy of Dühring's notions about the nature of distribution in a society where socialised property is dominant, Engels ridicules the quasi-scholar's ideas about commodity exchange within the commune by means of metal coins.

'The exchange,' he writes, 'is effected through the medium of metal money, and Herr Dühring is not a little proud of the "world-historic import" of this reform. But in the trading between the commune and its members the money is *not* money at all, it does not function in any way as money. It serves as a mere labour certificate; to use Marx's phrase, it "is merely evidence of the part taken by the individual in the common labour, and of his right to a certain portion of the common produce destined for consumption", and in carrying out this function, it is "no more 'money' than a ticket for the theatre". It can therefore be replaced by any other token, just as Weitling replaces it by a "ledger", in which the labour-hours worked are entered on one side and means of subsistence taken as compensation on the other. In a word, in the trading of the economic commune with its members it functions merely as Owen's "labour money", that "phantom" which Herr Dühring looks down upon so disdainfully, but nevertheless is himself compelled to introduce into his economics of the future. Whether the token which certifies the measure



of fulfilment of the "obligation to produce", and thus of the earned "right to consume" is a scrap of paper, a counter or a gold coin is absolutely of no consequence for *this* purpose. For other purposes, however, it is by no means immaterial, as we shall see later.<sup>1</sup>

The money acting here as the workers' wage ceases to be money because it does not perform two *essential* functions—those of being a measure of value and a means of circulation. It is *not* a measure of value because it is issued to the worker not as an equivalent of his labour power as a commodity, but as a voucher certifying to labour expenditures of a directly societal nature. *Neither* is money here a means of circulation because there is no real commodity circulation within the state sector. Unlike capitalism, where wages are a monetary expression of the value of labour power, the price of the worker's hands, wages under socialism express the worker's share in the social product, the size of which does *not* depend on the value of labour power but on the quantity and quality of his labour input. The remarkable thing is that Lenin saw this specific feature of socialist production relations at the very beginning of the transitional period. He endorsed the view that *in the conditions of the proletarian dictatorship society gave the worker not a wage but a social-labour ration.*<sup>2</sup> 'This ought to be developed (to the detriment of the dozens of pages with "points of view")',<sup>3</sup> he wrote in reference to

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<sup>1</sup> F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1978, pp. 367-68.

<sup>2</sup> See *Lenin Miscellany XI*. Moscow, p. 389 (in Russian).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

the scholastic disquisitions of various authors. This is convincing evidence that Lenin regarded cash wages in socialist society as merely the form of a new social relation, a merely outward form that only determined the quantity of the product turned over to the worker for personal consumption.

But apart from the portion of state-made objects of consumption consumed by those working in the state sector, there is also a portion that meets the needs of the farmers. This portion is sold and becomes a commodity because it leaves the state sector and changes owners. In sum, state production is only partly commodity production because *not all* its product is put on the commodity market.

This is wholly consonant with Lenin's opinion that commodity is an all-encompassing category so long as the system of social production is anarchistic and unplanned.<sup>1</sup>

This spontaneity is eliminated in the transitional period—as the socialist state acquires requisite experience—in relation to the state-owned means of production and the objects of consumption that pass into the hands of

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<sup>1</sup> That this is not everlastingly so is seen from capitalist practice in the monopoly stage. 'When capitalists work for defence, i.e., for the state,' Lenin wrote, summing up the economic lessons of the First World War, 'it is obviously no longer pure capitalism but a special form of national economy. Pure capitalism means commodity production. And commodity production means work for an *unknown* and free market. But the capitalist "working" for defence does not "work" for the market at all—he works on government *orders*, very often with money loaned by the state' ('Introduction of Socialism or Exposure of Plunder of the State', V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 68-69).

the workers employed in socialist enterprises. Hence Lenin's conclusion that *as the spontaneous production process is supplanted by planned regulation of production, the commodity turns into 'a product going into public consumption not through the market',<sup>1</sup>* but through the system of state non-commodity distribution.

The peasant running a farm of his own usually sold his product to the workers, the state, to other peasants, and so on, entering into a commodity-money relationship with them. He used the money thus obtained to buy things he needed, first of all manufactured consumer goods. Here, the product of a state enterprise entering into a real commodity relationship acquired not only formal, but also real value. In this way, a socialist product that was a non-commodity in one relationship became a commodity in another relationship.

If this is so, and if the worker gets the product by direct distribution while the peasant buys the commodity for money, how does this square with the fact that worker and peasant alike acquire the product at one and the same shop, at one and the same price, presenting the same legal tender? Does this not mean that worker and peasant are perfectly equal in the act of purchasing a product belonging to the state? These questions are wholly legitimate. More, they are necessary, because the idea that the content of the worker's and peasant's relation to the state-owned product is different *does* diverge from daily

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<sup>1</sup> See *Lenin Miscellany XI*, Moscow, p. 388 (in Russian) (*italics in the text are mine—R.K.*).

practices and is apprehended as a paradox. Yet, there is nothing unnatural about this divergence of appearance and substance, of the empirical fact and the theoretical construction. On the contrary. 'Scientific truth,' wrote Marx, 'is always a paradox, if judged by everyday experience, which catches only the delusive appearance of things.'<sup>1</sup>

The distribution of objects of consumption manufactured by state enterprises derives its essence not from the manner of the product's transfer to the consumer but from the *relation to state property* of the worker labouring directly in a state-owned factory and of the peasant who, prior to entering a collective farm, had run his own farm and had marketed the products of his labour.

Products in a state-owned shop may come to the worker or the peasant. And neither seller nor buyer will question the identity of their acts of acquiring objects of consumption. It would never occur to anyone to differentiate between the quantity of commodities sold, and the quantity of non-commodities directly distributed. Since it is not known who acquires the product, all consumer objects have the form of a commodity irrespective of the consumer's class background, for they are made for consumption and are *seemingly* intended for sale. They are formal values that may or may not become real values. The actual nature of the product and the specific relation of distribution are unknown as long

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'Wages, Price and Profit'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 54.

as the product is in a state of *rest*, reposing in storage or on the shelf of a shop. This does not become known until the consummation of the act of its realisation, i.e. its passage into the sphere of consumption—in *motion*, in the movement of the product out of the hands of the state to the hands of the individual.

The worker who acquires an article in a shop does not transact a purchase because he is the co-owner of the articles in the shop. The product's form of a commodity is immaterial; it merely facilitates the product's realisation, its transfer to the sphere of consumption, in a purely *quantitative* way as a form of accounting. In terms of the *qualitative* side of this social relationship we simply witness the issue to the worker, a member of the collective owner, of his share of the social product. Here money performs the function of public vouchers entitling their bearer to a portion of the consumer products.

The peasant (not member of a co-operative) is in an entirely different position. In the transitional period when the 'system under which the means of production were owned by the working class, a working class that held political power'<sup>1</sup> has clearly taken root, the peasant does not yet belong to the publicly-owned sector; he runs a private farm and sells the products of his labour in the market. With the money he gets for his products he goes to a state-owned shop and buys the consumer objects he may need. This amounts to an ordinary act of sale and purchase. While

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'On Co-operation', *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 472.

in the worker's case this act is of a purely formal nature, it is real for the peasant. *The worker did not have to sell anything in order to acquire the right to a portion of the social product. He obtained that right by his labour.* The peasant running a private farm, on the other hand, had first to take the results of his labour to the market. The money he received there certified to the social value of his labour and enabled him to acquire consumer objects from the state. *The worker's relation to the state is not mediated by anything other than his own activity.* The peasant's relation to the state is far more complicated. As an independent proprietor he does not take part in creating the state-owned product, which fact necessitates the mediation of money in his economic relations with the state.

In the *worker's* relation to the state his claim to a portion of the product is based on *direct labour in its concrete form.* In the *private farmer's* case the claim is based on money as the *universal equivalent* that certifies to the social value of the private producer's labour.

Hence, there is nothing unusual about the fact that one and the same article in a state shop may become a commodity if bought by a peasant and remain a non-commodity if it is transferred into the hands of a worker. This is no sophism, no game at paradoxes. It reflects the facts as they are conditioned by the essence of the relations of production.

In fact, this is one of the most striking confirmations of the Marxist postulate that the truth is always concrete. This is why even in the transitional period Soviet trade (like all trade by a proletarian state) which, it

is generally held, deals in commodities, is really divided into two types:

a) distribution of products that are commodities only in form (*within* the state sector) and

b) trade in real commodity values (*outside* the state sector).

So far, we have been examining the society of the *transitional period* when the independent peasant was the central figure in farming. Then, in the early thirties, a revolutionary change occurred which put the large peasant class on the socialist road. The peasants entered into association with each other on the basis of socialist property—a process that has gone down in history as collectivisation. But this association did not occur on the scale of the whole people as in the case of the workers, but on a local scale of one or several villages. The millions of family farms gave place to thousands of group farms, to collective producers. In relation to other artels, as these associations were known, and to the state, each artel retained a certain degree of independence as the owner of some of the means of production and as owner of the product.

We need not here go into the various special features of an agricultural artel. We merely want to stress that it is a collective of working peasants and that it reproduces in miniature the most substantive features of the *socialist* organisation of workers in the state sector. The collective farmers work on land owned by the whole people that has been placed in their use in perpetuity. The social (group) form of ownership of the means of production

is dominant, with the so-called *undistributable fund* (machinery, seed, buildings, cattle, etc.) identical in effect to property of the whole people as the main foundation of collective farming. The sum-total of the collective, farmers' labour power constitutes the single social labour power of the collective and the product it yields is collective property.

And this interesting sidelight: for a considerable length of time the socialist nature of the relations of distribution on collective farms was somehow more clearly visible than in state enterprises, for here it often operated directly, without the commodity-value integument. To keep track of labour expenditure, the collective farms used a unit of mean labour time known as the workday unit. Unlike the state sector, where labour time expended in making an object was always indirectly represented in terms of a conventional value, that is, through a definite proportion in which one product could be exchanged for another, the measure used for this directly and immediately on collective farms was labour time.

It stands to reason that alongside this form of accounting there was also value accounting in monetary terms. This was necessary, first, due to close economic ties with the state and, second, because the collective farms come to the market as sellers of their product. More, the practice of the economically sound collective farms showed that the money form was more practical and more advantageous. As a result, the accounting in workday units was abolished and kolkhozes went over to the system of guaranteed payments to the farmers.

In any case, this evolution shows that the



content of production relations in state enterprises is concealed behind a commodity form, a fact that often misled students of socialist economics. The kolkhoz, on the other hand, was a socialist enterprise where relations of distribution were not masked. The labour of each collective farmer was expressed not in money but in working time, in so-called work-day units. The substance and content of this expression of labour expenditure both in state enterprises and on collective farms was the same. The difference was only in the form. In the former case the immediate social labour was registered in the form of value, and in the latter units of mean working time were used for the same purpose. And these forms investing the same content existed simultaneously in enterprises belonging to the two types of socialist property.

In agricultural artels there was no appearance of commodity relations between kolkhoz and farmer: a certain portion of the product was issued in physical form against workdays worked and registered in the farmer's name. No money was needed to receive what he had earned. This did not conflict with the monetary payments for workdays made out of funds obtained through sale of the collective farm's product outside the farm, on the market, for it did not signify that the relationship between the co-operative and its members in the act of distribution was a commodity-money relationship.<sup>1</sup> In the present conditions the example of the kolkhoz is an especially clear illus-

<sup>1</sup> This confirms, and certainly does not negate, the non-commodity character of relations on collective farms. Nor is this altered by the fact that in recent

tration of the non-commodity character of distribution both in substance and in form.

To determine the content of the so-called commodity relations between state and worker we could from the very outset have referred to the example of collective farms which illustrates the essentially non-commodity character of socialist distribution and helps to see it as it really is. We could have drawn the conclusion that since both state enterprises and collective farms are socialist enterprises, and since distribution on collective farms is of a non-commodity nature, it is also of a non-commodity nature at state enterprises. The conclusion would be correct but no more than merely probable because it would have been drawn from a deduction by analogy. This is why we did not follow this course and picked a more determinative argument—the fundamental exposition of the essence of socialist relations of production by Marx and the relation of this essence to the commodity form.

A graphic argument showing that we are really dealing with economic relations of a non-commodity character merely clothed in a commodity-value integument is the existence, alongside distribution according to labour (wages, workday units), of rudiments of distribution according to needs through social

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years collective farms have gone over to cash payment for labour. The workday, where it is still used, remains the measure of expended socially necessary working time, and retains its specific essence. This is clearly emphasised by the formal nature of money used or settlements within the collective farm, the owner of the means of production. Here we have an analogue with state enterprises.

consumption funds. Out of these funds the population is provided free medical care, free education and professional training, grants, allowances, pensions, students' stipends, free or cut-rate accommodation in sanatoria and holiday homes, and various other benefits.

The fact that distribution of this portion of the social product is non-commodity in character is confirmed, first, by the fact that a considerable part of the material benefits and services are provided gratis, in physical form, irrespective of the quantity and quality of the individual's labour. A person receiving medical treatment or nourishment in a hospital, sanatorium, or holiday home is not related (even in appearance) to these material values as to commodities. Second, payment of large sums to persons not participating in social production (pensioners, students, and others) shows the non-monetary role of money used for this: products are given to the individual by the state, but their physical form and quantity are chosen within definite limits by the consumer himself; the money form is more convenient than food or goods rations precisely because it facilitates choice. Here we actually have a free transfer of the object of consumption into the hands of the consumer (*without compensation by labour*).

Let us compare this form of distribution with distribution according to work. If the former is only formal commodity distribution, the latter may be commodity distribution proper. But on what grounds? Aren't the same agents involved in both acts? Does the measurement of the product obtained against the quantity

and quality of work oppose the state as property owner to the collective of workers? Is anything new generated here or does the product distributed according to labour and the product entering the sphere of consumption through social funds represent relations of essentially one and the same type?

The situation under socialism is distinctive precisely because direct issue of products (involving commodity-value forms) within the collective of workers, who are also proprietors, occurs in two forms distinguished one from the other by *the presence or absence of a direct link with the results of the activity* of the individual, and not by the fact that one is essentially a commodity and the other is not. You get part of the products through *earning* them, while the other part is given to you *gratis* by society. Labour compensation for consumed goods, the existence of control over the measure of labour and measure of consumption, which give rise to different (including conventional value) forms of recording material outlays, cannot in content be a basis for commodity-money relations. This was shown by Marx, and the same thing is confirmed by the practice of socialist and communist construction.

The fact that distribution according to labour and distribution through social funds are of one type (despite their different degree of communist maturity) may be seen from the growth of the latter as the level of the production of material goods rises and labour gradually becomes a prime vital need. In 1976 every Soviet citizen received 15.4 times more on average out of public funds than

in 1940. In due course an ever greater part of the products whose distribution was formerly limited and regulated will be issued directly to the citizens of socialist society without the commodity-value relationship.

Such progress of obviously non-commodity forms of distribution would hardly be practicable if we conceived all objects of consumption distributed according to labour as commodities. The relative ease with which society goes over from paid to free distribution as it gains the requisite level of production is due to the fact that *payment is not based on real commodity relations, but is necessary as a material incentive of labour.* In a society where life is sustained through exchange of commodity equivalents this development of free forms of satisfying needs is impossible.

While the content of economic relations in the state sector, and also within each collective farm, is thus of a non-commodity nature, the relations between the two forms of property are, however, undeniably commodity relations. The emergence of large collective farms does not abolish commodity exchange because, as we have already said, agriculture is associated not on a countrywide but on a local scale. And since kolkhozes handle their means of production and their product independently, there also remains a certain—not only organisational but also economic—separateness of the now already collective producer-owners which is according to Lenin one of the criteria of commodity production. The products mutually alienated and exchanged by enterprises of the different sectors or forms of property become commodities. Means

of production and objects of consumption produced by state industry acquire commodity content aside from the common commodity form and become real values if sold to collective farms or collective farmers. The surplus output of collective farms and part of the incomes collective farmers receive in kind also become commodities. On receiving the 'wage' in kind, say, in the form of corn, a farmer's family sells part of it on the market to meet its needs, using the money thus obtained along with money received for workdays from the collective farm to buy the desired objects of consumption. Production continues to be commodity production even though there are now no private commodity producers.

#### **4. Complication of the Content of Commodity-Value Categories—a Sign of Their Dialectical Self-Negation**

The directly social character of labour that predicates the new nature of commodities and their gradual self-negation should not be regarded as immutable. Its emergence occurs as the degree of socialisation increases and as the distinctions in technical equipment, productivity, profitability, and the like, that exist at present between different socialist enterprises are gradually eliminated. The existence of value categories plays a prominent part in determining socially necessary outlays for making a product. As a result, they are not merely formal, but also—in the context of achieving any given aim—conceptual. The work of an individual or a col-

lective of individuals is directly social in these circumstances, but not in a complete or consummate form, being to a *certain extent* mediated by means of the economic mechanism, which includes the functioning of the law of value. By and large, the incompleteness of the development of socialist labour as immediately social is obvious. The problem is to determine this 'certain extent' of the mediation of labour by commodity-value relations specific for the present period.

In popular economic literature commodity relations are often portrayed as an exchange of products or a purchase-and-sale relationship between a) state enterprises, b) the state, on the one hand, and employees of the state sector, on the other, c) the state and its employees, on the one hand, and the collective farms, collective farmers and consumer and producer cooperatives, on the other, and d) between collective farms, collective farmers, and consumer and producer cooperatives.

By virtue of the essence of socialist relations of production, determined by public property in the means of production, we should accept for these four groups the commodity form of exchange. But matters go no farther than form alone. Exchange between state enterprises (group 'a') within the frame of one form of property and not involving alienation of the product does not come under the head of real commodity relations. Neither do relations of distribution between the state and the employees of state enterprises and offices (group 'b') which, though they are commodity relations in form, do not in substance involve an exchange of equal values. There remain

groups 'c' and 'd', that is, relations arising between different collective owners or workers in different sectors. These relations do *retain a commodity content*.

The fact that, for example, group 'c' can itself be sub-divided into relations 1) between state and collective farms, 2) state and collective farmers, 3) workers and collective farms, and 4) workers and collective farmers, shows how complicated is the aggregate of socialist exchange relations. This variety of organisations and individuals with different social status and class background makes us wonder whether the relations they enter are of one and the same type and whether, perhaps, the content of exchange changes depending on the identification of the individual concerned with the one or the other form of property.

The same applies to the commodity. By commodity we mean, first, a product retaining the form of commodity and possessing formal value solely due to the need for strict registration of outlays of social production in the absence of forms of accounting other than value accounting and, second, a product alienated by one owner to another owner and possessing real value, that is, a real commodity. Evidently, here different things are put under one and the same head on the basis of their formal resemblance despite differing radically from each other.

This often causes confusion over the question of commodities. It can be overcome if we separate quasi-commodity from real commodity and see the true content beneath the form.



According to Marx commodity is a unity of two opposites, namely, use value and value. The use value of a thing or its utility is created by the concrete labour of its producer and means different things under different social-economic systems. In conditions of capitalist production it has no independent meaning and acts as bearer of value which the capitalist is occupied in increasing. *In socialist countries, on the other hand, increasing value is secondary, while the utility of the object, its ability to satisfy a human need, is given precedence, this fully conforming with the aim of socialist production.* Value, the content of which is abstract labour embodied in a commodity and showing itself in a definite exchange relation, is here an entirely different thing. It changes some of its essential features and its role is gradually reduced to that of a form of registering social labour and the quantity of use values.

In socialist society it is customary to consider the product made by the state and distributed ('sold') to workers of state enterprises and offices a commodity. *Use value*, that is, its ability to satisfy a human need, *is its main aspect*. At the same time it is the result of an outlay of direct social labour measured in terms of formal value, i.e. value that is no longer a social relation of exchange between individual commodity producers but can still indirectly express the outlay of social labour.

In short, the product in question is a use value plus a formal value. Being devoid of real value it ceases to be a commodity and becomes a formal commodity or, in fact, a *non-commodity*.

..Second, products made by the state and sold to kolkhozes and collective farmers are also put under the head of commodity. Possessing use value, and as a product of a state enterprise also formal value, they acquire real value and become a *commodity* when they go to another owner and are alienated from the state sector.

We must not think, however, that this commodity is in all respects the same as commodities in the previous social-economic systems. The state-manufactured socialist commodity is made not by private labour as before, but by the directly social labour of industrial workers. This is an important distinction. It is not the purpose of this book to go in detail into the fundamental difference between a commodity in socialist society and a commodity coming from a private owner. That highly relevant topic could be the object of a special study. A commodity made with socialised means of production is at first collectively owned. This gives it features that serve notice of passage to a new type of exchange of activity, a step forward from commodity towards non-commodity. Here we should take Lenin's formula as our point of departure. 'Manufactured goods made by socialist factories and exchanged for the foodstuffs produced by the peasants,' he said, 'are not commodities in the politico-economic sense of the word; at any rate, they are not only commodities, they are no longer commodities, they are ceasing to be commodities!'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Instructions of the Council of Labour and Defence to Local Soviet Bodies', *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 384.

Agricultural products sold by collective farms and collective farmers to the state, to workers, and sometimes to members of other kolkhozes are the third type of commodity. On the collective farm these products have use value and formal value like state-manufactured commodities. When exchanged they acquire real value.

At the collective farm they are products of directly social labour, differing from commodities made in previous societies in social character and from state-manufactured commodities by the lower degree of socialisation of the labour embodied in them.

Finally, some commodities are products of the personal labour of citizens of socialist society sold in the market and possessing the same features as commodities in pre-socialist societies.

Looking at the substance of the matter, it should be said that the first group does not come under the head of commodities. The fourth group can be safely ignored because it is on its way out. The second and third encompass the bulk of the objects made at socialist enterprises and circulating as commodities.

In a socialist economy the transformation of a non-commodity (a commodity only in a formal sense) into a commodity, of formal value into value, is highly peculiar. All products passing from one form of property into another are subject to it. The product may even have several transformations. Take farm produce, say, butter, which was bought by the state from collective farms and was thus a real commodity. Its sale through state

...retail outlets to workers is, however, of a non-commodity nature. This conversion of a commodity into a non-commodity and back again, sometimes impossible to record, is a specific feature of the socialist-type economy.

In socialist society the same thing happens to money. As we have already noted, if a worker spends it in a state-operated shop, it only has the form of money. But if he spends it at the kolkhoz market, this social voucher of his labour is confronted with real commodities—products sold by collective farms or collective farmers. In this event the social vouchers act as money possessing the function of a universal equivalent (unity of measure of value and means of circulation). Consequently, that which is usually called money is more a labour voucher in the context of economic relations within the state sector; if used at a collective-farm market where it is confronted by commodities, the voucher performs the role of *money*.

When a collective farmer goes to a state-operated shop, he presents what we regard as the same vouchers which became money and were received by him at the market for his own product or products issued to him by the collective farm. In this case there is a real act of purchase and sale, meaning that farmer and state enter into a commodity-money relationship. The same rouble symbolises different social relations in the hands of a worker and in those of a farmer. And this is no theoretical sleight-of-hand but a real fact stemming from the existence of two forms of socialist property.

Since the natural form of money does not represent any use value and its use value consists exclusively in the ability of providing desired objects to its owner by passing into the hands of another, it does not stay in one and the same place for long and does not perform one role but moves from hand to hand as mediator in different acts of purchase and sale, exchange, distribution, and the like. For this reason it may retain the properties of money in one act of purchase and sale between different owners, and in another lose these properties and act as a voucher. And so forth: transformation of money into non-money, that is, into labour vouchers as its own antithesis, then a reverse conversion of labour vouchers into money when they return to the market. An endless chain of transitions and transformations wholly elusive empirically but open to theoretical analysis.

Having examined the peculiarities of concepts known as 'commodity', 'value', and 'money', all of which are categories of commodity production, we may therefore draw a number of conclusions. The present concept 'commodity' stands for two different but in form similar phenomena: a) *formal commodity* which is not a commodity in the Marxist sense of the word and b) *a commodity in content as well as form*.

The concept 'value' stands for a) *formal value* and is an old integument for a new, socialist content and b) *value per se* as the intrinsic property of commodity.

'Money', too, is a concept that encompasses two different things: in *one* sense (on the commodity market) it is the universal equivalent,

that is a) a measure of value, b) a means of circulation, c) a means of payment, d) a means of socialist accumulation, and e) world money (on the world market)—in other words, *money* in essence; in the *other* sense (within the state sector) money is the certificate of expended direct social labour and can only conditionally be called money. Since the same coins and banknotes may at different times serve as money and as vouchers, we have got to distinguish between their two essentially different functions.

As we have shown, in socialist society the seemingly insignificant division of 'commodities' into commodities in the formal sense and real commodities is of prime importance. Any other approach would cast doubt on the socialist character of state property, leading to negation of the proletarian or people's character of the socialist state. If what the worker acquires in the distributive outlets of the state were conceived as commodities we would be left in the dark about the intrinsic processes of the socialist economy. It is revisionists, the putative champions of creative Marxism, who contrast the state as owner to the worker as buyer.

To put an end to these distortions we must clarify certain aspects of theory that are liable to be misinterpreted. It is high time, for one thing, to recognise that products in socialist enterprises are distributed not contrary but according to Marx, without the slightest departure in substance from the ideas he propounded in *Capital* and in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. The fact that Marx did not raise the question of commodity exchange

between collective producers in a socialist society is no reason for us to question his ideas about the state of affairs within collectives.

To obviate any incorrect understanding of the new content of commodity production under socialism it would probably be worth our while to work out some new concepts or at least some additional terms to designate the objectively functioning *commodities in the formal sense, formal value, and formal money*. Once this is done, as we see it, we will be able to scientifically express the distinctiveness of the socialist economic system.

'It is necessary in communist construction to make full use of commodity-money relations in keeping with their new content in the socialist period,'<sup>1</sup> says the Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Fulfilment of this demand depends on successful development of Marxist-Leninist social science—'the scientific basis for the guidance of the development of society.'<sup>2</sup>

## **5. Circulation of Material Elements in Socialist Production**

The working class, the leading force of socialist society, does not sell its labour power. It does not therefore have a commodity relationship with the state, that is, with itself. This upsets the revisionist lie that socialist state

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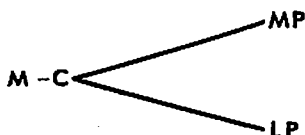
<sup>1</sup> *The Road to Communism*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1962, p. 536.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 574.

enterprises are state-capitalist in character; it also upsets the dogmatic conception of the essence of commodity production under socialism.

Let us pass from the argument in favour of this proposition presented above to an examination of the circulation of resources in socialist production.

Under capitalism labour power is the property of the proletarian, who makes his livelihood chiefly by selling it. Only capitalists have the means to acquire means of production. To begin the process of production, they unite in their hands the one and the other property, buying labour power in addition to means of production. This initial act has the appearance of a purchase of a dual type of commodity and is expressed by Marx as follows:

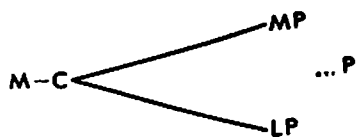


where M is the capitalist's money, C the commodity, and MP (means of production) and LP (labour power) are the elements into which C breaks up in its natural form.

The capitalist wants to make the maximum use of the labour power to manufacture a surplus product in all the time for which it has been sold to him, regardless of the effects on the worker's condition. The interests of the owner of the means of production are opposite to those of the owner of labour power.

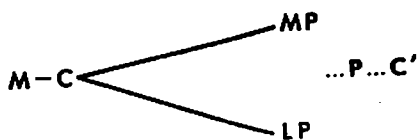


Since the fusion of LP and MP has already occurred, all essentials are at hand to begin production. The formula gains a new link:

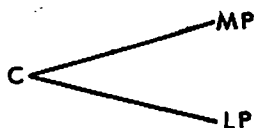


where P stands for production.

The product resulting from production is a commodity whose value exceeds the value of the elements of production. This gives the formula one more link:



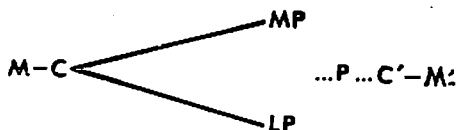
where the value of  $C'$  equals a) the original



plus b) a certain accretion of commodity value (c) created by labour power.

The capitalist sells the manufactured product  $C'$  for a sum of money,  $M'$ . This sum exceeds the originally advanced sum  $M$  by a certain magnitude  $m$ —expressing the accretion of the value  $c$ . This series of transformations

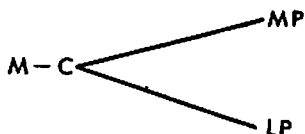
follows:



where  $M'$  equals  $M + m$ .

In this formula  $c$ , which becomes  $m$  after the commodity is sold, is the surplus value appropriated by the capitalist. The worker gets only the value of his labour power.

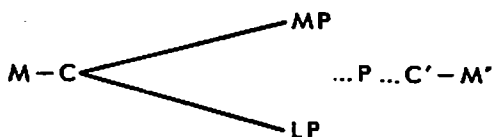
In the circulation of the material elements of state socialist production we find analogous forms. Externally, they differ very little from the capitalist forms. The establishment of a new industrial enterprise always involves considerable capital outlays—for buildings, technical equipment, machinery and raw materials, and hire of labour power. Since money is always a voucher of value, the money advanced for wages appears as a monetary expression of the value of labour power. On the face of it, the act has not changed:



which is followed by the process of production.

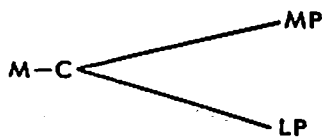
Through the application of labour power (LP) to the means of production (MP) we get a product which assumes the form of a commodity and is greater in value than the advanced resources. Giving it to the consumer, the state gets money for it. This com-

pletes one cycle of the movement. The series of transformations already familiar to us is thus, in effect, repeated:



That the relations resemble those which occur under capitalism is borne out by the practice of accounting. For the book-keeper this order appears permanent and immutable. What else could it be? *Only by representing the series of transformations in the course of production as a chain of operations with commodity values can he possibly account for the real values and carry out cost-accounting control over production, ensuring it against losses.*

In substance, however, this is the old form adapted to new conditions. It cannot be used in a competent politico-economic analysis. The above formula does not in content reflect the real economic relations. It should be entirely different. Under socialism money connects labour power and the means of production only in appearance: since the means of production are publicly owned, labour power is *directly* fused with them. From the formula



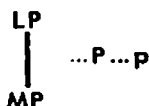
we must therefore remove M—C. What remains

LP  
|

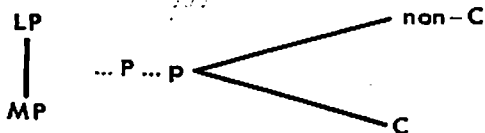
is MP—a connection of the personal and material elements of production. The next stage is the beginning of the process of production: LP ... P. The result of production

|  
MP

is the product, p. Now we have this formula:



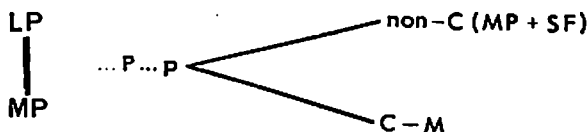
But what comes next? As we know, the product of production becomes partly a commodity, while the other part is distributed directly within the given sector. Hence its division into commodity and non-commodity, which we can designate as C and non-C. The series of transformations will then be:



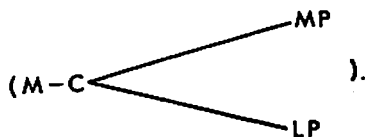
What goes into the commodity and the non-commodity parts of the product? Since most of the means of production, and also the products that comprise the social consumption funds (SF) remain in the hands of one and the same proprietor, they may be put under the head of non-commodities (non-C). The 'status' of the consumer goods distributed according to labour is still being discussed in

Soviet literature. Let us take the opinion of one of the contending sides, the one that regards consumer products as commodities. A certain part of the means of production, that which is sold by the state to another proprietor, the collective farm, also comes under the head of commodities. In our formula it will come under C.

The non-commodity products undergo no further changes, whereas the commodities have still to be sold. This act, C—M, completes one cycle of production:



To renew the production process there must be reproduction of the means of production (MP) and of labour power (LP). Under capitalism this is a simple operation: sale of C' yields M', a part of which is spent on buying new MP and labour power



In the socialist state sector, on the other hand, the first cycle, which begins with MP,

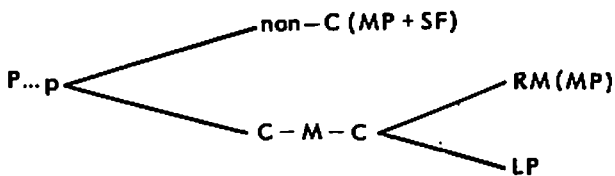
|  
LP

yields 1) a non-commodity, that is state-owned MP + SF and 2) money (M). What has happened to the labour power which had initially

been directly joined with the means of production? It has dropped out of the process of production due to the presumably commodity nature of the objects of consumption used for its renewal, and has been replaced by money.

According to this viewpoint, *first*, by buying commodities from the state the worker turns his labour power into a commodity and, *second*, the joining of labour power with means of production was possible only by hiring it for money, that is, by buying LP for the available MP. This means, *third*, that the direct joining of LP and MP typical under public ownership of the means of production is here *replaced* with a joining of the two elements through money, which is typical of capitalism. As a result, the original premise of the formula—*direct* connection between labour power and publicly-owned means of production—comes into collision with the presumed course of production. Consequently this connection appears as *mediate*.

Since apart from labour power money can also buy requisite raw materials (also means of production) from the collective farmers, the above formula will be:



where RM (MP) stands for the agricultural raw materials acquired from enterprises of

a different form of ownership. Hence, the ultimate result of the assumption that articles of consumption sold also to workers are by nature commodities, brings us back to the formula



that is, the connections typical of capitalism.

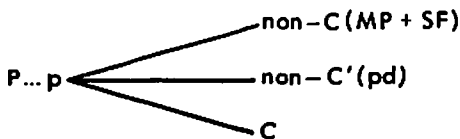
LP

The direct connection MP, symbolising the worker's ownership of the means of production, is, as it were, interrupted and replaced by the worker's relationship to property that is not his own, a relationship of purchase and sale of labour power.

To reconcile the theoretical scheme, built on the assumption that all consumer articles are commodities, with the actual state of affairs, we should, as we see it, proceed not from the form but from the content, not from conventional notions but from the *basis*—ownership of the means of production by the whole people. The working class, which creates all state production, has *no need* and, in fact, is *unable* to buy state-produced objects of consumption (that is, objects which also belong to him) as real commodities any more than *he is able* to sell to the state, that is, to himself, his labour power.

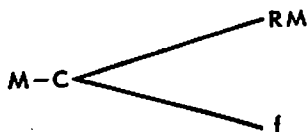
Going back to our formula, we must abandon the assumption that all consumer articles are commodities and put the product distributed

among workers of the state sector under the head of non-commodities (along with state-owned means of production and social funds). Designating these products as non-C' or pd, we get:

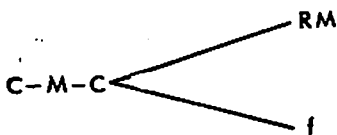


where MP is joined to the already operative public means of production, SF and non-C' (pd) renew the labour power and engage it in the production process, while C is sold to other proprietors.

The sale of the latter represents the act C—M. The money is then used to buy the requisite agricultural products—raw materials (RM) and food (f)

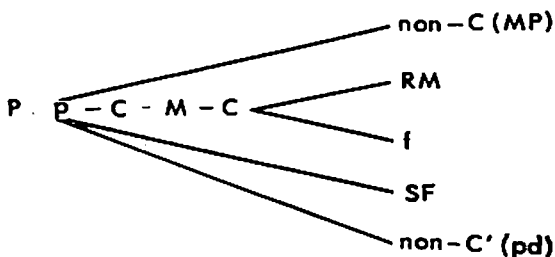


the whole formula will be:

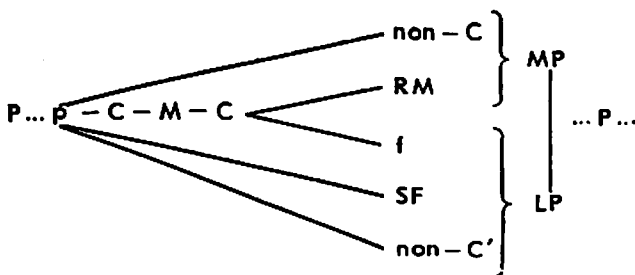


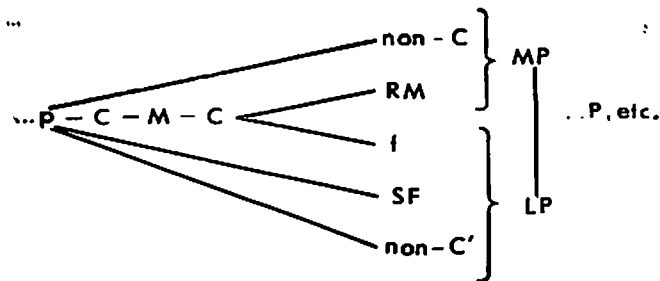


Adding the formula of commodity exchange to the general scheme, we get:

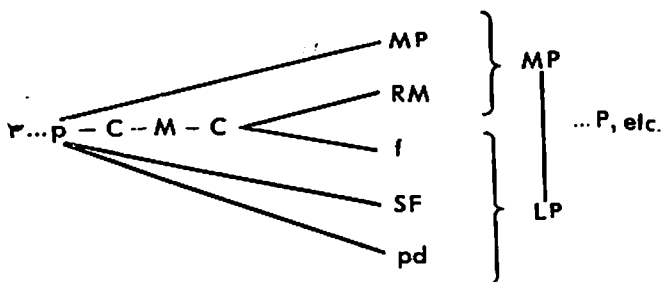


All these elements are now in the possession of the state and are distributed as follows: the non-commodity products of labour (non-C) absorb part of C-RM (agricultural raw materials) and form new MP; SF is separated from non-C and joined with non-C'. Furthermore, non-C' absorbs another part of C-f (articles of consumption produced on collective farms) and forms the sum-total of products distributed among workers of the state sector and used for compensating the outlays of labour power (LP). The immediate connection between MP and LP is thus restored and the process continues:





By replacing some of the symbols with equivalent ones, this may be expressed as follows:



The direct connection between the means of production and labour power is restored because *not all* articles of consumption are commodities. The idea that under public ownership of the means of production the worker receives not wages (usually understood as the sum of money equivalent to the value of labour power), but his social labour ration issued for direct social labour now appears in a somewhat different light.

The same scheme, with but a slight adjustment, is also applicable to collective-farm production. Since collective farms buy not

raw materials and food but machines and manufactured goods, the RM and f of the first formula should be replaced with appropriate designations. The rest of the formula looks the same.

Combatting distortions of the essence of the socialist system, we must also continue to expose attempts at identifying socialism with state capitalism. We must show that use of old forms in new conditions does not mean that the content is the same too. It changes radically. 'From the standpoint of the development of international communism, our work today has such a durable and powerful content (for Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat)', Lenin said, 'that it can *and must* manifest itself in any form, both new and old; it can and must regenerate, conquer and subjugate all forms, not only the new, but also the old—not for the purpose of reconciling itself with the old, but for the purpose of making all and every form—new and old—a weapon for the complete and irrevocable victory of communism.'<sup>1</sup>

This is doubly relevant during the active unfolding of communist construction, and is confirmed by economic, as well as political, analysis of the socialist scene. The old commodity-money *form* of connection between worker and state cannot alter the *non-commodity content* of the new, socialist relations of production, in which alienation of labour as an economic relationship is eliminated,

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Left-Wing Communism—an Infantile Disorder', *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 103.

and so is the material basis for the exploitation of man by man.

The concept that much of the social product is not a commodity in substance, though retaining a commodity integument, does not (as some authors would have us believe) contradict the spirit of the economic reform that is under way in the USSR since the mid-sixties. Unfortunately, the psychological impact of the word 'commodity' is so great that the ordinary consciousness sometimes clad in quasi-scientific form usually resists even timid attempts to look more deeply into the essence of economic phenomena.

To take seriously the 'commodity in essence' concept with all the consequences this entails (including exaggeration of the role of profit to the detriment of natural indicators of production) does not help improve methods of socialist economic management, as the experience of the Soviet 8th and 9th five-year plans (1966-1975) has amply borne out. *It is the purpose of the reform to assure precise accounting of labour outlays and to assure rational and realistic management by means of this accounting. And to our mind the 'commodity in form' concept, which represents outlays of social labour, is far more consonant than any other with the nature of the new economic relations.*

Attempts at interpreting the reform as an act tolerating a revival of elements of alienation of labour are not likely to benefit the socialist system, no matter how attractive the accompanying rhetoric may sound.

What is the purpose of our presenting the special economic problems at such length? The answer could be put as follows:

1. Economic relations of a commodity nature between the owner of the means of production and the owner of labour power have always been an expression of the *separation* of the latter from the material *conditions* of production and human life activity, which became a factor not subject to the control of the labourer and conditioning appropriation of the results of the labour of others. For Marx the examination of so complex a phenomenon as *alienation of labour* entailed study of the entire mechanism of commodity-money relations in capitalist society. And it is impossible to avoid the same with allowances for the new, socialist relationships when studying the *elimination* of the alienation of labour, that is, the process of subordinating to people the social forces they have created.

2. Analysing the types of dependence (as expressions of non-freedom) in the antagonistic society, Marx took note of a) personal dependence (slavery, feudal bondage) of the labourer on the owner of the means of production, and b) the objectified, impersonal dependence (given personal 'freedom') of the proletarian on the capitalist class (see Chapter II, section 3). Local isolation and narrowness typical of subsistence farming is overcome in the second stage, and, as Marx put it, 'there takes shape a system of universal social metabolism, of universal relationships, all-sided requirements, and universal assets. Free individuality (citing this passage a second time—*R.K.*) based on the universal development of individuals and the subordination of their joint, social productivity as their joint public possession, is the third stage. The

second produces the conditions for the third.<sup>1</sup> This third stage is socialism, which is a guarantee against alienation of the individual and abolishes impersonal dependence. The labourer's dependence on the exploiting class is replaced under socialism by *dependence on the results of the labourer's own activity, his dependence on himself, that is, by freedom.*

Referring to the people of the future communist society, Marx wrote that they would be 'universally developed individuals whose social relations, being their own social relations, are also subject to their own, public control, are not products of nature, but of history. The degree and the universality of the development of the potentials in which this individuality becomes possible, certainly presuppose production based on exchange-values, which, along with universal alienation of the individual from himself and from others, also produces the universality and all-sidedness of his relations and abilities.'<sup>2</sup>

Genuinely harmonious development of the personality, an expression of true emancipation, is possible only through appropriation of the material conditions and results of production and elimination from social relations of their elemental, uncontrolled, supra-human character. And the concept of socialist commodity presented above is an illustration of this.

3. The Programme of the Soviet Communist Party says that liberation from exploitation is the supreme expression of freedom. But

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Grundrisse...*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 75-76.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

can it be compatible with essentially commodity relations between the owner of the means of production as represented by the socialist state and the bearer of labour power, who would then confront each other as independent (and unequal) proprietors? By logic and fact the answer is negative. The concept of commodity-money relations under socialism presented here is aimed at eliminating the contradiction between the general theory of socialist society, which performs the leap to the realm of freedom, and the solution of a concrete theoretical problem that is so far sadly ambiguous.

4. Showing the intricate patterns of capitalist production, Marx calls attention to the fact that due to lack of control over their own social relations people tend to create false notions about them. The relations between people are seen as relations between things. The dependence of the worker's lot on his ability to make some *article*, the commodity owner's on sale of *commodities*, and the capitalist's on the *demand* for the products of his enterprise gives birth to a cult of material wealth, creating a distorted idea about their substance in bourgeois economics and working people's psychology.

Socialism destroys this commodity *fetishism* by a) introducing a scientific organisation of social production and b) transforming commodity relations in a way that they cannot be anything other than *relations between people*. This is possible only in a society where products do not confront their immediate producers as commodities. And survival of commodity relations between enterprises

belonging to different forms of property (while having become formal *within* the enterprises in question) alters nothing. True, the properties of these inter-sectoral or inter-kolkhoz relations of exchange of products often spread to many other relationships. But this occurs rather by analogy or on the basis of empirical observations than by virtue of a scientific understanding of the essence of socialist production.

5. One of the main arguments in favour of extending commodity-money relations to spheres where, as we have endeavoured to show, they are essentially of a formal character, is that, ostensibly, any other approach would inevitably ignore the law of value, would undermine the pillars of *khozrashchet* (economic accountability), and thereby damage economic practice. These fears, as we see it, are groundless. Besides, for us it is a mystery why, in order to avoid these undesirable effects, we must retain the action of the law of value in spheres where value has already become conditional and where the law of value is no longer an independent notion and has become a mere instrument for measuring and recording outlays of social labour subordinated to, and a part of the mechanism of, the *law of planned (proportional) development*.

Negation of the content of commodity-money relations between, say, the state and the worker or between state enterprises, which follows from the social meaning of these relations in the present period, does not disrupt the principles of socialist economy. To keep account of material values we do not have to put all produced material goods under the



head of real commodities, because many of them are registered as conventional commodities and remain so when they enter the sphere of consumption. Profitable production is inconceivable unless the outlays of labour are properly counted. And the question of profitability cannot be expunged even under communism. It will continue to be relevant even when commodity production will no longer be necessary.

It would be strange to assume that the realness of commodity and value will survive until that time, for it has already ceased to exist in intra-collective relations and is sure to disappear completely once the two forms of socialist property merge into one. As we see it, *khozrashchet* (economic accountability), which is essential in any planned economy, should not be associated with just the concepts of commodity production. Already it often reposes on conventional commodity-money relations. After one form of socialist (or communist) property is shaped—and before passing to the communist system of distribution—money settlements may survive for some time, though they will be completely conventional. They will play an important part in planned regulation of economic development. Gradually, however, they will be replaced with the measure of labour in units of working time.

Regrettably, the preoccupation of some economists with the purely external, 'accountant's' side of the matter has diverted them from the more deep-going processes witnessed in socialist enterprises. *What is worse, they underestimate the influence on the psychology*

*of the worker of the incorrect contention that the product he produces is not his property and confronts him as a commodity belonging to the state.*

*The important thing is for the worker not only to stop selling his labour power but also to stop thinking and feeling that he is selling it. This is difficult to achieve if the contention is spread that the product created by the worker is a real commodity wholly appropriated by the state. In reply the worker may, for example, demand 'a share in the profits', or be negligent with the equipment, or be wasteful with raw materials, or commit theft, or breach production discipline. The concept of commodity production must flow not only from the needs of daily management, but also from an understanding of the nature of our system and of the need for moulding the new man. It must not handcuff the initiative of the working people. The elimination of the alienation of the process and results of labour under socialism must be properly and correctly explained. This will help eliminate remnants of estrangement to labour among the workers—the self-alienation of labour resulting from capitalist exploitation that has to be rooted out in the course of the emergence of the communist social system. This is one of the essential conditions for making labour a free activity and a prime vital need.*

*Not value but use value is strategically dominant in socialist production, which is explicitly oriented on the ever fuller satisfaction of the growing reasonable material and spiritual needs of people. True, this is not always appreciated by the administrators. The place*

and part of use value in the economic theory of socialism and the economic policy of socialist states has still to be studied. Yet—to slightly alter Marx' phrase in the 'Inaugural Address of the Working Men's International Association'—the final victory of the political economy of labour over the political economy of property<sup>1</sup> depends on this in many ways. To win this victory is not simply a scientific or applied scientific aim, but also a social-political or class aim. The aim matches the magnitude of the present era, at the centre of which we legitimately find the working class.

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, 'Inaugural Address of the Working Men's International Association'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 16.

### THE UNITY OF THE LIBERATION OF LABOUR AND LABOUR'S CONVERSION INTO A PRIME VITAL NEED

#### **1. The Need for Labour and the Conditions for Its Spread**

It is through man's labour that the human race came into being and that society is improving itself. Through labour man fuses directly with his essence, asserting himself through his creativity as a social being. *Man 'face to face' with his creative essence in the process of its immediate and active self-realisation—that is one of the most abstract expressions of freedom.*

The example of labour is convincing evidence of the fact that apprehension of necessity, of the objective law underlying a phenomenon or process in the life of society, is merely a spiritual premise of freedom, its necessary but insufficient condition. The impossibility of doing without labour as the source of livelihood was apprehended by humanity many thousands of years ago. But this did not make people free. Labour was a forced, non-voluntary occupation under threat of punishment or hunger, and awareness of its necessity was an awareness of need imposed from outside. It is only in qualita-

tively new social conditions—under the system of social relations that are being created by socialism and communism—that the conscious attitude to labour as an imposed obligation can give way on a massive scale to the attitude that labour is free self-expression.

Marx wrote in *Capital*: 'In fact, the realm of freedom actually begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases; thus in the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of actual material production.'<sup>1</sup> This does not mean that labour as such must be eliminated, or that freedom is conceivable only outside productive activity. It means that the realm of freedom begins when all work, in all fields of production, is stimulated not simply by the need for material goods, not simply economically. In other words, it begins when, along with the natural requirements (food, clothing, protection from cold and illness, and the like), social and cultural needs, too, begin actively to affect participation in labour. These social and cultural needs take shape 'beyond the sphere of actual material production', that is, outside the sphere of manufacturing things, but in the sphere that 'produces' the individual as a social being, that develops the *personality*.

Marx does not contrast the realm of freedom to material production as a 'realm of non-freedom'. The idea behind his words is different. Though social production is the material basis for raising the degree of human freedom in relation to nature, the realm of freedom is possible only after a qualitative reconstruction

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 820.

of social relations and of man himself. Alongside other social factors, it is man's ability to change himself that is the precondition of the freedom of man. To put an end to 'labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations', and yet unable to end the production process (without consigning society to degeneration and himself to extinction), man must greatly enhance the attractiveness, the magnetic power of labour. Only then will the externally imposed necessity of labour turn into an intrinsic necessity for the development of 'human energy which is an end in itself', paving the way for the 'true realm of freedom',<sup>1</sup> because the factor stimulating labour will be labour itself regarded as a means of satisfying the wish to work.

Communists regard as true freedom not apprehension of the necessity for labour nor performance of this necessity (i.e. labour in any social conditions), but exercise of the apprehended necessity of labour of a specific social quality within the framework of society—labour as the prime need of man.

Is this practicable? Bourgeois propagandists say it is not. Why? Because the need for labour, as they see it, is contrary to 'human nature'. Yet, it is *one of the most ancient gains of human culture*. As industriousness it has been part of the make-up of creative personalities in every past epoch.

Unfortunately, we still lack a conclusive idea about the place of labour as a vital need among man's other needs. Some people, even people in the ideological field, think that

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. II, p. 820.

labour will not become a need until a distant future. But can one divorce the ideal from the real, can one ignore the new that appears around us each day? In socialist society labour already becomes a vital need for people, though it has not yet had the deep and all-round development which it will have in the second phase of communism. The mere fact that achievement of this need is looked upon as a practical task is a distinct advantage of socialism.

Though at first labour was not a need but only a means of obtaining resources to satisfy the animal needs of man's distant ancestors, it proved to be the basis of the life of society. Gradually it became the factor that conditioned passage to a qualitatively higher form of existence for living nature. Man's needs, animal in origin, acquired a social form. New types of need appeared, bred exclusively by the social environment. The humanly transformed need of the body in physical exercise, the need for a definite period of bodily activity, may be conditionally regarded as the germ of the vital need for labour. But this is only the premise, the physiological implication of the future developed social need that resembles it as little as a pithecanthropus resembles modern man.

With labour divided into mental and physical and with society stratified into classes, one of which has monopolised all spiritual activity, labour is an incontestable vital need for only a relatively small round of people—speakers, generals, scientists, poets, artists, architects, musicians, and the like. This does not mean, however, that the need for creative

work is absent among the broader sections of people. Nameless craftsmen built pyramids and temples, created models of folk architecture, altered the course of rivers, composed songs passed down from lip to lip, and created popular melodies. If labour had not been a need of the spirit, if only the slightest of needs, in the times of slavery, feudalism and capitalism, it would have been impossible to explain the masterpieces of folk art, the inventions of self-taught prodigies, or virtuoso skills in various trades.

Two questions arise in this connection: First, how to reconcile the claim that labour acts as a need even in an antagonistic society with the proposition that antagonistic society can impart nothing but revulsion to labour due to the alienation of labour prevailing in it? Second, if the need for labour existed before socialism, why do Communists consider it an objective of the present and future?

This is an incontestable contradiction. A labourer's attitude to labour cannot be purely negative due to the nature of his life activity. His working life creates a positive attitude to useful activity, teaches him to understand the value of labour, makes him see labour as the purpose of human existence. It is workers and peasants that have throughout history displayed the creative human essence much more than landowners and capitalists. The emergence of the vital need for labour is, consequently, *a general sociological tendency*. And the historically conditioned character of labour in an antagonistic class society, which repels people from the main type of their life activity and depresses their inner need for creative



work, is antagonistically opposed to this general tendency. It tends to prevail over it, for the relations of production based on domination and subordination cause aversion for forced labour on behalf of the exploiter and thus an aversion for all labour. In these circumstances non-freedom also consists in the suppression of the vital need for labour activity, which is for man the most essential social phenomenon.

In a world of alienated labour the individual tends to draw a sharp distinction between labour and consumption. Even in those rare moments when he enjoys working, when he is consumed by it as a need, he is blind to what is happening to him and considers life truly human if it is unburdened by labour.

Only the socialist revolution can deliver a crushing blow to this anomaly.

It is not often that the vital need for labour surfaces en masse in an antagonistic class society, for there the social conditions of its development are limited. Socialism and communism, on the other hand, impart this vital need to all people. Where exploitation prevails the vital need for labour cannot be a specific characteristic of any social form of labour, whereas under communism, when it becomes all-embracing, this precisely is its role. Communism does not intend to impose on man any features and needs foreign to his nature. On the contrary, it creates the best possible climate for the fullest possible exercise and improvement of human nature.

In the precapitalist period the labourer—society's principal productive force—performed the following functions: he was the main

factor of influence, by means of implements of labour, on the objects of labour; he was the source of energy (along with draft animals); he was the sole regulator and controller of the process of production, and, last but not least, the maker of new technology, of articles of consumption, of works of art, and so on. Individual labour required mainly muscular force, was predominantly physical (spiritual activity was the privilege of the dominant classes). Due to low productivity, long working hours and brutal exploitation it developed only one side of the human abilities. Useful and necessary for the normal human body in a definite quantity, physical labour became fatiguing and warped the brain when it went beyond this limit. And the fact that the product of their labour was appropriated by the slaveowner or feudal lord made the labourers look upon labour as a senseless waste of time and energy.

The development of the implements of labour under capitalism broke down the process of production into sets of operations. At first there appeared the so-called working machine, which replaced man's direct action on the implements and objects of labour. Then the engine replaced man in his capacity of source of energy. Yet man continued to control and service the machine and its functioning. In these conditions technology, the property foreign to the worker, is used in the interests of the capitalist in total disregard of how such use affects the worker's condition. Not man sets the pace of labour: it is imposed upon him by the machine. The worker becomes its physical and intellectual appendage. For the

worker the machine is the material representative of capital. The creation of human hands, a product of labour, the machine imposes on the worker the character of the principal type of his life activity and thus symbolises the domination of the product over the human being. And this enslavement of man by things is not eliminated once and for all until production becomes socialist, with the tempo of labour no longer exceeding the natural limits of the human body and with the means of production owned by the whole people serving as the material confirmation of man's domination over nature and over social relations.

Mechanisation reaches its natural culmination in the automation of production processes, closely preceded by mass conveyor-line production. Automata perform not only the first two functions, but also effectively replace man in regulation and control. This is necessary because the nature of modern mechanisms, their complicated interaction and high-speed operation, the ever increasing use of chemical processes, and the like, are so much harder to register and regulate for man's sensory organs and therefore require supplementary self-regulating appliances. As a rule, automation leads to a steep heightening of the productivity of labour.

Even when automation does not push the worker out of the enterprise, adding to the reserve army of unemployed, it creates instability and calls in question the living standard of many groups of workers. This under capitalism. Under socialism, which guarantees the right to work, it only compels workers to improve their skills to meet the requirements

of modern technology, while people made redundant in one sector learn a new trade and are transferred to another. In other words, it promotes their development in both cases.

Automation is the future of social production, the mainstream of technical progress. And for a number of socialist countries comprehensive mechanisation of labour-intensive processes is highly important as a necessary preliminary measure, along with eliminating the gap between the high degree of mechanisation of the main operations and the low machine-to-man ratio in the auxiliary jobs.

It would be a mistake to visualise the increasing degree of freedom in labour, that is, the growth of labour into a prime vital need, as a smooth, ascendant process without any contradictions. It has been the will of history that socialism should win first in countries that were not highly developed scientifically, technically and economically. As a result, the social liberation of labour, that is, elimination of its social alienation, greatly outstripped the elimination of its 'technical alienation'. A contradiction arose in the development of freedom due to the fact that certain economic relations (e.g. socialisation of the means of production) were ahead of the technical basis (development of all operations into varieties of industrial labour). In some cases this has been a brake on labour becoming a vital need, though social relations had already prepared the ground for it. What has to be done is to create technical conditions for freedom of labour consonant with the social conditions, and to afford each working man the opportunity for creative work.

From capitalism the working class inherits not only arduous and exhausting labour, but also isolation from almost every type of intellectual activity. The latter was the privilege of the bourgeois intelligentsia and gave its fruit chiefly to the propertied class. The antithesis between mental and physical labour that existed under capitalism is reduced under socialism to the rank of a substantial distinction. And this latter is also destined to disappear.

Since technical progress (especially automated production) requires simultaneous performance of closely related operations, there is a gradual eradication of boundaries between the old trades (based on the old division of labour and on outdated technology), accompanied in the framework of each trade by development of greater versatility in each industrial and agricultural worker. The Dneprodzerzhinsk chemical plant is a typical case: already in the early sixties more than 70 per cent of its workers had two trades and many had three or four.

This makes workers and farmers producers of a broader scope; their technical thinking develops, and elements of mental labour invade the realm of physical labour. And the essential creative understanding of the process of material production in his sector by the broadly developed specialist leads naturally to attempts at improving and rationalising production techniques, at improving the mechanisms, at finding new potentialities and at finding ways of economising materials. The spiritual element in labour grows stronger, and the worker's cognitive, creative interest

increases. No longer can the concepts 'mental labour' and 'physical labour' even approximately reflect the properties of the burgeoning, new, harmonious type of labour that is in the act of surmounting these two extremes.

This is true to a still greater extent about a worker's labour in an automated factory. Here man is no longer the immediate factor of production; he is removed from the general system of interacting mechanised devices, and stands above them. Feeding of prime materials or parts, their replacement, adjustment of the bench and other physical operations that took up so much of the worker's time, are no longer wanted on an automated line. Here, his job consists mainly of mental operations of control, analysis of causes of any malfunction, and regulation of some section of the line. In other words, the worker performs functions that were previously handled by a technician or engineer. The changing conditions of labour are gradually eradicating the line between trades in the given enterprise. The experience and versatility of the universal type of worker emerging there enable him to pass from one type of activity to another. The occupational narrowness that had hounded the worker as a necessity imposed from outside and that fenced him off from other types of labour, gives place to *vocational and technical freedom, the relativity of which comes to light only when it transcends the limits of some, sometimes fairly broad, sphere of production.* The level of freedom in choice of trade according to personal preference rises.

Work should be a passion. And it must be sensible, useful, socially necessary and public-

ly acknowledged work serving simultaneously as a means of individual self-expression and of the worker's self-assertion as a personality. Being a passion, it must be free of any self-seeking considerations. It must possess its own charm, its own inner force of attraction.

Of course, it is easy to say that it must. It is obviously harder to prove that it must. Authors who wrote about the emergence of communist-type work were usually right in their final conclusions. But these, unhappily, did not always flow from the suggested premises. Some of the authors held, for example, that the blending of mental and physical labour in production was accompanied with everybody's immersion in creative endeavour.

There is no denying that in *universal aspect* physical as well as mental labour is a creative, purposeful transformation of an object of nature. But concrete types of even mental labour (controls operator, accountant, cashier, librarian, programist, laboratory assistant, and the like) often amount to mere performance of the same monotonous operations and are less creative than they are *mechanical*. These authors held that the repetition of definite operations in mental labour did not, in contrast to physical labour, produce a lasting dynamic stereotype. This, to put it mildly, is inaccurate. Sensing this inaccuracy, they made an exception for what they described as auxiliary operations of mental labour, meaning mechanical mental labour, the volume of which exceeds the element of creativity even in the work of many highly qualified operatives in present-day production.

The blending of mental and physical labour in the activity of every operative that will occur in the process of communist construction is the initial premise for the transformation of the basic mass of labour operations performed by man into creative operations associated with active intellectual search and requiring knowledge and wit. But this is not all. Frequently, mechanical (now no longer physical, but mental) labour predominates in automated production as well, despite the minimum number of manual operations and the maximum expenditure of nervous energy. Here man performs the function of regulator and controller of the production process. This requires a concentration of attention, coupled with combined reactions to readings of appliances developed to a point of automatic reactions. Technologically, such labour must undergo considerable changes before it becomes communist labour in the full sense of the term.

Technical progress also has another tendency that will ultimately become dominant: continuous introduction of ever more advanced technology, including self-regulating appliances, all types of cybernetic machines, and the like, performing mental operations conducive to formalisation. This relieves man of tasks that can be profitably delegated to appliances. The operative's range of activity becomes broader, on the one hand, and more narrow, on the other: now he will be able to control an ever greater number of technical processes indirectly, by regulating a 'clever', self-controlling machine, on the one hand, while, on the other, in some fields of production the



expenditure of his physical and nervous energy diminishes because a whole range of jobs is done for him by machines. Hence, man is able to concentrate his attention in ever greater degree directly on that sphere of labour where he is really irreplaceable—the function of creating new models and types of machines, articles of consumption, objects of art, social and organisational forms of human life, and the like.

The blending of mental and physical labour does not lift all problems. Other questions have to be solved, such as *mechanisation and gradual reduction of the volume of mechanical mental labour performed directly by the operative and its rational distribution among all members of society*. Only after this question is resolved on the scale of all society will there be access for all to creativity in the direct and exalted meaning of this word. Following the disappearance of the intelligentsia as a specific social stratum, the essential distinction between creative and non-creative labour will finally be overcome, though the 'levels' of creativity and the contribution of people of different ability will in these conditions depend on the degree of versatility and talent of each member of the communist association. This sort of 'inequality' will naturally be of a purely personal character, stripped of any and all elements of a social kind. If some ambitious individual fails to become an Einstein, he will have only himself to blame. It will be impossible to shift the blame on society, on some impersonal 'social conditions'. The absurdity of these charges will be much too apparent.

Man's relation to labour is most vividly reflected in the more or less conscious interest that impels him in the process of his useful activity. It stands to reason that his basic interest lies in receiving the greatest possible amount of products, prompted by the natural needs of the individual and his family, and the needs of the collective.

In the pre-socialist social systems labour was as a rule by its social function a source of the means of livelihood. In other words, it was chiefly a means of satisfying needs other than the vital need for labour. There were two things that prevented it from becoming a universal need. First, the alienation in favour of the proprietor of the means of production of the basic mass of the product and the entirely insufficient satisfaction of the needs of the labourer. This repelled man from labour, on the one hand, and compelled him to labour to exhaustion, on the other. Second, the mass of arduous and exhausting physical labour was shifted entirely to the labourers. The exploiters appropriated the benefits of science and culture, thus restricting the spiritual development of the exploited. Burdensome labour almost entirely stripped of the creative and spiritual principle could not arouse the labourers' interest, much less become a developed vital need of the spirit. It is understandable why in these circumstances economic incentives gained decisive priority; there was the all-consuming wish to earn more, which frequently reduced to nought all moral and other interests in the results of one's labour.

The lust for profit born from fear of poverty and the mercantile spirit of bourgeois society

emasculates the finest human qualities, commercialises conscience and talent, and comes into collision with the creative approach to labour. Absolute predominance of material incentives speaks of an absence of economic freedom, for it proves that labour is not an independent activity, a free expression of man's highly diverse abilities, and does not possess independent significance as the essence of human life. Man is oppressed by an often indeterminate economic necessity.

The following observation made by Marx confirms the specifics of necessity as the opposite of human freedom: 'Just as the savage must wrestle with Nature to satisfy his wants, to maintain and reproduce life, so must civilised man, and he must do so in all social formations and under all possible modes of production. With his development this realm of physical necessity expands as a result of his wants; but, at the same time, the forces of production which satisfy these wants also increase.'<sup>1</sup>

The expansion of production naturally causes an expansion of the sphere of social practice, and makes human labour encompass an ever greater number of objects of nature. Man's domination over separate areas of the environment increases. This, however, gives rise to a profusion of practical problems deriving from the already established but not yet cognised and understood laws and regularities. The inclusion of an ever greater sphere of the objective world into the field of human practice gives impulse to two opposite processes—

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 820.

the growth of freedom and the expansion of the necessity that opposes man. The greater the area of nature cognised by society, the more society must master and develop, and the more of the unknown has got to be known. The concept of necessity in the context of the relation between necessity and freedom, reflects not only properties common to all phenomena of the material world, but also acts as a kind of characteristic of the continuously richer human practice. It is a more concrete concept than necessity analysed in relation to accident. With reference to practice, whose main content is social labour, freedom turns out to be a qualification antithetical to necessity. The correlation of these two sides at different periods serves as a characteristic of a particular condition of society.

At one time, needs were defined chiefly as a purely subjective factor in Soviet economic and philosophical literature. This was due to the confusion of two things: the objectively existing needs of the human and social organism, on the one hand, and the reflection of these needs in the human mind, on the other. The former are obviously independent of the will and consciousness of either the individual or society, and must be considered a law of nature. The perception of needs, on the other hand, is secondary and subjective, just as the reflection of any other facts in the human mind. Does this mean that objective social needs should be included under the head of necessity when we speak of freedom as an assimilated necessity and as domination over external and one's own nature? As we see it, the answer should be affirmative, because the

necessity for eating, for protection from the cold, for working, and the like, does not differ from any other necessity. It is a law of 'human nature', an objectively inescapable phenomenon, and must be reckoned with. It is clear, therefore, why Marx associated the development of production, and hence also the increase of man's wants, with the expansion of the realm of physical necessity. This is why freedom must also be associated with some kind of 'restraint', a sensible development and refinement of needs, with domination over needs, and with relative independence from them in man's activity—an independence that exists only when the growth of the needs is covered by the growth of production.

In the days of the primitive community people had the one principal task of surviving, of maintaining their physical existence in very hard conditions. It would be wrong to say that the productive forces did not develop at that time, and that needs did not grow. But all these changes were distinguished by the fact that the degree of development of the productive forces, the growth of the productive capacity of the clan—this clearest indicator of the degree of man's domination over nature—was always balanced by the counter-growth of needs. Society produced no 'surpluses', it produced nothing that was not directly consumed by its members.

The leap to relative freedom occurred when the productive potential enabled people to exceed the level of what the community consumed and to create a surplus, to achieve 'over-production'. But this leap to freedom was simultaneously a leap into the realm of social

enslavement, because the progress of production gave birth to the exploitative alienation of labour and created a class that appropriated not only the implements, objects and products of labour, but also the producer himself. No matter what forms antagonistic society subsequently assumed, there was this common rule: *the mass of the population was denied that part of the product it produced which could to some extent make it independent of its own needs, that is, weaken the necessity that dominated over it.* Reproduction of the neediness of the working people *was the unavoidable condition for the reproduction of exploiter relations and the non-freedom of most members of society.*

This means that elimination of non-freedom is possible only through elimination of the reproduction of exploiter relations in one economic sphere after another or, in other words, through elimination of the reproduction of the neediness of the working people. This is the beginning of the realm of freedom, but not its culmination. Freedom in its universal sense cannot be won overnight. It undergoes a long process of development amounting to *its extended reproduction on the scale of society as a whole*, its penetration into all spheres of society. It requires not only elimination of the exploitation of man by man, though this is the cornerstone of freedom, but also a steady improvement of the living standards of all members of socialist society.

According to Marx, the realm of freedom begins where and when man works not only for his earnings, by compulsion, not only in the expectation of definite material gain. In the

conditions of socialism the 'external expediency', independent of man and dominating man, loses the monopoly influence it had on labour under capitalism and is necessarily supplemented by an intrinsic expediency, a personal conviction in the necessity of labour regardless of the remuneration. There is a moral change that facilitates labour's transformation into a vital need of the spirit.

All the same, it would be wrong to oppose spiritual incentives to material incentives. The great revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses vividly displayed in, say, the first communist *subbotniks* in the young Soviet Republic, was an expression of a selfless attitude to labour, of dedication to proletarian duty. People were motivated not by the hope of reward but by the idea, by their loyalty to the working-class cause. As individuals the participants in the *subbotniks* were impelled by moral revolutionary motives and derived great moral satisfaction. But this only from the individual angle.

As a collective, on the other hand, they had a material interest in the results of their labour—the repaired locomotives, for example, which were then so necessary (*materially necessary*, to be precise) to the Soviet Republic. *While the individual is guided by purely moral motives this does not abolish the material interest of the collective in the results of the individual's activity.* The individual may ask nothing for himself, may want no wage, his sole interest being the success of the common undertaking. This interest is defined as a moral incentive. But if we have a collective of socially conscious individuals, the incentives that are moral for

each of these individuals may as an aggregate represent a collective material interest.

It would be one-sided to see these motivations of the individual as being purely moral, because indirectly they are stimulated by the material interest of the collective, just as this interest is influenced by the moral motivations of its actual bearers, the individuals.

Lenin taught us to build socialist production not by enthusiasm alone, but with the help of the enthusiasm generated by the great revolution, by personal interest, and by personal involvement.<sup>1</sup> He taught the Communists the skill of working with people such as people are. And his historic instructions are the guideline for the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the matter of distributing material and spiritual goods. The Party has always combatted violations of the principle of material interest, and has always stressed that it must be combined with moral stimuli, with daily organisational and educational work.

Under socialism there are three kinds of personal economic interest: 1) personal interest in the results of labour in a socialist enterprise (or collective farm) operating in the framework of the economic law of distribution according to work; 2) interest in the profit from one's personal subsidiary homework; 3) a selfish, profiteering interest, which has been stripped of a broad social basis. The first, which is socialist in inner essence, is antagonistic to the third, which regrettably,

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 58.



is still capitalising on the difficulties and contradictions of our growth (especially the flaws in the service industries). And only inveterate dogmatists and utopians who do not distinguish between these truly different forms of material interest, will oppose the socialist type of personal material interest, doing untold harm thereby to communist construction.

Labour is not free if it is wholly dedicated to the personal material interest of the second, let alone the third, variety. It is no more than the shadow of labour on a personally owned farm or a capitalist enterprise, and makes the labourer a slave to his own needs which arise, as a rule, under the influence of philistine bourgeois consumer standards. Surviving due to the subjective incomprehension by some members of socialist society (who pursue narrowly personal and distinctly consumer interests) of the new content of social labour, it retains the elements of non-freedom and divorces these people from the collective, flings them into the midst of profiteers, of thieves of public riches, and gives them the psychology of the private proprietor who is not loth to profit at others' expense.

For them freedom is not associated with labour but with creature comforts, with accumulation of personal property. Their outlook is a token of moral slavery. To make these people free we must apply educational measures coupled with compulsion to participate in socially useful activity, which is here a factor of liberation.

From its first day socialism abolishes labour as an activity conditioned purely by 'want

and external expediency'. Unlike capitalist society in which the worker's consumption is limited by his earnings which roughly correspond to but do not exceed the value of labour power, a fundamentally new relation is shaped under socialism between the quantity of labour and the quantity of the consumed product, while value ceases to play any decisive part in determining this relation. Under socialism personal labour has not ceased but is already beginning to cease to be impelled by only the need for things.

The principle of equal pay for equal work, and of distribution according to work, which is dominant under socialism, is sometimes taken as an absolute, though in fact as the country progresses towards communism it is being increasingly combined with an essentially new type of distribution. Needless to repeat what has already been said of social consumption funds. Let us merely note that the striking thing about socialist distribution is its peculiar duality, with rigid economic accounting being combined with selfless generosity.

Distribution *per se* has never, of course, been the principal or determining factor in economic life. It is in all cases a derivative expressing the specific communist features of socialist public property, the result of the development of production on which, however, it is able to exercise either a stimulating or an inhibiting influence. But precisely for this reason it may be asked whether or not *this dual content reflects some more profound features of social labour under socialism.*

Marxists hold that distribution according to need begins when labour becomes man's

prime vital need. This is a two-sided process: the change in the nature of distribution is the effect and the visible manifestation of a change in the nature of labour. The unconditional issue to the working people of a share—and under communism of all—of the products they consume must accord with the degree of the need to engage in labour.

A new type of man is shaping before our eyes, whose behaviour embodies the leading trends and the main direction in which society is developing. For many Soviet people labour has already ceased to be merely a means of earning a livelihood, and has become a social vocation, a moral duty.

The fact that workers frequently increase their own work quotas is highly significant and has far-reaching social implications. It reflects the richness of the new labour relations inconceivable in the setting of the capitalist alienation of labour, but natural for the emerging communist social system. Do they not show that the vital need for work is growing? It is one of the main approach points to that historic boundary where labour ceases to be imposed by material need and external expediency, and where freedom begins.

Labour as a need of the spirit is an activity that no longer depends on any marginal considerations. The necessity for it is dictated by the desire to benefit society, by the natural self-assertion of a highly moral personality. Like freedom, it is described in the Programme of the Soviet Communist Party as an *understood necessity*. This description shows the profound connection between the development of labour into a prime vital need and the leap

from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom. The Marxist idea of freedom is freedom of activity, first of all freedom of labour. And it finds its ultimate embodiment in a developed vital need for work, i.e. an intrinsic, conscious impulse for useful activity not imposed from outside.

In socialist production the vital need for work passes through *two phases* of development and creates two forms. The first of these predominates in the early stages of socialist construction. It reposes chiefly on the ideological belief of the working people that doing a given piece of work, regardless of its nature, is necessary. Seeing labour for the good of the working people as a personal revolutionary duty, Communists and Komsomols, the finest sections of the Soviet people, performed the most arduous and the most exhausting work, made sacrifices and suffered privations, and therein found the supreme moral satisfaction. The vital need for work based on the ideological conviction that the communist cause is historically correct was, is, and will be one of the essential factors behind the labour enthusiasm of Soviet people. In the process of communist construction this *first* form of the vital need for work *grows* into the second, which reposes on the change in the concrete content of labour as it is transformed into a creative process.

A distinction must be drawn between the creative attitude to work and the creative nature of work. There is work that does not involve difficult combinations of mental labour with muscular effort (such as that of stevedore, porter, hammerman, or the monoto-

nous and tiresome work of the book-keeper or office clerk). These functions are mechanical and are not as such of a creative nature, but they can still be a need of the spirit if the individual is guided by lofty considerations and performs his work by virtue of his convictions, i.e. if he draws his moral stimuli *not directly from the specific type of work he does*, but from the communist ideology and from faith in the inevitable victory of the new social system. A creative attitude to this kind of job shows that a new component has appeared in it, and that apart from the main mechanical operations the individual has begun to perform the functions of organiser or innovator in the interest of the common cause, and has thus gone over to a more complex type of activity.

There is also *creative work in its own right*, whose very nature marshals and compounds the individual's intellectual and physical faculties. Though, of course, the content of labour as such is no guarantee against its being reduced by some persons to merely thoughtless operations.

## **2. A Concrete Sociological Analysis of the Vital Need for Work**

In the sixties few problems engaged Soviet economists, philosophers, sociologists, ethicists and aestheticians as deeply as the problem of labour. The main flaw of much of their research, as we see it, was their underestimation of a strictly materialist explanation for labour's development into a prime vital need and the one-sided ethical interpretation of this complicated and multi-faceted process.

In the beginning of 1964, a group of associates of the sociological laboratory of Moscow University's Department of Philosophy, including this writer, polled three Moscow enterprises—Spetsstanok, Stankoagregat, and a factory making grinding machines. There had been many similar polls before and after ours, and in different Soviet cities. The writer refers to this one, now of considerable vintage, because he was directly involved in it, and because all the others yielded essentially similar results.

The purpose of the poll was to check general theoretical propositions with the actual state of the processes, to destroy some of the stereotypes and illusions, and to verify the logic of abstract thought through the logic of empirical material.

In drawing up their plan, the researchers acknowledged as a principle that the vital need for work is implicit in every working person but differs in each case in motive, degree and intensity and may be either correctly or wrongly oriented.

The question was put as follows: how does man's already existing and unconquerable need for creativity begin to push back all non-creative needs and become the prime need conceived by every working person as an intrinsic necessity as man gradually shakes off the fetters of antagonistic social relations?

For the researchers labour as a vital need playing an ever increasing role in the life of people was not only a future achievement of communist society, but also a reality of the present day. This is why, from our point of view, it was *justifiable to examine not only the*

*inception, but also the degree or level of development, of the vital need for labour*—an indicator of the level of the communist development of groups and individuals in production.

The results of the poll exceeded our expectations. We had of course anticipated that in answering the question of how attractive labour was at these enterprises, the ideological, moral and creative interests of the workers would play a prominent role. Still, we held that first place would go to their interest in their earnings, to the personal economic incentive, the comprehended material interest.

But this proved to be wrong. The workers gave priority to good relations with their mates, to a friendly and close-knit work collective. Next came the convenience of shifts, which enabled workers to combine work with study and rest, to combine obligations in production with social obligations and home life. Diversity of the job that made it attractive to the worker as a versatile personality held third place. Equal appreciation was expressed of work containing a substantial element of mental activity, requiring knowhow and providing scope for creative involvement. The workers were also stimulated by the importance of the product made at their enterprise, by its significance for the economy. Many were attracted by the physical effort involved. And only after this, in sixth place, and even that on a par with opportunities for improving proficiency, came the matter of earnings.

It is important to note, furthermore, that earnings did not take first place even when the question concerned what the workers did not like in their job. Among the factors criti-

cised by the workers, the size of their wage held fourth place. In first place was ununiform provision of work, lack of rhythm, idle time, and rush work; faulty organisation of production was in second place, and flaws in the safety rules were third.<sup>1</sup>

Certainly, the results of the poll are not by themselves a conclusive characterisation of the stimuli of labour. They are at best a photograph of just some aspects of the labour psychology of the workers of the three factories. Replies as to what workers like and do not like about their job are not an orderly set of motives. The numerical precedence of one or another motive (for example, good relations with mates or convenient shifts) does not make it the principal motive. The limitations of the data obtained are obvious. But this does not cancel out the practical importance of what we obtained: *people turned their attention not to wages first but to the character, conditions, and social significance of their work*. The necessity for working is really no longer imposed by material need and external expediency alone. More and more, it is intrinsically apprehended.

The fact that workers give top priority not to personal gain means that their range of interests has grown. The workers' interest is rising above the economic sphere proper to

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<sup>1</sup> Some sociologists thought that ununiform provision of work, lack of rhythm, and faulty organisation of production were mentioned by the workers because they affected their earnings. There is an element of truth here, but not all the truth. It is one thing to refer to earnings first, and quite another to refer first to organisation of production. In the former case personal interest takes precedence, whereas in the second it combines with public interest.



a sphere where moral and creative motivations take precedence.

Friendly relations within the collective hold top place among the positive motives. This shows that socialist collectivism has become a force of attraction, a factor stimulating individual work.

The workers put convenient shifts in second place as an attractive feature. And this is understandable. The hours of the worker's shift have a bearing on his way of life, his daily routine, his opportunities for meeting friends and being with the family, his leisure, study, and the like. Incidentally, by raising the question of shifts, the workers served notice of the change in their material interest. They have begun to regard not only things, but also free time as a material benefit. And that is a necessary objective condition for the harmonious development of the personality and for satisfying diverse material and spiritual needs, including the need for creating.

Workers attach special importance to the content of their job, to alternating functions in the process of their work, to opportunities for showing their inventiveness and initiative. Variety of operations shares second place with convenient shifts as an attractive job feature. Those wishing to change to another, more interesting job were much more numerous than those wishing to change to a job simply because it was better paid. And though only less than four per cent were willing to change to a more interesting but less remunerative job (this was one of the questions, too), it became clear that on the whole *the character and content of the job means more to the workers*

*than what they will be paid for it.* Though still based on personal economic interest, labour is gradually emerging from under the exclusive influence of this interest, and has begun to acquire a new, independent significance in the eyes of the workers. Though it may not yet be the prime vital need of man, it is already a tangible need.

The interest that the workers showed in the production of their factory may be regarded as an expression of concern for the common good, which Lenin described as one of the early signs of communism. It is no longer a matter of indifference to people what exactly they produce, what objects embody the efforts they apply, what objectifies their abilities, and to what extent the things they produce can be consumed or used by other people. The workers' interest in the production of their enterprise is a token of collective material interest in the results of social labour.

We obtained a similar picture from our analysis of the basic motivations of labour. The biggest general group of the workers gave precedence to the significance and social usefulness of what they were doing, but also took into consideration the need for material incentives. The second largest group consisted of workers who merely mentioned the social significance of their labour and the motivation of its social benefit. In third place were workers who regarded earnings as the main motivation, but were not indifferent to the content of their work. These were followed by workers who gave precedence to innovation, to the creative interest. They totalled about one-third of the questioned workers and outnumbered

red those who were concerned exclusively with the personal material interest and were entirely indifferent to everything other than the size of their wages.

These facts show that the ideological, moral and creative interest in labour, combined with a sensibly conceived personal material interest is playing an ever more decisive role in material production. In the setting of the economic law of distribution according to work there gradually emerges a communist need not associated with any form of distribution. This need, in its initial form, is part of the make-up of many Soviet people.

Most of the factors with a negative influence on the workers' attitude to labour are related to the organisation of production and can be eliminated by the collectives themselves, without intervention on a national scale. This applies to the ununiform provision of work in the first place, and to faults in the organisation of production and in the safety regulations, to the not always satisfactory sanitary conditions, and the like.

In the early sixties the opinion was voiced in Soviet literature that already under socialism labour is a prime vital need for many members of society, but on a scale that is short of what is necessary for the modern level of production. If this is so, the intrinsic content of working time should fall into two parts: the time when the individual gets a chiefly creative satisfaction from the process of labour, and the time he must devote to labour chiefly due to the necessity deriving from the present level of labour productivity. This question was 'sounded' in the poll of the

workers at the three aforementioned enterprises.

It should be remembered, however, that neither economics nor sociology nor psychology have any tested prescriptions as yet for studying needs in general, and the vital need for work in particular, on a mass scale. This explains the tentative nature of our research. Its authenticity is doubtful but it is nonetheless of some interest.

The workers were asked three questions: after how many hours of work does weariness usually set in; how many hours (on the average) of the working day do you work without strain; how many hours of work give you satisfaction?

Taking the arithmetic mean of the answers to the three questions as roughly the time when the vital need for work is essentially present, we calculated the correlation of work done as an internal and an external necessity in a seven-hour working day: at Spetsstanok it was 5.2 and 1.8 hours respectively, at Stankoagregat 4.1 and 2.9 hours, and at the third factory 5 and 2 hours.

Certainly, these ratios give enough food for thought. Soviet economics has adopted the concepts 'necessary labour' and surplus labour' as used by Marx for dividing the workers' labour into labour replacing the value of labour power and labour appropriated by the capitalist and creating surplus value. Yet, for the worker of a socialist enterprise, the co-owner of the means of production, the product used for expansion of the social productive forces and for satisfying the needs of society is just as necessary as the product satisfying his per-

sonal material and spiritual needs. It follows that under socialism these concepts can be used only in a definite, strictly limited sense—certainly not for analysing the substance of social relations, and only for fixing quantitative limits to economic accountability, for value and for techno-organisational relations, which are often similar in form with the analogous sphere of capitalist production.

But in that case other concepts, such as *socially necessary labour* and *socially surplus labour*, should also be singled out. As we see it, however, the starting point, the 'count-down', will have to be different. It will have to express the specific quality of communist society. In the burgeoning new social system, in accordance with its own nature, necessary labour is labour according to need, that is, free labour. Labour as an external necessity imposed by various non-labour circumstances and non-creative motives could be called 'surplus labour', that is, labour as an unavoidable tribute to the as yet incomplete maturity of the new society that diminishes with the society's advancing maturity.

What this looks like in reality may be partly judged from the calculations we have given earlier. They show that the internal necessity for labour (that is, moral or creative freedom or both) is now in evidence during a relatively longer period of working time than the external necessity. True, this conclusion is drawn from a poll of workers of only three Moscow enterprises held a fairly long time ago, and it would probably be wrong to consider it valid for other enterprises in industry and

especially in agriculture. Still, it is clear that this is a possibility that materialises when the machine-to-worker ratio is of a high order, and that, in other words, this possibility represents a distinct tendency.

We have already mentioned the connection of the dual character of distribution in a developed socialist society—distribution according to work in the form of wages and distribution according to needs through social consumption funds—with some of the properties of labour activity. As we see it, this duality reflects the process of the communist transformation of labour: growth of the role of public funds in satisfying the needs of the members of Soviet society testifies to the growing share of labour according to need in the total social labour. The quantitative expressions of these processes may not coincide, because the ratio here is a complex one, being the ratio of the phenomenon to its essence.

In sum, according to the poll more than half the workers experience the impulse of the vital need for labour during the bigger part of the working day. If this is not a sign of the coming victory of communist work predicted by Lenin, then what is?

True, as long as the main types of labour are not forms of creative activity, this need is not a communist need for labour in the strict sense of the word. It is still too dependent on material remuneration. All the same, it is no 'illusion'. Neglect of a tangible feature of the future is no more justified and no less harmful than its exaggeration.

The life of three Moscow work collectives shows that the Soviet worker is not engrossed

in personal gain. More, motives of an economic nature were literally smothered by motives of a loftier order.

### 3. The Nature of the Creative Stimulus of Labour

One of the objections to communism dating to the Utopian Socialists was that if the principle of distribution according to need is introduced, society may perish from idleness. 'Who would then agree to work?' bourgeois theorists asked. In the eighteenth century William Godwin, a progressive English writer, devoted a whole chapter to this in his book *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*.

'Once establish it as a principle in society that no man is to apply to his personal use more than his necessities require, and you will find every man become indifferent to those exertions which now call forth the energy of his faculties. Man is the creature of sensations; and, when we endeavour to strain his intellect, and govern him by reason alone, we do but show our ignorance of his nature. Self-love is the genuine source of our actions, and, if this should be found to bring vice and partiality along with it, yet the system that should endeavour to supersede it, would be at best no more than a beautiful romance.'<sup>1</sup> This is how Godwin presents the view of his opponents.

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<sup>1</sup> William Godwin, 'Of Property'. In: *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, Vol. 2, London, MDCCXCIII, p. 819.

Arguing against them, he makes three points.

First, no system of equality is tenable at the present level of consciousness, and will be so only after people better themselves intellectually. It is impossible so long as mankind is insufficiently enlightened. Hasty and thoughtless measures are intolerable when carrying out ideas of equalising property because they will create confusion.

Second, idleness there will be none because the volume of work one will have to perform will be much reduced. At the end of the eighteenth century, when Godwin wrote, only one-twentieth of Britain's population was earnestly engaged in farming. If instead, Godwin added, the work of this small number were divided amicably among the whole nation, it would occupy a mere one-twentieth of the time of each. The work done by every member of the community would be so light as to assume the appearance of agreeable relaxation and gentle exercise rather than of labour. No one in the community would be expected in consequence of situation or vocation to consider oneself exempted from manual labour. Working only a bit of the time, people would be in every way happier and better off than they were now, Godwin concluded.

The assumption that people would immerse themselves in idleness, Godwin wrote, is based on the assumption that accumulation of wealth and self-interest are the sole motivation of the individual. 'But the case is far otherwise,' he wrote. 'The present ruling passion of the human mind is the love of distinction.' Certainly, he added, there is a class of people who



'are perpetually urged by hunger and need, and have no leisure for motives less gross and material.' However, the class that stands over them is only minimally engaged in activity for the sake of satisfying its direct needs. Guided mainly by the wish of winning the respect of their neighbours or of protecting themselves from their contempt people of this class concentrate on accumulating material wealth.

If this self-assertion were provided a sensible outlet, Godwin writes, it would be a motive force of the system of equality. Some people are more active than others and at the same time inexcusably indifferent to improving their financial state. Deprived of the opportunity of acquiring the esteem or avoiding the contempt of their neighbours by means of dress or situation, people will divert their passion for distinction into some other channel. They will want to avoid the reproach of indolence as carefully as they now avoid the reproach of poverty. This will be stimulated both by a greater social spirit, the effect of man's consciousness having risen to a higher level of perfection, and also by the greater leisure, which is for the enlightened mind one of the essentials for great deeds that win esteem and respect.

Godwin builds his concept on the growing effect of education and moral principles on people's behaviour. His book appeared in 1793, the year of the bourgeois French Revolution. Has the approach to the matter of stimulating communist work changed since then?

The visibly growing significance of the moral principle in the life of socialist society

is reflected in Soviet literature. What we see may be described as an 'ethicalisation' of the communist attitude to labour. The matter is presented as follows: in socialist society decisive importance attaches to material incentives (payment according to work), which operate in combination with moral incentives, whereas under communism all members of society will be motivated exclusively by moral incentives; when socialist society grows into communist society moral incentives will remain, while direct material compensation for labour will no longer be necessary.

In short, under communism personal material interest will wither away. But can sense of duty to society become its dependable successor? Will it in centuries to come (for communism is the unbounded future of humanity) guarantee a positive attitude to labour on the part of every individual? What is the link that will dependably connect the personal moral and the social material interests?

Soviet philosophical and economic literature refers to material and spiritual (the synonyms of which are 'ideological', 'moral,' 'ethical' and 'ideologico-ethical') factors that stimulate work under socialism. Both types of stimuli are said to be of a conscious nature. The distinction between them is drawn according to a different criterion—the orientation of the interest in work, the object of the individual's striving. And this is where, as we see it, some authors commit an inaccuracy: they define the object of the interest in work as either the material values the individual receives in reward for his work (material incentive) or the public benefit, the striving for which is

associated with a heightened moral evaluation of the personality (moral incentive). But there is another object of personal interest—the *process of work* as such, and this must in no case be allowed to escape our field of vision.<sup>1</sup>

There has been devotion and dedication to work from times immemorial. Works of art (rock and cave drawings, statuettes, and the like) dating to primitive society can hardly be explained by purely utilitarian motives.

It is our view that the promising hypothesis of Laszlo Garai, a Hungarian scholar, merits very close study. 'It is well known,' he writes, 'that each animal genus has a specific need in performing activity through which, under normal conditions, it secures its subsistence....

'In man, too, the need to perform the activity that secures his subsistence took shape in the process of anthropogenesis. Labour activity is precisely this sort of need, meaning participation in social productive practice. *For this reason the new need directed itself to labour activity.* Since labour is an activity specific of man, moreover the main one of his distinctive features determining all his other traits, it is our hypothesis that this need is the *principal specifically human need.*'<sup>2</sup>

Attractive work according to ability creates a personal interest whose nature has not yet been studied—an interest that increases in proportion to the personal compensation and the significance of the work for society. Still,

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<sup>1</sup> Sometimes even in special literature no distinction is made between interest in the content of labour and interest in the common good, in group achievements, and the like.

<sup>2</sup> *Voprosy psikhologii*, No. 3, 1966, p. 64.

it plays a relatively independent role. This type of personal interest is at the root of a qualitatively distinctive, *creative* incentive and is by nature concrete and individual.

In contrast, personal material and moral incentives are in most cases indifferent to the content of the worker's operations. Some people follow this principle: any work is good if it is well paid. As we found out at the three Moscow factories, this applied to between 25 and 35 per cent of the workers. But a substantial section was motivated by public benefit and moral interest, the principle that the good job is the job that does the greatest good to society. There were many more of these people than of the former—between 36 and 56 per cent. Many preferred a combination of the two incentives in different proportions. Lastly, there was a group of people interested in work as work. The view that 'a good job is where you can show something of your own, something new, your inventiveness, skill and quick thinking', was shared by some 29 to 37 per cent of the questioned workers.

This group of workers had no interest in just any work that yielded either personal gain or public benefit or both. For them work was an 'independent value'. They were attracted by the opportunities it offered for their personal ability. This conclusion was drawn not only from the direct questions (the sociologist is always taking a chance when formulating his questions of partly prompting the answer), but also indirectly.

We have already said that at these enterprises those who wanted a change of job were mostly seeking a more interesting occupation

rather than bigger earnings. Some were even willing to take lower pay so long as the job would yield more creative satisfaction. It turned out that in socialist society workers drew a distinction between labour for gain, labour for the common good, and labour for creative self-assertion. Evidently, the time has come to draw the same distinction in theory.

While recognising the compound and simultaneous effect of all labour incentives, it would hardly be right to, say, reduce the motive power of innovation unreservedly to moral factors, tracing it exclusively to the wish of benefitting society, to the social effectiveness of labour. Creative interest stands apart from the moral, first, by reason of its *purely personal* character and, second, by reason of the *richness* of its content. The moral interest is less 'rich' than the creative in the sense that it is associated merely with the *results* of labour, with consumer values, with material or moral satisfaction. The creative interest, on the other hand, is directed not to the result alone, to something *already produced* and immobile, but to the *emergence* of this result, to the *entire content of the process* of labour, which the worker experiences as a process of enjoyment of the interaction of his own intellectual and physical faculties, as the desired content of his vital process, as a pleasant experience.

The creative interest gives expression only to the need intrinsic in man, though often it is not a wholly conscious interest and needs to be awakened and developed. Like any other need it has no moral content by itself, though the

individual's attitude to it can and must be an object of moral evaluation.

What conclusions can we draw from this? They say that if material values, such as the individual's rewards for his labour, serve as the object of his striving, this is a material incentive, a personal material interest. This seems to be self-evident. But before we accept it, we should determine what material values are meant.

The benefits in question may be the daily bread, but also works of art, the essential clothing and visits to the theatre. Some obviously satisfy material needs (nourishment, protection from cold, and the like), while the others satisfy spiritual (e.g., aesthetic) needs, though both are obtained for money. Is the interest in satisfying a spiritual need an essentially material interest? Or is it material only because of the existing monetary form that mediates between labour and consumption? We are accustomed to describing the interest in financial gain as material, though the individual may use the money to buy, say, books, as well as provisions. This wants closer scrutiny.

Second, this view is placed in doubt by the fact that processes as well as things may be implied by the abstract concept of material value. And processes and things can both satisfy either spiritual or material needs. So, which value—spiritual or material—is represented in creative labour, an incontestably material process enclosing its own reward?

What, we may be told, is the use of asking this question if it contains its own answer?

A reasonable query. Still, it is useful because by defining labour itself as a material value we reveal the incompleteness and conflicting nature of the concept we have just discussed. It follows that under communism as well people will be impelled to work not by moral stimuli alone. The need in labour as a material 'benefit', the need in an interesting and stimulating activity, confirms the fact that the personal material incentive will survive, albeit in transformed shape. Even after the incentive of things, of products of labour, will die away, the incentive of the content of labour will survive. *The personal material interest will shift from the product to the process of labour and will thus prove to be, in this form, man's eternal companion.*

We may be rebuked for reducing the cherished torch from the temple of the human spirit, man's sacred monopoly, the sacramental rite of creation, to a phenomenon of a less lofty order. Indeed, there is no denying that to picture the creative process as a bearer of whatever form of material interest is almost as difficult psychologically, as it is, say, to reconcile oneself with the possibility of parallel lines crossing. But why not try it as a hypothesis?

The solution is intimately related to a topical problem of historical materialism: to determining the specific quality of the social form of the motion of matter and that new type of *the material* that is conceivable only in a social environment. The reference is mainly to social relations, some of which are often called objectified relations. Not because they consist of objects—for that sort of relations do not

exist—but because they arise in connection with objects as consumer values.

It is for two reasons—the relative underdevelopment of the subject of our discussion, the creative incentive (the psychology of creation is even now almost wholly limited to the psychology of artistic creation), and the absence of graphic objectified methods of apprehending it—that stimuli of creation escape the attention of researchers. Yet, a very substantial social relation is to be found here, lacking which no organisation of society could function.

Labour is first of all a material process that alters an object of nature in accordance with the ideal conception determined by human (personal or social) needs, and by the properties of the material and the implements of labour. As a process of satisfying a certain human need it may be conditionally likened to the process of satisfying aesthetic needs, namely, visiting the theatre, listening to music, or seeing works of art. But this analogy, like any other, has its limits. The substantial difference between the one and the other is, indeed, striking: labour as a process of satisfying the need for labour is probably the only form of consumption which is by nature active and constructive; this cannot, obviously, be said of the 'consumption' of aesthetic values (though here, too, construction of the personality is in evidence).

The relations of production, this main component of 'social matter', are usually reduced in Soviet literature to property relations or to economic relations of production, that is, to contacts between people concerning the *appro-*



*priation* of the products of labour. In an antagonistic class society these relations are expressed in the antagonism between the propertied and the dispossessed, in the exploitation of the latter by the former. In a way, this is a *vertical* (from bottom up or vice versa) plane of the relationship of domination and subordination superimposed on the perpetual process of production. But relations of production also have a *horizontal* plane. Apart from the specific intercourse between exploiters and exploited, as, say, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, there are also continuously vibrant ties within either of these large social groups.

What changes does socialism introduce in the relations among labourers in the process of productive labour? To begin with, socialism *unites* the owners of the conditions of production and the direct producers—in both cases it is the labouring classes. Apart from property relations (economic), a special role in intercourse begins to go to direct labour, technical, technological, or productive *labourer* relations that are contiguous with the productive forces and belong to the sphere of technology and labour organisation. This is the actual state of affairs, and it has got to be acknowledged. It is understandable why in their concern with protecting, multiplying and developing socialist property, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government devote so much attention to improving the organisation of industrial and agricultural production, and to arranging more rational forms of contact between the different sections of working people in socialist society.

From the dialectico-materialist point of view, the material relations of production between people are the core of social relations representing the human essence. But which type first of all—the economic whose substitution leads to a substitution of social system, or the labour, labourer, techno-organisational relations, which are in essence the same under several social-economic systems? We hold that it is the latter.

If the essence of man were reduced to economic, property relations, where only relations of property and the consequent relations of exchange, distribution, and so on, are meant by the term relations of production, we would quite unconsciously come to the conclusion that there is more than one human essence. It would even prove possible to count their number by relating the various modifications of the human essence to some specific social and economic pattern. Such a 'pluralistic conception' of one of the basic questions of Marxist social philosophy is bound to come into collision with the conception of the monistic character of the natural historical process and to complicate our understanding of the successive link between different epochs.

By following this approach we could come to a point where it will be possible to infer that the members of either one of the contending antagonistic classes are not human beings. The ultimate illogical conclusion flowing from this premise is that the human essence changes with the change of social systems, depending on the change of forms of property, and that there is nothing in common between the human essence in, say, socialist society and

the human essence under capitalism, to whatever class the individual may belong.

Certainly, the human essence is subject to development. But this does not prevent it from retaining a *qualitative definiteness* throughout history. This definiteness reposes *not in transient economic structures* which determine the essence of classes, but in the eternal natural condition of human existence—in labour which, as Marx said, is 'independent of every social phase of that existence, or rather, is common to every such phase',<sup>1</sup> that is, in direct relations of production, in labourer relations, that are relations governing the use of labour implements and the organisation of work. *Labour activity constitutes the essence of the specifically human life activity, and the immediate labour relations common to many epochs are the basis of the material social relations determining the human essence.*

If the vital need for work, the nature of the creative incentive, and interest in work as such are seen from this angle, it becomes clear that all this amounts to the individual's striving to reproduce in his life activity the 'social matter', that is, the immediate human labour relations constituting the objective basis of the human essence. This material need differs from other material needs in that it owes its origin not to the natural but the social character of man, to man's need for self-assertion as an active and social being.

The reproduction of the human essence in each creative act, the creation of new things, the display of one's abilities, are experienced

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 179.

by the individual as an enjoyment. But 'enjoyments themselves,' Marx said, 'are indeed nothing but social enjoyments, relations, connections.'<sup>1</sup> More, the enjoyment derived from the creative process is not a simple relation. History has cast it in the role of a perpetual mover which, under communism, will help without any external impulse to reproduce the most substantive of social relations on which all other relations depend, and will help to renew the functioning of the entire social organism, of different forms of social life. The power of this incentive is comparable only with the power of nuclear energy, and its use will perform a revolution in the social 'energetics' of the future. Communism is described as real humanism precisely because it is based on the power of emancipated labour, which is given only to man.

In coming to grips with self-love, which he assumed to be the fruit of inequality, Godwin tried to prove the necessity of eliminating personal motives of activity and replacing them with the motive of the common good. In the rapidly developing bourgeois society of the late eighteenth century this was an immense contribution to the laying of the theoretical groundwork for scientific communism.

But to reproduce essentially similar views today, moreover in conditions of developed socialism, to associate communist work exclusively with moral incentives, with a high degree of consciousness, is to fall out with the classical propositions of Marx, Engels

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, 'Wages'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 422.

and Lenin, and with the practice of socialist and communist construction.

'If we want to be of help to some cause,' Engels wrote, 'it must first become our own, egoistic cause ... consequently, in this sense, even apart from any material aspirations, simply for egoistic reasons, we are Communists and precisely for egoistic reasons wish to be *people*, not only individuals.'<sup>1</sup> If a modern author were to say anything of this sort on his own behalf, he would probably be misunderstood by many of his colleagues and blamed for 'advocating individualism'. Yet, this raises the question of communism being impossible without the active development of the individual, personal interest, and of the purely moral motivations of a social order not being effective enough as the main and perpetual mover of personal activity.

The stimuli for work operating in society must always be oriented on some personal needs of people. Only then will we have a viable system of social relations, for it cannot be built exclusively on a 'responsive sense of duty to society'. This *ideal* factor is obviously insufficient for the continuous renewal of the *material process of labour*. In short, the already existing ethical substantiation of communist work must necessarily be supplemented by materialist substantiation.

What human needs are known to science?

There are different points of view on this score. The following may be suggested as one of the approaches to distinguishing needs by

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<sup>1</sup> Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 27, p. 11.

their origin—*natural and physical*, inherited by people from their animal ancestors but possessing a social form, and *social*, which are purely human acquisitions. The need for work belongs among the latter.

Since we consider it an essential vital need of the human being, a token that the individual has assimilated social relations, and since we measure the nature and degree of this assimilation by the nature and degree of the need, we may legitimately ask why the individual is able to be the bearer of the human essence.

There could be this answer: the bearer, protector, continuer and maker of social relations is society. The individual is born in society into a setting of definite forms of social life. And to reckon with them, to maintain them, is crucial for the individual's own existence. Society impregnates and enmeshes the individual in social relations and makes him conscious of them every minute of his life. The individual's behaviour is determined from outside. This is why the individual is a mirror of the epoch in which he was born. If we were to stop at this point, we would have presented views typical of metaphysical materialism, leading to a fatalistic understanding of history, to abject worship of spontaneity, to a belittlement of man's abilities. All this Marx described as being one-sided.

The other answer to our question is the Marxist answer. Marxism does not contrapose the objective conditions and man's activity to one another. In the process of labour, which is the basis of social and historical practice, the material of nature is opposed by man *as*

*a force of nature.*<sup>1</sup> The substance of the historical process amounts to the practical interaction of the socially determined active subject who, however, possesses his own activity, and the social and natural environment. There is no non-human or supra-human history.

All associations of people—from the maximum (a concrete historical society or a world system) to the minimum (Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday)—are at different levels, in their own way, modes of existence of the human essence. Persons are the individual bearers of social relations.

'Above all' Marx warns, 'we must avoid postulating "society" again as an abstraction *vis-a-vis* the individual. The individual *is the social being*. His manifestations of life—even if they may not appear in the direct form of *communal* manifestations of life carried out in association with others—are therefore an expression and confirmation of *social life*.'<sup>2</sup>

Here, we encounter certain difficulties. As long as we speak of society, everything is clear. Society is inconceivable without social relations. The same may be said with certain reservations about any social group. Its very existence guarantees the existence of the social (group) principle. But how does the individual acquire this ability, where are the essential social ties 'recorded' in him?

'In the brain,' is one answer.

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<sup>1</sup> See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 299.

'In what way?'

'By means of the memory.'

...But here, too, we spot a contradiction. It develops that the totality of social, mainly material, relations comprising the essence of man and of the human is sustained only by the social consciousness, and that is an ideal factor.

Lenin wrote that social relations are divided into material and ideological. Like the invisible lines of a magnetic field they permeate the entire society. They can be discovered only indirectly, by generalising particular cases of human activity, by generalising particular actions. More, to be conductors of these social 'magnetic lines', people must themselves become something in the nature of little social magnets, grains or, better still, knots in the social nets. They must be the singular being (potentially and actually) of those ties which none but they can establish and maintain.

According to one conception, it is not the coagulum of all social relations but only the reflection of the ideological (and socio-psychological) social relations of a specific epoch that act as the 'social atom'. All that is social in an individual, if the matter is taken to its logical conclusion, is conceived as spiritual, while the material is that which comes under the head of natural and biological. This is strongly reminiscent of the view of the pre-Marxian materialists that for an individual to 'maintain' social relations he must be continuously 'reminded' of them; the subject must feel himself to be completely determined by the laws of society, just as, according to Hegel, man is the most independent when he



knows himself to be entirely determined by the Absolute Idea.<sup>1</sup>

But why cannot the individual as the 'social atom' possess an independent social charge, merging with social relations not only spiritually, but also materially?

As we see it, he certainly can. This depends on how the natural and social nature combine in the separate individual, how the biological performs social functions. Regrettably, only rare sociologists notice this aspect of the matter, though Soviet psychologists (e.g., L. S. Vygotsky, and A. N. Leontiev) offer interesting supplementary material on this score for historical materialism and scientific communism.

The satisfaction of man's 'essential', vital need for work has its psychophysiological side. To accept this view does not mean 'biologising' human needs, as some sociologists would have us believe. It takes account in scientific analysis of the influence that the continuous reproduction and satisfaction of the social need for work can exercise on all the vital functions of normal people. The rhythm of the processes in the human body is largely determined by the rhythm of labour. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with one's work affects the state of the nervous system and through it even the physical condition. Man's social organisation has fused with the biophysical basis more strongly than this would appear at first glance. The fact that we know very little about it is no argument for negating the psychophysiological

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<sup>1</sup> See Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, London, p. 283.

basis of the need for work shaped by the social conditions as a product of the social evolution of the individual into a social being.

Take children brought up in an animal environment. Their example shows that abilities and functions typical of man are not inherited. They are acquired individually in the social environment. This process is usually described as assimilation of culture where the term 'culture' connotes the totality of achievements substantial for humanity and capable of exercising a practical influence on the life activity of the individual. In this sense assimilation of culture is assimilation of the totality of social relations, assimilation of the ability to participate in human intercourse, and this principally with relation to the production of the necessities of life.

Sometimes culture is used to mean purely spiritual values, whose assimilation is often one-sidedly regarded as a passive accumulation of the knowledge already in the possession of society. If we were to interpret assimilation of culture as a passive absorption of cultural values, the process of the development of the individual as a human being would amount to an endless quantitative accumulation of verities, to an enrichment of the spirit. Assimilation of the most substantial social relations would then be interpreted as a spiritual assimilation, as a function of the memory, and the vital need for work as a spiritual (moral) need, the essence of man as the product of only his spiritual development.

But there could be a different approach. We could see man's various abilities and needs

as an exercise of definite organs. The problem here is put as follows: the human being has no special, morphologically distinct permanent organs (like the lungs, heart, stomach, ears, legs, and the like) with which the specific character of human activity could be associated; the elementary physiological functions of the brain are common to all human individuals, those brought up as animals and who are not normal, and those who are normal people. Search in these two directions augurs no positive results. Hence, the answer is to be traced to the transformation under the effects of the social conditions of those faculties that nature has bestowed on man. It is this *third* way that A. N. Leontiev suggests, referring to such authorities as the prominent German psychologist, Wilhelm Wundt, and the distinguished Soviet physiologists Ivan Pavlov and A. A. Ukhtomsky. It develops (and here historical materialism invades the realm of psychology) that human behaviour is determined by brain structures formed in the course of individual development in the social environment, by peculiar compounds of the elementary functions of the brain which perform the role of *special organs* of man's nervous system, thus obviating the need for any new organs.

Defining the 'functional organs' of the brain, Leontiev writes: 'These organs, which function exactly like the ordinary morphological organs, differ from the latter by being *new formations* arising in the process of individual (ontogenetic) development. They it is that constitute the material sub-stratum of those specific abilities and functions which take shape as

man masters the world of objects and phenomena created by humankind, the creations of culture.

'Now we know enough about the mechanisms that form these organs, the peculiarities of this, in order to create experimental "models" of them in man. On the other hand, we can now also more clearly conceive that which represented the humanisation of the human brain and brought the further development of the human being under the effect of social and historical laws, which accelerated this development immeasurably. The cortex of the human brain with its 14-17 billion nerve cells became *an organ capable of forming functional organs.*'<sup>1</sup>

Knowing this, it would be strange to pretend that the matter concerns natural science only, and not sociology. And it is still more strange to evade a mutual adjustment (not mechanical, of course, and not artificial) of the propositions of such disciplines as psychology and historical materialism. The above conclusions were drawn by psychologists through experimental research and correct use of the Marxist method in social science. It is also important to note the reverse influence of psychology on the philosophical apprehension of the development of society.

As we see it, the teaching on the functional organs of the brain closes the doors to the pre-Marxian materialism which conceives 'thing (*Gegenstand*), reality, sensuousness, ... only in the form of the *object* (*Objekt*) or of *contem-*

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<sup>1</sup> Leontiev, 'Chelovek i kultura' ('Man and Culture') in: *Nauka i chelovechestvo* (Science and Humanity), Vol. II, p. 71.

plation (*Anschauung*), but not as *human sensuous activity, practice*, not subjectively.<sup>1</sup> This could not be completely ruled out so long as it was thought that the assimilation of social relations by individuals was purely spiritual. *Discovery of the mechanism of the individual material physiological consolidation of social relations as functional organs of the nervous system enables us once and for all to banish from Marxist social science metaphysical materialism which has here and there blended with idealism.* The largely spiritual interpretation of man's essence is fading into the past. Man stands before us as a biosocial structure. The relation of consciousness to being has proved to be not only a question of man's relation to the outside world, but also a question of his relation to himself, to his organism, his actions, of the relation of the higher forms of man's reflection of the world to the lower, of the ideological reflection to the psychological, and of the ideological and psychological to the psychophysiological reflection, and of the relation of the thinking man to himself as the sensuous man.

The doctrine of the psychophysiological assimilation by people of the human essence in organs of the brain and brain structures shaped in the process of activity confirms the correctness, integrity and harmony of historical materialism. L. S. Vygotsky wrote on this score: 'Changing the well-known tenet of Marx we could say that the psychological

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'Theses on Feuerbach'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 3.

nature of man is the sum-total of the social relations that have been transferred within him and that have become functions of the personality and forms of its structure. This does not go to say that the Marxist tenet means this very thing. But we see in this tenet the fullest expression of everything we are being led to believe by the history of cultural development.<sup>1</sup>

This is just one of the forms of reflection by the subject of the social object. Lenin described sensation as 'a direct connection between consciousness and the external world', 'the transformation of the energy of external excitation into the fact of consciousness',<sup>2</sup> whereas in the case of functional organs of the nervous system being formed there is a conversion of continuously active social relations into a function of the human organism reshaped under their influence in the process of its practical activity.

The analogy with sensations is, as it were, broad but not deep. Functional organs are not simply an immediate connection with what is for the individual the outside world of social relations. They are part of that world, in which the social is grafted on and transforms the biological.

Unlike sensations, which last only so long as an outside excitant is being applied, functional organs, once they are formed, determine man's behaviour as man *outside* the social

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<sup>1</sup> L. S. Vygotsky, *Razvitiye vysshykh psikhicheskikh funktsii* (Development of Higher Psychic Functions), Moscow, 1960, pp. 198-99.

<sup>2</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'Materialism and Empirio-criticism', *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 51.

sphere as well. Having become a function of life, social relations acquire in every individual not only an ideal but also a material form of their singular being, just as the individual becomes a more or less complete, more or less perfect, embodiment of the social relations and asserts himself in his intercourse with other individuals as an element of social being. The individual measures all these contacts with the outside world by the gauge of social relations assimilated by him in the process of ontogenesis. Consolidated psychophysiologicaly, they do not die in the individual until the individual dies himself.

Mankind parts fairly easily with one or another economic and social structure of society and the corresponding social consciousness shaped by one of the systems of property in means of production. But it cannot, by its nature, part with labour. Not only because it would then deprive itself of the means of subsistence, but also because it would lose the features it has acquired in the process of labour and without which it cannot be the embodiment of societal qualities. The functional organs of the brain, which are biological accumulators of social qualities, are the product and psychophysiological basis of first of all societal relations common to several successive epochs and essential to man in general—relations of labour, production, labourer, and the like, and then, only second, of economic relations. The latter do not consolidate in the brain physiologically and chiefly determine the identity of the social class. Property and labour relations are assimilated by people differently. *The essence of man covers,*

*first of all, those societal relations which lead to an at least partial repatterning of individual psychophysiological structures.*

Since economic relations have this ability to a lower degree, the re-education of persons contaminated with proprietary views is wholly feasible. The main thing is to place the individual in a situation created by the life activity of a fully-developed work collective. By joint organised reaction to successful furtherance or to breaches of the interests of the collective, which is here both subject and object of education, it maintains a system of relations in which it is impossible and undesirable for the individual to behave anti-socially. This, in substance, is the principle behind the pedagogical system of Makarenko, the reputed Soviet educator.

The functions of the brain with which individuals are endowed by nature are organised by the social environment into a physiological apparatus of a special quality. The corresponding needs arising in an organism with this apparatus are not natural physiological needs, but social-physiological needs. Any attempt at explaining the latter on the basis of concrete historical social relations, by analysis of the basis and superstructure of a society, usually leads to conclusions of an ethical order. The 'naturalisation' of all man's needs, for its part, leads, as in the case of Feuerbach, to loss of any idea about the specific quality of social principles. It is essential to consider *both sides*, to find the bridge from the psychophysiological—the only natural element in which the societal can take firm root—to the system of essential bonds between people, and



to see the reverse influence of these ties on psychophysiology, leading to a reconstruction that will enable it to be the natural bearer of the socio-creative beginnings, of faculties that do not exist in man's biological fabric.

Soviet authors write prolifically about labour turning into a prime vital need under communism and about man's assimilation of the true human essence. In some cases, however, this sounds like an empty declaration. Take the question of abolishing the exploitation of man by man, and the alienation of the process and product of labour. Is this not an inspiring goal for nations performing one or another type of socialist revolution? Which of the socialist countries has not seen the mighty labour élan and enthusiasm of the masses spurred by their knowledge of controlling the wealth that was previously appropriated by exploiters, spurred by the knowledge of working for themselves, for the good of society? But we would have been poor dialecticians if we were to expect this factor to be as effective all the time in countries where socialism has existed for several decades and where a generation of people has grown up that never knew exploitation and that, naturally, reacts to different forms of stimulation. This is not only a matter of any further socialisation of the means of production, of creating systems of automated machinery, and of furthering the communist education of the working people. The question is broader and more complicated, and cannot be well solved unless we take account of factors that have only recently come within the field of vision of science and practice.

Among other things, the objective is to mould a need for creative work in the rising generations of Soviet people through education and training. This has got to be a conscious, single-minded, scientifically organised process. Here there is a junction of sociology, scientific communism, ethics, psychology, and the science and practice of education—a field of fruitful search and discovery that would contribute substantially to the moulding of the man of communist society.

It will be recalled that Lenin defined communist work not only in the context of moral factors, but also as 'labour performed because it has become a habit to work for the common good, and because of a conscious realisation (that has become a habit) of the necessity of working for the common good—labour as the requirement of a healthy organism.'<sup>1</sup>

Lenin was not repelled by the word 'organism' (which some interpreters of Marxism regard as a sign of 'drift' from the sociological to a 'medical' standpoint), because he had his feet solidly planted on scientific ground. When setting out to organise labour on scientific lines in the light of Lenin's approach, we must thoroughly study the psychophysiological and social-psychological nature of creativity. This is the road to a truly communist transformation of the basic sphere of man's life activity. There are ample grounds, therefore, to question the old approach of referring the

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'From the Destruction of the Old Social System to the Creation of the New', *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 517.

creative incentive purely to moral, ideatic factors of the process of labour.

Can we count exclusively on the moral factor in the second phase of communism? Evidently not. No, we do not underrate the tremendous significance of the emerging communist ethical consciousness. But it would be wrong, all the same, to interpret communism in an idealistic spirit.

Material stimulation of labour will at all times be relevant. Under communism, to be sure, it will be of a different kind than now. Once man will already have the material and spiritual blessings he needs, the only way to encourage him will be with more interesting, more creative work. In other words, labour will stimulate labour. For under communism too—and we better give it thought now—we must not be idealists who ignore man's needs, and not only such needs as food, clothing, housing, medical treatment, entertainment, leisure, and the like, but also the creative needs, the level of which is the measure of the level of truly human social relations.

Labour, no matter the degree of its socialisation, will always be personal, concretely individual. Incentives of a purely social, moral type cannot replace the incentives of personal enjoyment or satisfaction of personal needs which will no longer be self-seeking, but are certain to survive and develop. The personal needs, whose satisfaction will be guaranteed by society, will no longer influence man's attitude to labour.

Social interest as<sup>1</sup> a moral incentive is already exercising and will surely continue to exercise a decisive influence on the work of

the members of communist society, who will treat it as a personal interest. But the individual will not dissolve in the collective. He will always show his distinctiveness, primarily in creative work, work that bears the imprint of his personality but at the same time attaches man to society, imparting to him the secrets of his own human essence and that of other people.

The question of material and moral stimuli of labour has a specific bearing on the basic question of philosophy. The fact that some authors predict disappearance of material stimuli and exclusive domination of moral stimuli under communism would lead us to the conclusion that on the highest rung of the new social system the relation of being to consciousness will be of a new type, that being and consciousness will change places and that, in any case, the effort to maintain being will become meaningless in the life of the individual.

Only people for whom the being of man is mere physical existence can reason in these terms. They are blind to the other, more essential side of the problem, namely, *man's need to galvanise social relations in his personal life activity continuously through his own labour*, for outside social relations he is not man. His need is continuously to sustain the flame of social being. This is the key of historical materialism to the future material stimuli of labour. Also, it is the bedrock sense behind Marx's formula that communism 'is the *genuine* resolution of the conflict between man and nature and between man and man—the true resolution of the strife between existence and

essence, between objectification and self-confirmation, between freedom and necessity, between the individual and the species.'<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. The Transformation of Labour into Use Value

In his initial elaboration of the theory of surplus value Marx referred to labour as a commodity, as a purchase and sale of useful activity. Later, however, he wrote of the circulation of labour power as a commodity. Why this alteration?

In the industrial practice of the factory-owner there evolved the popular notion (later adopted by bourgeois political economy) that he buys and pays for the labour of his workers. This was convenient for accounting, and also profitable for the capitalist because it concealed from the workers that he appropriated unpaid labour. The abstract money form of wages corresponded to and fed this illusion. It eradicated, as Marx put it, 'every trace of the division of the working-day into necessary labour and surplus-labour, into paid and unpaid labour. All labour appears as paid labour.'<sup>2</sup>

To break the secret of capitalist exploitation it was essential to destroy this illusion and prove that the capitalist does not pay for, and therefore buy, labour. If he did so, production would cease to be a source of capitalist

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 296.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 505.

accumulation and the capitalist would cease to be a capitalist.

What does a capitalist buy if not labour? He buys the capacity for labour, says Marx. He buys labour power, which has the wondrous property of creating more value in the process of labour than is necessary to sustain its active state and assure its reproduction. This capacity to yield additional value makes it valuable to the owner of the means of production. It is immaterial for the capitalist what he produces, whether it is soap, rifles or embroidery. He is indifferent to the use value of the product, but not to its value. And only for this reason he is not indifferent to where he invests his capital.

What does a worker consume in the process of labour? Does he consume his labour power? No, it has been sold to the capitalist and is being consumed by the capitalist as a source of surplus value. It would be consumed by the worker if he were to produce products for himself with his own means of production. In fact, however, the worker consumes means of production in the process of labour. 'Labour,' Marx wrote, 'uses up its material factors, its subject and its instruments, consumes them, and is therefore a process of consumption. Such productive consumption is distinguished from individual consumption by this, that the latter uses up products, as means of subsistence for the living individual; the former, as means whereby alone, labour, the labour-power of the living individual, is enabled to act. The product, therefore, of individual consumption, is the consumer himself; the result of productive consumption, is a product

distinct from the consumer.<sup>1</sup> Productive consumption is not an aim in the worker's case, for it does not directly satisfy any of his needs. It is no more than a condition for satisfying other needs—those that the worker experiences outside the process of production.

In sum, capitalist production presents the following picture of consumption in the process of labour:

The social class	What it consumes	The result of consumption	The relation to individual consumption and development of the personality
Capitalist	Labour power	Surplus value	Indirect
Proletarian	Means of production (not its own)	Product of labour (not its own)	Indirect

Despite the different situations of capitalist and wage worker, neither satisfies any direct need in the process of labour. There is a granite wall between the labour appropriated by the capitalist and personal consumption, insurmountable for both the non-working owner of the means of production and the working proletarian.

The capitalist's indifference to the content of the labour process is obvious, for he can perform his specific social function even if ignorant of the rudiments of production in his factories, which is run by salaried employees,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 179.

for he operates in a distinct sphere of the division of labour or does not work at all.

The worker is a different matter. His continuous and direct participation in the process of production should, one would think, arouse an active—positive or negative—attitude to the various types of work. Under capitalism it is the labourer (digger, ironsmith, carpenter, fitter, miner, engineer, architect, poet, singer, thinker, or what have you) who experiences either hatred or love of labour. And this love is the source of the vital need to work, a product of its universal nature that enters into conflict with the system of capitalist social relations.

Affection and sympathy amount to attachment, an as a rule dedicated attachment or predilection for a concrete person or object. Love of labour, like any other love, is selective. It may be a love of one or two types of activity. Love of labour, industry, is always oriented and presupposes a definite level of individual proficiency in the chosen type of work. One cannot like drawing if one is not adept at drawing. One cannot like physical work if one only watches others at work. And it is to this concrete and oriented attitude to labour, to activity in general, that capitalism is hostile. In capitalist conditions choice of activity is subordinated not to the free play of human abilities, but to the inexorable logic and needs of capital.

Capitalist production erodes love of labour in two ways: first, by exploiting and alienating labour, due to which the aversion for working for an exploiter often spreads to working in general and, second, by bringing love of



labour, 'loyal' and 'constant' to the chosen type of activity, and therefore stable, into collision with the exceedingly fickle needs of capital, which, as a rule, has the last word in this conflict.

The vital need for work is not stimulated by capitalist social relations. Under capitalism it has no social relevance and is rarely more in meaning than a fact of the individual's personal life. In the social climate created by capitalism dedication, creative zeal and sacrifice of personal tranquility and prosperity, and so on, are considered a sign of the 'eccentricity' of talent, a 'peculiarity' of an extraordinary individual worthy of ridicule. *Individuals subordinated to the needs of capital and standardised by it are involuntarily afraid of those who submit to nothing but their own need for work.* 'The most that a worker can sell,' Engels writes, 'is his *future* labour, that is, undertake to perform definite work in a definite time. But by so doing he does not sell labour (which has still to be performed) but places his labour power at the disposal of the capitalist for a definite fee and a definite time (in the case of day wages) or for a definite piece of work (in the case of piece rates); he rents out or, in other words sells, his *labour power*. But this labour power is fused with the worker's person and cannot be separated from it. This is why its cost of production coincides with the worker's own cost of production—that which economists used to call the cost of production of labour and which is the cost of the production of the worker and, consequently, the cost of the production of labour power. Thus, we can go on from the cost of the pro-

duction of labour power to *the value* of labour power and determine the amount of the labour that is socially necessary for the production of labour power of a definite quality.<sup>1</sup>

That is how matters stand under capitalism. But is some other situation possible?

Certainly. Let us assume a society in which the labourer is rewarded according to the quantity and quality of his work, irrespective of the value of his labour power, which would have ceased to be a commodity. Let us assume further that the portion of the product made by society that is not sent to the sphere of direct individual consumption is consumed collectively, irrespective of the possible value of labour power or of the quantity and quality of the labour of the individuals comprising the collective of consumers. In such a society there can be no division into sellers and buyers of labour power and there must be a steady, planned exchange of activity between groups of labourers employed in different branches of production. Would not the new relations evolved here between people be a complete negation of what we see under capitalism? Would there not be a direct exchange of objectified labour for living labour—which exchange, according to Marx, ‘would either do away with the law of value which only begins to develop itself freely on the basis of capitalist production, or do away with capitalist production itself, which rests directly on wage-labour’?<sup>2</sup> Nobody can seriously deny that all the features listed above are those of socialism.

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<sup>1</sup> Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 22, pp. 206-07.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 502.

Among the most substantive features of socialism are the following:

1. The aim of socialism is the ever fuller satisfaction of the growing material and cultural needs of the people through the continuous development and improvement of social production. This is put down in the programme documents of ruling Marxist-Leninist parties and, notably, in the Programme of the CPSU. Under socialism production is adjusted not to the artificial need of capitalists for appropriating the unpaid labour of other people, as is the case in bourgeois society, but to the normal human needs of the members of society; here production is a direct unity of the process of labour and the process of increasing the quantity and improving the quality of use values,<sup>1</sup> a restored unity (more precisely an identity) of the process of labour and its concretely useful content, and all types of productive activity.

2. The interest society has in the individual's labour is determined not by his ability to provide a definite quantity of surplus value but by his ability to produce a useful object. Under socialism labour is regarded in a social context primarily by virtue of its usefulness, as concrete labour embodying the individual abilities of the labourer. Hence society's special interest in man. The concept of abstract labour can here be applied only conventionally.

*The accent on the concrete qualitative side of the individual's activity is a crucial condition*

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<sup>1</sup> Increasing value, as we see in Chapter II, is not part of the content of socialist production, and is its characteristic only in the context of quantity.

for making labour a prime vital need, because labour in general cannot become a need (let alone a prime need) irrespective of its content and the range of emotions which it arouses in the person who performs it.

The need for creative labour has to be satisfied. But to do so, as we have seen, there must be suitable social conditions, because often they prevent this creative need from arising and because they do not yield the satisfaction sought in labour—the concrete type of labour for which the individual has a predilection. For in this respect the need for work stands alongside other needs—breathing, eating, drinking, and so on—with labour, assessed on a par with air, bread, water, and so on, itself becoming a *use value*.

Why was nothing said in the past about labour's ability to be a use value? Evidently, because in capitalist society the accent is laid primarily on value, while use value is only the bearer of value. Possession of value is a social recognition of a thing which, in a way, deforms even the notion of its usefulness.

We have already said that under capitalist relations the labour process does not coincide with the process of its consumption, because labour acts not as a need for labour but 'merely a *means* to satisfy needs external to it'.<sup>1</sup> Survivals of this under socialism impose the imperative of continuously improving distribution according to labour and more accurately differentiating payments for labour. Yet,

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 274.

over-concentration on this type of stimulation may make the historical perspective unjustifiably narrow. Because communism, which necessarily asserts labour's transformation into a prime vital need, is able, in this sense, to secure the *immediate identity of labour and consumption*—a kind of consumption that is of purely social origin and, moreover, specifically constructive, not wasteful.

Certainly, in this case, too, there is expenditure of means of production and of creative potentials, but this new coagulation of social labour received as a product through the consumption of labour that has become a vital need, is much superior to the expenditure in quantity of socially necessary working time because it combines past or dead labour with living labour.

We may be told that this view of the use value of labour, or of labour as a use value, is incorrect because Marx did not use these terms in this context, though labour evidently was to some extent a human need in all social-economic systems.<sup>1</sup> However, these objections may apply to how the individual apprehends labour, not to the social function of labour. Marx's conception of the alienation of labour proved that the system of exploitation of man

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<sup>1</sup> In Marx's works the expression 'use value of labour' denoted the usefulness not of the objectified product of labour, but of labour whose process is itself a product in, say, the services sphere. The use value of my labour relates in this case to someone's non-labour needs which my labour satisfies. Here, however, we are dealing with something else: the use value of my labour in relation to my own need for labour.

by man leads to prevalence of the tendency repulsing people from work, creating a gap between personal labour and personal consumption, with the latter acting as a preferred or even the sole desired occupation. Besides, the exploitation that is necessarily implicit in the appropriation of the product of someone's labour by the owner of the means of production, causes a depersonalisation of the labourer and dispossesses him not only of the thing but also of the authorship, that is, it undermines the very foundation of his socially relevant self-assertion, the social recognition of the maker's abilities, and the moral assessment and self-assessment of his labour.

There is a direct connection between the subordination of production to the motive of the maximum profit and labour's inability to be a use value on a society-wide scale. Labour can be a use value only when *not abstract but concrete labour* is the basis of social recognition. This means that production must be oriented on creating use values.

Labour cannot be a universal need and acquire use value as a process where production is not directly subordinated to satisfaction of man's needs. Conversely, when this subordination begins and when the labour of each is assessed not from the standpoint of increasing the abstract universal value but is measured by how much it contributes to the satisfaction of the needs of others, all the obstacles that prevented labour from being ranged alongside other needs are gradually put out of the way. Alongside its social function of a means that satisfies needs other than the need in itself, labour becomes an aim and at the same time

a means of attaining this aim—the continuous renewal in individuals of the intricate complex of emotions connected with activity which, precisely as a complex, provide an outlet for the true human individuality. These emotions, acting as an outlet, mould the individual as a personality, as social man. In this sense labour stimulates itself and every individual acting as the subject of the creative process stimulates man in himself. Precisely this process taken as a unity with the socially determined relation to it of the subject is the *substance* of the use value of labour.

If we take the sum-total of the factors we have here discussed in their general relation to one another, we will get something like the picture given in the adjoining table. It goes without saying that here what is recorded as the final state is under socialism actually a tendency sometimes obscured by other, rival tendencies. But that does not alter the fact that this is the direction of our development as socialist social relations ripen and communist social relations begin to emerge.

The second word of the expression 'use value' sounds improper in reference to labour. It will be recalled that 'use value' is that which can be useful and capable of satisfying a human need. The German word *Wert* seems to cover the meaning more suitably. The expression 'consumer worth of labour' looks more logical. It is more precise, more simple, more comprehensible. What is the worth (not the cost) of labour as a process of satisfying the need for activity? Put in this way, the question is not in the least ambiguous. It is simple,

Type of production	Relation between the ultimate and immediate aims of production	The aim of production	The chief social measure of the value of labour	What labour is socially important	The relation to the need for labour	The relation to the labourer's personality
Capitalist	They do not coincide	To obtain surplus value	Value — measure of quantity	Abstract labour measured as value	Objectively negative	Alienated and alienating
Socialist	They coincide	Products satisfying human needs	Use value, quality and quantity of use values	Concrete labour from the point of view of its content and skill, that is, ability to produce objects useful to man	Objectively positive by virtue of society's special interest precisely in the concrete, highly effective and high quality labour of every labourer	Production for the sake of man and a growing interest in man's creative possibilities as the basis for the collectivist socialisation and positive self-assertion of the personality



comprehensible, and will nearly always be answered.

In short, we are speaking of the use-worthiness of labour which it acquires irrespective of its result once it becomes a need. We deliberately avoid any discussion of the conditions for its transformation into a need, and concentrate on the general method of approach. The matter, as we see it, boils down to the following: *the tactical and strategic solution of the problem of making labour a prime vital need depends objectively on the process or labour's acquiring the qualities of use-worthiness.* This is yet another formula of freedom in the making.

Among the objective factors of this transformation is the abolition of the social and technical conditions that create an aversion to labour, that is, of the exploitation of man by man and of the specialisation and working conditions that warp the personality. Labour is filled with a creative intellectual content like, say, the work of a composer which Marx described as the 'self-materialisation of the individual'. According to Marx, 'in material production labour can acquire this character only if 1) its social character is given and 2) this labour is of a scientific nature, and is also universal labour, man's effort not as a force of nature trained in a certain way but as a subject active in the process of production not in purely natural, naturally evolved, form, but in the form of an activity that governs all the forces of nature.'<sup>1</sup> As for the subjective factors, much arduous work is being done, and

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Grundrisse...*, *Op. cit.*, p. 505.

is still to be done, to cultivate the labourer's positive predilection for labour—from a system of communist education to elaboration of methods of concentrated influence on the functional organs of the brain among the rising generation.

Admittedly, the need for work is not simply a spiritual-ethical thing. As a human need for bodily activity it has the 'basis' of a complicated psychophysiological mechanism. We must also remember, however, that creative activity as a variety of the labour process can play the role of a use value, and this to an ever greater degree with the growth of the elements of communist work. This brings us to the conclusion that the idea about the erosion of material stimuli during the advance to communism is incorrect.

It is more than clear that communist society will not need to provide economic incentives for the labour of individuals. But the fading away of the economic stimulus does not mean that there will be no material stimuli of any kind. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of determining *what* material stimulus there will be for communist work. It will possibly be the stimulus of *creative* work. An understanding of the role of this stimulus is the key to understanding the new form which historical materialism is taking when it draws not only on the material of the pre-history of human society, but also on the rich experience of communism developing on its own basis.

As we see, Communists have given this considerable thought. They have come to grips with the self-love of the philistine for whom parasitical consumption is the sole purpose of

life, but are themselves prone to *creative 'self-love'*. In its most striking form it comes close to self-denial for the sake of a cherished job, and is ingrained in Communists as *the individual's respect for his constructive social beginnings*. Attempts to portray Communists as foes of any personal creative self-assertion are a malicious and dishonest caricature. They may be prompted by the behaviour of a few dogmatists and ascetics, but have no ground in the practice of Communists as a political party. Nor could this be otherwise. After all, communism sees its main vocation in furthering the individual aptitudes of every citizen and in switching them into the process of the all-round enrichment of the life of society.

### **5. Will Free Labour Remain Purposeful?**

Marxists-Leninists associate the progressive emancipation of labour in socialist society with the emancipation of working people from personal material cares. This process is already finding expression in steadily rising living standards in the socialist countries. People have gained a sense of security. The knowledge that by virtue of their right to work they will always have work relieves them of one of the material cares—that of having a source of livelihood. This speaks of the diminishing dependence of the individual's personal fate on social necessity.

In the sixties there was a change of quality in the development of the Soviet economy. For the first time since the Revolution, the Communist Party and the socialist state were

able to approximate the rate of growth of industries serving the immediate needs of the people with the high growth rates of heavy industry. The preferential increase of low-level wages with the expanding social wealth, and larger allocations for meeting public needs, are a token of the drive, as envisaged in the Programme of the Communist Party, for levelling living standards.

In 1976 the average monthly wage in the USSR was 151.4 roubles, and 206.3 roubles if allowances and benefits from social consumption funds were added. This compared with the 33.1 and 40.6 roubles respectively in 1940. The salaries of administrative staff, formerly on average 20 per cent higher than the incomes of industrial workers, are now lower (132.4 and 168.2 roubles respectively).

Naturally, like all averages, these figures do not show the differentiation of incomes by quality, quantity and skill of the labour given to society, and the difference in living standards deriving, among other things, from unequal opportunities for spending earnings. In industry, agriculture and construction, for example, the salaries of engineers and technicians (205.8 182.1 205.5 roubles respectively) were higher in 1973 than those of workers (168.2 133.1 185.3 roubles), followed by office workers and other employees (139.2 119.1 145.6). Some food products are cheaper and more easily obtainable in rural than in urban areas, in southern parts of the country than in the northern, and so on. But this is not the point. The growing amount of material and cultural goods acquired by Soviet people, while showing a definite level of well-being

and a definite degree of economic equality, is still restricted by, mainly, the size of wages and salaries, and the time has not yet come to write off personal budgets, personal spending, economising, savings, and the like. Though the personal work of an increasing number of people is no longer unconditionally dependent on the necessity of satisfying individual non-creative needs, it is still too early to say that a relative independence of the individual's labour from all personal needs other than the need for work has been secured. In any case, practice yields insufficient evidence as yet to buttress attempts—on the grounds of Marx's words about the development of human energy into an aim in itself and of labour into a self-stimulating process—to negate material interest either in the immediate or the more distant future.

Should labour be a source of livelihood under communism, too? Will it still be oriented on securing goods? Some Soviet authors have given negative answers to these questions. They contrasted the two main functions of labour—that of maintaining life (the economic function) and that of developing human aptitudes, of humanising man. It was held that since the former superseded the latter under the pre-socialist social systems, the latter would be sure to oust the former under communism even on a society-wide scale. But this does not look right.

It is true, of course, that under communism the centre of gravity will shift to the use of labour as a means of moulding the personality. Personal labour will cease to be a source of livelihood in the immediate, narrow sense of

the word, because the bulk of the material goods required by the individual will finally be provided unconditionally at the expense of society.

Those who argued that collective material interest would no longer be necessary, maintained that to consider it timeless is tantamount to perpetuating just one social relation—the relation of usefulness which, as they saw it, would lose all meaning under communism. They held that communism would then look like a 'realm of collectivised utilitarianism'. But their position was untenable for it was impossible to prove that collective interest in the manufacture of goods will fade away at some stage of the communist system. Can anyone seriously argue that relations of usefulness will fade away if consumption will continue?

Labour has always been and always will be a source of livelihood and a source of development. Man cannot live without labour, without producing the means of life. In the light of these elementary verities it is obviously wrong to infer that the necessity for labour will one day give place to a 'free' self-activity conceived as an activity independent of any material factors since freedom is, in fact, interpreted as a metaphysically conceived absolute opposite of necessity. It should be remembered that freedom is also a necessity (perceived and assimilated technically and socially by man) resulting from the progress of science, production and social relations. Freedom is a specific quality and supreme type of the necessity for people's practical activity. This is precisely why it cannot be conceived

as wholly abdicating the material basis. It is a harmonious synthesis of the objective and the subjective elements in the activity of humans.

Take the notion of 'man's active essence as a philosophical principle'. 'Activity,' wrote Soviet philosopher G. S. Batishchev, 'cannot but pass continuously from the form of a living process into an objectified embodiment and vice versa; it is an interminable mutual transformation of conditions and of the act, of the objectified world of culture and the actions of people (labour and the like). In this way activity conditions itself by the results of previous activity since it draws them into its own process, engulfs and dissolves them in it so as later to reproduce and recreate them as its own, new result in which the results of previous activity are thereby sublated. In this sense, human activity is truly a *causa sui*—the cause of itself. That which looks like an independent, outside action of "circumstances" on man is, in fact, if we analyse all connections and mediations, merely a complex, indirect form of the self-conditioning of human activity through its objectified embodiments. In society it is not things by themselves that act on people, but people who act on one another and each on oneself through the medium of things: "circumstances" are such only inasmuch as they are reproduced by activity as its own conditions in strict accordance with the nature of this activity.'<sup>1</sup> And more in similar vein.

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<sup>1</sup> *Chelovek v sotsialisticheskom i burzhuaznom obshchestve* (Man in Socialist and Bourgeois Society), Moscow, 1966, pp. 249-50.

Certainly, this abstraction of human activity has its attractions, creating the illusion of its primordial independence and freedom from the natural environment. It is good to feel oneself god who moulds the surrounding and accompanying 'circumstances'. But there is one 'circumstance', hunger, the need for nourishment, that does not as a *fact* depend on activity and can be altered by activity only in form. It calls in question this seemingly absolutely sovereign abstracted activity. To say nothing of the fact that in the absence of any 'circumstances' activity could not have begun at all; neither can it continue in their absence.

The dialectical formula of *objectification—deobjectification*, through which the author expresses *activity*, seems to have little or no sense when not buttressed by analysis of the dialectics of human *needs and aptitudes*. By virtue of the fact that there is always need behind human activity, the latter is always 'burdened' with meaning. But this is a virtue rather than a fault.

Disquisitions like the above underestimate the fact that all human activity is conscious and purpose-oriented. Man, Marx writes, 'not only effects a change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realises a purpose of his own that gives the law to his *modus operandi*, and to which he must subordinate his will.'<sup>1</sup>

Conscious purpose is a law of human activity. This Marxian formula is no 'distortion' of historical materialism, no 'subjectivist

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 174.



echo', no 'psychologism', but a highly meaningful scientific generalisation. Unfortunately, vulgar interpretations of the determining role of the environment and the determined role of man and his activity keep cropping up in literature. The author we have quoted earlier tried to evade this. But he was more inclined, contrary to reality, to regard human activity as a self-sufficient objective process rather than acknowledge the sublated influence of 'circumstances' on its natural fixing of aims and purpose-oriented character. It was hardly accidental that he avoided all mention of real *needs* and *interests*.

Let us suppose that labour a) has ceased to be a source of livelihood and b) has become a pure 'aim in itself', irrespective of its concrete, useful result. In that case, however, we would be dealing not with labour, but with an exercise: its specific purpose-oriented character would have disappeared, and vague, high-flown verbiage, overlooking the practical, mundane basis of the problem, would take the place of the Marxist view of the matter. Besides, the problem was furnished with conditions that made its solution impossible: it was assumed that, having become a need, labour becomes indifferent to the concrete results, to the works of labour.

But can this sort of 'labour' activity, one that sheds all purposes aside from self-education, become a need? Can it, having become a sport, remain a need differing from sport only in that it develops intellectual, as well as physical, abilities? If the answers are in the affirmative, the position will be untenable, there will be a gaping breach in it because for

labour to become a need it is absolutely necessary for the labourer to have an interest in the product of labour, in the object in which his creative ability is being embodied; this interest has nothing in common with the philistine (truly utilitarian) worship of things as obligatory attributes of philistine contentment, conceivable only outside the sphere of social labour.

Naturally, attempts to 'emancipate' man from the useful character of labour are not novel. In this particular case they derive from preoccupation with one of the aspects of the Hegelian conception of labour. Referring to Hegel's words about implements (means) of labour, Lenin observed in his *Philosophical Notebooks* that in Hegel there were the rudiments of historical materialism. The end, Hegel said, is always finite, while the means presuming the ways of achieving the end concentrate in themselves reason as such: 'To that extent the Means is higher than the finite Ends of external usefulness: the plough is more honourable than those immediate enjoyments which are procured by it, and serve as Ends. The instrument is preserved, while the immediate enjoyments pass away and are forgotten. IN HIS TOOLS MAN POSSESSES POWER OVER EXTERNAL NATURE, ALTHOUGH AS REGARDS HIS ENDS, HE FREQUENTLY IS SUBJECTED TO IT.'<sup>1</sup>

Is this subordination to nature overcome by man who pursues some finite ends? Yes and no. The ends of man depend wholly on

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Conspectus of Hegel's Book *The Science of Logic*', *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 189.

nature as long as his labour is a means of maintaining his physical existence and until labour turns into the profoundly apprehended main content of man's life, his prime vital need. Thereupon man 'sublates' this subordination, because he begins to take an interest not in the given concrete product intended for his personal consumption, but in the product (more precisely the work) of his labour.

The interest in a thing as an object of unsatisfied needs gives way to interest in a thing as the embodiment, subjectification, self-assertion of man satisfying his need for labour. In sum, the immediate ends that will be pursued by the man of communist society must be subordinated not to nature, but to the creative process comprising the essence of human life activity. Yet, man will never be able to completely abandon his physical, bodily organisation. He must sustain it, must produce material goods in order to maintain it as a natural condition of every vital manifestation, including the most important one, namely, labour. Can anyone seriously suggest that labour will cease to be a means of life if there is no other way of sustaining the very process of labour?<sup>1</sup> This 'transformation' is an illus-

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<sup>1</sup> The 'root' of this methodological error is traceable to the fact that consumption is conceived as a force hostile to labour, as the absolute antithesis of creative activity, as dissipation of material and spiritual values accumulated by labour. In that case, the analysis is not taken to its end and evades the thought that man feeling the need for labour consumes labour as such, and that consumption is possible as an enjoyment of the creative process—as consumption of a perfectly individual and constructive variety. It must not be identified with productive consumption,

ion that does not stand up to philosophical criticism, let alone the criticism of practice.

It is true that man has become the aim of social production, and it is also true that under communism this will gain a new, more consummate and more graphic expression. But collective material interest in products without which development of the integral, harmoniously developed man is nothing but a hollow phrase—material interest in things that are not an aim but a means of providing better conditions for life and creative endeavour as an element leading to another, loftier aim—is still the most important condition for this aim to be achieved. Scientific ideas about communism have nothing in common either with the pharisaic 'philosophy' of poverty as a 'virtue' or with the philistine bourgeois cult of things. Marxism-Leninism holds that material wealth is created to satisfy the reasonable needs of man and is essential for the development of human abilities and the flowering of the personality. In building the foundations of communism we must not ignore the material factor, the needs of people. And this applies not only to the present stage of socialist society, but also to the future.

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because the 'object' consumed is not a thing but a process, not an object outside the individual but one of his own vital manifestations.

Thus, divorcing labour as a need from the process of consumption, overlooking the fact that labour can be a use value, that is, play a new role, they conceive consumption as an eternal antipode of production, as a process satisfying only the non-creative needs. In other words, they conceive consumption in terms of 'alienation' or from a standpoint which they themselves 'criticise'.

Building communism and transforming labour into man's prime vital need, society faces at least two problems: in the economic sphere it is of prime importance (especially for planning agencies) to register the needs of society (including the developing need for labour); in the sphere of culture it is essential to cultivate in people a sensible attitude, a sense of proportion, towards their needs. Under socialism this is the core of all cultural and educational work, and is being done through state control over the measure of labour and the measure of consumption.

Needs can differ. They can be sensible and consonant with the normal needs of a healthy and culturally developed man (these needs, if they are in material goods, cannot be limitless); they can be unreasonable, frivolous, the consequence of perverted taste, poor upbringing, and the like. And to align the volume of personal needs with scientifically grounded standards is a challenge that socialist society must meet as it approaches communism. This brings to mind Spinoza's thought about limiting affects and about sensible 'organisation' of human desires as a condition of freedom. Given all the other premises, under communism freedom of the individual will depend exclusively on man's approach to the satisfaction of his needs. And it is no accident that the Programme of the Soviet Communist Party calls attention to the cultivation in Soviet people of the ability 'to enjoy the benefits of communism in a rational way'.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Road to Communism*, p. 567.

In communist society personal needs are no longer the foundation of human activity. The question of personal maintenance will recede to the background. Human activity will be independent from all personal needs but one—the need for labour. Man's independent activity in relation to other needs, his freedom from material cares, is a token of communist freedom.

Why, however, cannot man be free in relation to labour? In the immediate sense such freedom would mean at least a relative independence of man's life activity from labour, freedom from labour, indolence, that is, a life activity stripped of its main content. Can this sort of life be called free if the very concept of freedom is applicable only to human activity whose main content is labour? Freedom is a positive quality of any type of activity, not a negation of all activity, not freedom from activity in general. Human labour cannot be free in relation to itself. The free man cannot be free of the need for labour, because precisely the development of this need is the fundamental condition for and supreme expression of freedom.

Labour directed to obtaining means for satisfying needs other than the need for labour is to be viewed as subordination of the essential human activity to man's *natural* character. Labour satisfying the need for labour is a dialectical negation ('sublation') of this subordination and stands for the ultimate *triumph of the social principle*, a process that stimulates itself and a creative activity relatively independent from factors external to it.

Given the opportunity to satisfy all other needs, it is in labour as a need that freedom finds its consummate embodiment. But this does not destroy the necessity for labour. Here necessity takes the form of freedom. While remaining a source of subsistence for society, for the individual, labour will act as a means of self-assertion, of opening all his spiritual and physical potentialities.

No matter how much a worker may like his work, in socialist conditions the thought of the emolument he will get for making an object, whether a machine part, a table or a book, tends to obtrude on the concept of the aim of his work, on the thing he is making, on the apprehension of his activity. For some people it blots out the social aim of their labour, the aim that gives their work any social meaning. This kind of 'bifurcation' of the aims of labour will disappear under communism. Labour will be rid of all overtones of utilitarianism and will arouse the individual's interest as an engaging process yielding profound moral satisfaction, as a source of aesthetic pleasure, as a means to a social result, and certainly not as a source of the indirect advantages that it is as yet yielding in socialist society. This makes the present principle of personal material interest historically transient.

To labour in the second phase of communism we may apply Marx's description of truly human labour: 'Let us suppose that we had carried out production as human beings. Each of us would have *in two ways affirmed* himself and the other person, 1) In my *production* I would have objectified my *individuality*, its

*specific character*, and therefore enjoyed not only an individual *manifestation of my life* during the activity, but also when looking at the object I would have the individual pleasure of knowing my personality to be *objective, visible to the senses* and hence a power *beyond all doubt*. 2) In your enjoyment or use of my product I would have the *direct* enjoyment both of being conscious of having satisfied a *human* need by my work, that is, of having objectified *man's* essential nature, and of having thus created an object corresponding to the need of another *man's* essential nature. 3) I would have been for you the *mediator* between you and the species, and therefore would become recognised and felt by you yourself as a completion of your own essential nature and as a necessary part of yourself, and consequently would know myself to be confirmed both in your thought and your love. 4) In the individual expression of my life I would have directly created your expression of your life, and therefore in my individual activity I would have directly *confirmed* and *realised* my true nature, my *human* nature, my *communal* nature.

'Our products would be so many mirrors in which we saw reflected our essential nature.

'This relationship would moreover be reciprocal; what occurs on my side has also to occur on yours.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, 'Comments on James Mill, *Éléments d'Économie Politique*'. In: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 227-28.



## 6. Reduction of the Working Day, Gradual Elimination of Distinctions Between Working and Free Time

In *Capital* Marx described reduction of the working day as the main condition of freedom.<sup>1</sup> At first glance there is a contradiction here—labour as a need defined as the highest form of freedom, on the one hand, and reduction of the working day, that is of the time of labour as the main condition for freedom, on the other. But this is only a seeming contradiction.

Any of man's needs—and in this regard the need for labour is like all other needs—are of a restricted nature at any given moment. No matter how much you may like physical or mental labour, once you go beyond the *measure* of its enjoyment it may become its opposite. Fatigue, dissatisfaction with the results, unpleasant emotions caused by overstrain—all these things are common among modern men.

Already under socialism labour becomes a developed need for many members of society, but this in doses smaller than necessary at the present level of production. Hence the conventional division of every person's working time into two parts: 1) working time according to need, when the person experiences satisfaction in the process of activity, and 2) the time when the individual is compelled to work in excess of his need, of necessity created by the present level of production.

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<sup>1</sup> See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 820.

Raising the productivity of labour facilitates reduction of the working day. Since the revolution, the average working week in industry has been reduced by nearly 18 hours (from 58.5 hours to 40.7). In the late sixties a five-day week was introduced, with two weekly days off. The rising consciousness of people, rising skills, the greatly higher machine-to-worker ratio, the broader outlook of people employed in socialist production—all this increases the time of labour according to need in absolute as well as relative terms. *The reduction of working time and the increase of the time of labour according to need are converging tendencies.* And there is no social force in socialist society that would act against their convergence.

But this is not all that Marx envisaged. Seeing the restricted need of man in some single type of activity, he also envisaged changes from one type of labour to another. We must not see the condition for freedom in a ceaseless reduction of working time in general. What is meant is reduction of established specialised working time, though the time of work as a whole may even increase. The creative mental process cannot be in principle limited in time. It can and will continue after the established working day.

One of the important tasks arising in connection with the reduction of working time is to secure rational use of the time that is thus freed. Valuable research was begun in this field by Soviet Academician S. G. Strumilin, and continued in the late fifties under G. A. Prudensky at the Siberian branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Compared with the twenties

the biggest changes were found not in the duration, but in the structure of free time.

The Siberian researchers divided the time of a worker into working and extra-working time. Extra-working time was divided into four basic parts:

1. *Time for household chores and self-service*, including use of community services and service enterprises (shopping, preparing food, child and personal care, care for the home and furniture, for clothing, footwear, and so on);

2. *Time for sleep and eating*;

3. *Time connected with production but not part of working time* (travel to and from work, time used at the enterprise before and after work, shower, changing clothes, and the like);

4. *Free time* for rest, study, proficiency training, self-improvement, upbringing of children, social activities.

Not only the duration of extra-working time, but also its distribution under the above four heads were studied.

It was found that the usual structure of extra-working time on week days was this: free time amounted to 15-20 per cent, 12-15 per cent was spent at work (changing clothes and showering at the enterprise, travelling to and from work, and so on), 45-50 per cent on physiological needs (sleeping, eating), and 23-25 per cent on work around the house and self-service. The time for sleeping and eating cannot be reduced. But free time can be considerably increased by reducing the time spent on household chores and time spent at work but not related to working time.

Women spend much time on housekeeping. For women to combine happy motherhood

with active and creative participation in social labour and public activity, in study and in artistic pursuits, far-reaching efforts are being made in the Soviet Union to lighten living conditions, to provide improved shopping facilities and expand the public catering industry, to improve the service industries, child-care institutions, to provide good housing, to redistribute family duties, and so on.

The same may be said of the time spent on travelling to and from work, on preparing and cleaning up the workplace, and the like. Measures are being taken to improve transport facilities, working conditions, and so on.

Analysis of extra-working time and the reserves of free time is highly useful. What strikes the eye, however, is that it is incomplete: no study has been made of the relation of extra-working to working time, that is, of the content of the *sum-total* of the workers' time, which is, in fact, the only true characteristic of their *way of life*. Let us add two items to the suggested structure of working time. This will give us the following picture:

*Sum-total of a worker's time*

*A. Working time*

1. Time for satisfying the need for labour;
2. Time worked in excess of the individual need for labour;

*B. Extra-working time*

1. Time for work at home and for self-service;
2. Time for sleep and eating;
3. Time spent at work but not as part of working time;
4. Free time.

How, roughly, will all these items change? In *working time*, which will be reduced in absolute terms, item one will increase in absolute and relative terms while item two will diminish correspondingly. The need for labour, as we have shown, is limited by the natural resources of the human body. Still, it is wrong to expect that working time will go on shrinking indefinitely. What is desirable for the worker in present-day socialist production, in whose case item two still plays a considerable part, may turn out to be unacceptable for the worker in communist society. Any further reduction of the working day may, under full communism, come into collision with the general need for labour. Since the time of labour in excess of need is expected to disappear, the problem of reducing the working day will probably become irrelevant. Being the effect of technical improvements in the production of material goods and in mechanical mental work, the reduction of working time will increasingly 'compel' people to take up creative pursuits, especially in the truly boundless field of cultural production. Yet, the need for creative work does not tolerate any time restrictions and periodically reveals its truly insatiable essence.

The growing *extra-working time* will see a considerable reduction of items one and three, albeit at dissimilar rates, while item two will probably remain the same and item four will tend to increase. One cannot expect, of course, that under communism time for home work and self-service will disappear completely; it will change quality, however, for there will be a socialisation of daily living conditions,

which will be a field of social labour and will see the bulk of the time spent in it merging with working time, that is, the time for satisfying the vital need for labour. Time related to work in production will also diminish to some extent; given efficient public transport and other improvements, it should not amount to much.

In the long run, the time of working people may be expected to consist of the following items:

*The worker's total time*

A. Working time or time for satisfying the need for labour;

B. Extra-working time:

- 1) Time for sleeping and eating;
- 2) Free time.

All three parts (one of working time and two of extra-working time)—amounting to practically all the worker's time—will be devoted to satisfying human needs, chiefly the social ones (the need for labour, satisfied in working time, and the need for creative pursuits, for social activity, for various forms of cultural activity, for the harmonious development of the personality, and the like, satisfied in free time), and to normal physiological needs (sleeping and eating). This shows that man and his needs are becoming the aim of social production.

There is still a certain difference between working and extra-working time: the first belongs to the labour sphere and the second to the sphere of everyday life. Under capitalism this differentiation is full of meaning, because there is a gaping abyss between working time, which the capitalist takes from the

worker, and personal time, which belongs to the worker.

Socialism and communism put an end to this perverse state of affairs. As it turns into a need of the spirit, labour ceases to be an imposed necessity. It becomes a free self-activity. It becomes an enjoyment and takes on the quality of rest and leisure, though, to quote Marx, it remains a devilishly serious thing entailing intensive strain.

Even now the labour process is tending to transcend the fixed working time, especially in the case of the creative professions. The rising cultural and technical level of people working in material production tends to alter their attitude to work. The restrictions imposed by technical standards, applied techniques, and so on, are becoming too narrow for a technically advanced, highly educated specialist. He gets to be critical towards his work. His approach to his daily practical tasks gets to be creative. His searching mind seeks better ways of organising production. Worker and collective farmer turn into worker-intellectual and farmer-intellectual. The rationaliser and innovator, whose labours become labours of the spirit, works on innovations and improvements not only during his working day, but also spends hours of his free time, the time meant for rest, over blueprints and calculations. Doing in his leisure time what he did during his working time, and the creative satisfaction he obtains, are evidence of an *erosion of the line between working time and free time*. This is one of the consequences of labour becoming a prime vital need and of man's achieving active social freedom.

At present, time spent on social activities is considered part of free time, though it differs from working time only conventionally, because social activity is also work—work done for the benefit of society but with no compensation.

The future reduction of working time and the trend towards learning two (or more) trades and professions, the proliferating opportunities for rational use of free time not only for cultural entertainment or sports, but also for satisfying the growing need for creative pursuits—all this convinces us that there are two processes. On the one hand, labour that is ceasing to be a burden is no longer opposed to leisure as its antithesis and, on the other hand, the new content of leisure, the many active forms of recreation, and the spread of creative pursuits to everyday life, lead to the eradication of distinctions between working and free time.

*The time devoted to labour as a need of the spirit becomes equivalent to free time, and vice versa.* The antithesis of labour and living ceases to exist. Communism creates conditions that harmonise best with man's social nature and his diverse vital needs. Labour becomes a socially necessary activity mediated not by every individual's want of products, but by a developed social need for labour. As a result, man finally gains independence from his animal nature and wins all possible opportunities for unimpeded development of his social essence.



### ON THE ROAD TO A CLASSLESS SOCIETY

#### 1. Analysis of the Social Structure of Soviet Society

No matter how fruitful the study of the 'osteal and muscular system of production' and analysis of the essential definitions and dynamic laws of the new system may be, it will have purpose only as the basis and premise for studying the anatomy of the 'body politic', the fabric of society shaped by its social structure. Lenin wrote: 'The social structure of society and of state power is characterised by changes, and unless these changes are understood not a single step can be taken in any sphere of social activity. The understanding of these changes determines the prospects for the future, by which we mean, of course, not idle guessing about things unknown, but the basic trends of economic and political development—those trends, the resultant of which determines the immediate future of the country, those trends which determine the tasks, direction and character of the activity of every intelligent public man.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'The Social Structure of State Power, the Prospects and Liquidationism', *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 144.

This is why the development of the social structure of Soviet society has invariably attracted the close attention of the latest congresses of the CPSU and is a prominent topic in the speeches of Party leaders and of numerous studies.

The growing interest of the Soviet public in current social changes in the USSR and in the tendencies marking the relations between classes and inside classes, has highly important practical grounds. *First*, there is great need for periodically determining the degree of progress to the crucial aim—classless society—and accordingly bringing the pertinent tasks up to date. *Second*, study of the social composition and social relations under socialism is essential for scientific guidance of society, because it gives the ruling Communist Party detailed knowledge of the object of guidance. Lastly, knowledge of the nature of the social changes is a crucial initial factor for working out current and long-term economic and cultural plans.

Much material has been collected about the different aspects of the social development of Soviet society, including concrete sociological studies and theoretical generalisations. The broad exchange of opinion has shown where its participants are of one mind and where they differ.

The social structure of society embraces the inner fabric, that is, the division of society into qualitatively definite and socially significant parts, as well as the ties between them. In contrast to structure by sex, age, and nationality, which follows natural biological lines, the social structure arises on a material

foundation of a purely historical origin, conditioned by the development of social production. This foundation, according to Marxism-Leninism, is the *social division of labour*. In other words, the social structure is the natural reflection of the division of labour as personified by groups of people belonging to different specialised spheres of production and society, and by the relations between these groups. Just as Marxism found the key to understanding the history of society, as Engels put it, in the history of the development of labour, so have *Marxists found the key to explaining the history of social relations in the history of the division of labour*.

The interest shown by the Communists in the social differentiation of people derives from their search of a revolutionary and at once scientific solution of the age-old problem of *equality*. Since individual aptitudes cannot be standardised, Marxists-Leninists approach the idea of social equality from the only realistic angle of abolishing the old division of labour and its consequences—the antithesis of mental and manual labour, creative and routine labour, organisational and executive work, and of town and country. The main obstacle here is the most pronounced of the social divisions—*the division of society into classes*, itself the product and at once the pillar of the old division of labour. It cannot be abolished without a determined class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and its ultimate victory in alliance with all other working people.

What has to be done to abolish classes is strikingly illustrated by the example of the

Soviet Union. There are visible signs that a classless society is emerging in the USSR. But, understandably, this historic objective is not reached at one stroke. It must not be treated simplistically. It is too early to say that some of the processes have run their course, too unwise to show haste, to go against the dialectics of the rapidly flowing stream of life.

To understand the real scale of this objective we must compare the starting point of socialist development with the present state of affairs, and treat the present as the starting point for the final elimination of class distinctions in the course of building communism. At the time of the October Revolution (1917) there were in Russia several economic and social patterns, ranging from the patriarchal to the large-scale capitalist, with sharp class contrasts and an exceedingly motley social structure. It was entirely natural, therefore, that initially, during the transition from capitalism to socialism, society came to grips with the most acute social-class distinctions—those that were the immediate obstacle to the objectives of socialist and communist construction. Directed by the Marxist-Leninist party, the worker-peasant state set the objective of abolishing the classes that were antagonistic to the working people, that is, those which privately owned the means of production, exploited the labour of others, and constituted the social basis of the system of domination and subordination.

As we have said, judging from Soviet experience, the crucial economic task of the transitional period is to socialise the in-

struments and objects of labour and thus assure appropriation of the results of production by the producers themselves. This was done in two essential ways, depending on the nature of the means of production that were being socialised. The machinery, technology and organisation of large-scale industrial production require appropriation by the whole people on a countrywide scale. In the case of small-scale production based on manual labour, however, the most suitable form was that of cooperatives, for cooperatives provide the right conditions for introducing advanced machinery and for a collectivist readjustment of the skills and mentality of previously dispersed individual producers.

As a result, there were radical changes in the social structure: the bourgeoisie, the landlord, merchant and kulak classes, who represented 16.3 per cent of Russian society before the revolution, were stripped of their economic and political privileges, disappeared as classes, and were gradually absorbed by the mass of the working people.

The social structure of the working people, too, changed radically. Workers and others employed in the state sector of the economy increased from 17 per cent of the population in 1913 to 84.3 per cent in 1977. Their numbers and influence are rising continuously in the conditions of building the material and technical basis of communism and of the scientific-technical revolution. In the meantime, the percentage of individual peasants and artisans outside cooperatives, who represented 74.9 per cent of the population in 1928 and dropped to 0.03 per cent by the end of the

sixties, is so insignificant that it is no longer shown in statistics since 1970. Having adopted the economic basis of large-scale collective farming, the peasantry has changed its social nature radically and is an organic part of the socialist social forces. In fact, kolkhoz peasants and workers in producer cooperatives now represent an entirely new class, that of cooperative producers, numbering one-fifth of the population.

In view of the abolition of social-class antagonisms and the emergence of a society consisting exclusively of labouring classes and social groups that are by nature socialist, the term 'class', as conceived in the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin, has become debatable in relation to the new conditions in the USSR. Most scholars hold, and rightly so, that the term is still applicable to the Soviet working class and kolkhoz peasantry in the stage of developed socialism particularly when characterising their place and role in the world revolutionary process. It is another matter when we deal not with classes as such, but with their mutual relationship inside Soviet society, where class distinctions are visibly fading. In the latter case the concept 'class' does not reflect the social reality as clearly as it does in the context of an antagonistic class structure, because it is being applied to a fundamentally new object of, in a sense, an opposite nature—to an emerging classless society.

Lenin listed the following criteria distinguishing the large groups of people described as classes: a) their place in a historically definite system of social production, b) their rela-

tion to the means of production, c) their role in the social organisation of labour and d) the methods of receiving their share of the social wealth, and the size of that share, which both depend on the above criteria. Summing up the experience of the antagonistic class systems, Lenin added that classes are groups of people, one of which—due to their distinctive places in a definite mode of social production—appropriates the labour of the others.<sup>1</sup> *The Marxist-Leninist method requires us to consider all these clear criteria of inter-class distinctions, and rules out the use of any other criteria.*

What do these criteria show when applied to present-day Soviet society? The distinction of place in a historically definite system of social production in conditions of privately owned means of production signifies that one class dominates and the others are subordinate. This does not apply to the system of socialist production. Public appropriation of the means, objects and products of labour destroys the economic roots of exploitation and the relationship of domination and subordination. As for the distinction of place in the system of production between the working class and the collective farmers, it is confined to the fact that the former is employed in the determining branch of the economy (socialist industry) and is therefore the leading force of the whole national economy.

That property is socialised in all areas of the economy means that *the relation to the*

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'A Great Beginning', *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 421.

*means of production is socially homogeneous and collectivist, and that it is a relationship of labour:* the means of production are owned jointly, and each labourer is a participant in common ownership and common use. None is a private owner, and cannot become one. The monopoly on handling the means of production is vested exclusively in the organised association of working people, be it a cooperative or the socialist state. Workers and collective farmers are related to the property of the whole people in equal degree and are, in this sense, in an equal position.

The distinction in their relation to the means of production is seen only in the production process itself. The worker deals with machinery and raw materials that are socialised on the scale of the state. The collective farmer, though working land that belongs to the whole people, uses implements that are usually collective property socialised on a local scale (of village or district). This distinction is becoming less and less basic, both in essence and because it is obviously temporary. In the final count, the process of countrywide socialist socialisation is bound to spread to the entire economy in breadth and in depth. Thus, the second criterion of classes is felt much less strongly in the case of the working class and the collective farmers, and is gradually tending to disappear entirely.

As for *the role in the social organisation of labour*, the distinction in the status of workers and collective farmers has, in fact, been reduced to naught. One cannot say, as one would about the bourgeoisie and the proletarians or the landlords and their serfs, that the work-



ers organise labour and the farmers merely perform it. Both aspects are now merged in the persons of the immediate owner-producers. The working class and collective farmers are entirely equal in this respect.

Now the distinctions in *distribution*. Here, neither the working class nor the collective farmers are social groups that can appropriate anybody's product outside the framework of the planned exchange of activity under the system of the social division of labour. The socialist way of life closes the channels for non-labour incomes. The principle of distribution according to quantity and quality of work is gradually leading to a unification of the methods of receiving the earned share of the social wealth, to a levelling of its size for people of the same proficiency and doing equally productive labour. The inclusion of collective farmers in the system of state social maintenance and in other benefits related to free use of social consumption funds is clear evidence that class distinctions in this sphere are fading away as well.

As we see, the social structure in the USSR no longer accords with the 'classical' structure of a class society. Developed socialism is *a social system without antagonisms and with class partitions essentially destroyed*. The social distinctions are highly mobile and there is an active and free passage of citizens from one social stratum of working people to another.

The basic class criteria that distinguished the largest segments of the social structure—the working class and collective farmers—in the past are becoming increasingly similar. This means that the two classes are objectively

on the way to an organic fusion into one whole, into a close-knit classless labour association as it was envisaged by the founders of scientific communism. Sociologists note that these days the '*macrostructure*' (class structure) of Soviet society has become *simpler*, and that the deepest and sharpest social distinctions are fading away, on the one hand, and that the '*microstructure*' is becoming *more complicated*, that non-class distinctions which were formerly secondary are forging into the lead in daily life, on the other.

Not only objective but also subjective factors, it is true, make it difficult to grasp these new features of social relationships in the USSR. The source of one of the difficulties is the fairly widespread reluctance to *draw a radical, fundamental distinction* between the tendencies of social development in modern capitalist society, which is multiplying the forms of and sharpening class and national antagonisms, and those of the non-antagonistic socialist society, which is overcoming surviving class distinctions and strengthening the friendship of peoples. As a result of this 'logic', correct criticism of, say, Garaudy's right opportunist concept of a 'new historical bloc' of proletarian, petty-bourgeois and bourgeois elements which he invented to 'replace' the leading role of the working class in the revolutionary struggle—this correct criticism is, of all things, used to evaluate processes in the social structure of developed socialist society. As a result, matters reach a point where it looks as though the Soviet working class, the collective farmers and people's intelligentsia are pitted against one another;

contradicting the social-political and ideological unity of the Soviet people, the firmness of the bloc of Communists and non-Party people, which has repeatedly been confirmed by the facts and recorded in Party documents.

The terms 'classless society' and 'socially homogeneous society' are often treated as synonyms. To be sure, social homogeneity, once attained, also means absence of class oppositeness and class distinctions. But elimination of these distinctions, though it will be a qualitative advance to social homogeneity, will not really settle the matter. To put it briefly, the classless social structure is created by identifying the basic 'class' criteria in a non-antagonistic society, whereas the socially homogeneous structure of society can result only from a complete restructuring of the old division of labour. The classless society, and thereafter its social homogeneity, are components of a consistent solution of one and the same problem. But they have a different content and are achieved at different points in time. This must be borne in mind to ensure correct and timely analysis and not to miss the time when distinctions between classes disappear. Besides, it shows that one must not expect the newly-created classless society to attain overnight what has still to be secured by long and arduous work.

Two friendly classes—the working class and the collective farmers (along with a rapidly growing social stratum, the intelligentsia)—stood out in the social structure of Soviet society for many years. Later, and this may be considered a reflection of objective social processes, some sociologists began to regard

this 'three-member' formula widespread in the late thirties as insufficient. They suggested that in addition to inter-class distinctions as such, the basic social-class distinctions should also include the distinction between predominantly mental and predominantly manual labour, between urban and rural, the distinctions within classes and social groups, and so on.

There was also the suggestion to single out three so-called socially active groups—the working population (which included the two classes, the intelligentsia, and office workers), the student population, and the pensioners. But upon closer scrutiny it was found that this 'social structuring' was based not on the social division of labour, as Marxism requires, but on age differences. Certainly, this variant merited attention along with other similar experiments. But it could not substitute for the class approach, and this especially because, contrary to this approach, it stripped two large groups—the rising generation and those members of society who are beyond the working age—of their class identity.

This and many other attempts to anatomise the social changes in our society do not obscure but, on the contrary, accentuate the timeless relevance of the Marxist-Leninist method. Since the natural regularity of the emergence of a classless, socially homogeneous society has manifested itself in practice, *it is important to constantly bear in mind the social force that is at the centre of the transformations, leaving on them its own, decisive imprint.* Otherwise, preoccupied with sociological exercises in fragmentising the social struct-

ure of society, we may lose sight of the main perspective and forfeit our integral understanding of events. Instead, we would fall prey to the illusory idea that the eradication of class distinctions is a disorderly process.

The force we are referring to, the *social intelligence and social heart* (Marx) of the emerging classless structure of society and, for that matter, of all other revolutionary processes, is the *working class*. Wholly relevant, filled with new and rich content, is Engels's thesis that 'the condition of the working class is the real basis and point of departure of all social movements of the present'.<sup>1</sup> The working class is the mass guarantor that a socially homogeneous society will finally emerge, and this by virtue of its main qualities, as recorded by Lenin: 1) it is trained, united, educated and hardened by decades of economic, political and ideological struggle against capital; 2) it has assimilated the urban, industrial culture created by capitalism, and is determined and able to safeguard it, to preserve and advance its gains, to put it within reach of the whole people, of all working people; 3) it is able to bear all difficulties, trials, adversities and sacrifices that history inevitably imposes on the front-rank fighters, on those who break with the past and boldly blaze the trail to the future; 4) its best part is filled with hatred and contempt for the philistine, for philistine features and habits that are so deeply ingrained among the petty bourgeoisie; 5) it derives special strength from having passed the school of

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, 'The Condition of the Working Class in England'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 302.

labour, its diligence inspiring respect among all working people, all honest men.<sup>1</sup>

These features of the working class are concentrated in the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary party created by the working class and expressing its vital interests. Thanks to this the working class is the natural bearer of the socialist ideology and the social relations of cooperation and mutual assistance of exploitation-free people, the most consistent fighter for the aims and ideals of communism.

In socialist society the working class has long since overcome its former proletarian condition and controls a powerful modern industry, the decisive basis for the development of the productive forces and, therefore, the wellbeing of society as a whole. It produces the greatest part of the social product, is associated with the latest machines and technology, and works in fields that ensure scientific and technical progress, from which this progress spreads to all the other branches of the economy. The working class is united by the large-scale industrial organisation of production and the corresponding discipline, by modern technological processes requiring a high degree of concentration and coordination of labour. The role of the working class in the revolutionary movement and in building the new society, its political make-up, its interests, its views and ethics are becoming a *standard* for all social groups. And it is only natural that the peasantry and intelligentsia are changing in suitable ways to come closer

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'Greetings to the Hungarian Workers', *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 389-90.

to the working class under its leadership and with its active assistance.

The leading place of the working class in Soviet society is growing more pronounced thanks to the general rise of culture. The educational standard of the workers is higher than that of the collective farmers, higher than the average for all employed in the economy, and also higher than the countrywide average. Educational growth rates among workers are the highest in the country.

Usually, when analysing statistics related to social changes in Soviet society, attention is attracted first of all to the rapidly increasing numbers of people engaged in predominantly mental labour: in 1977 there were 12.5 times as many of them as in 1926. A truly impressive growth. According to the Central Statistical Board of the USSR there were 46.5 times as many engineers and agrotechnical workers in 1977 as in 1926, 18.35 times as many medical workers, 15.8 times as many science workers, lecturers, teachers, press workers, writers and artists, and cultural workers, 9.8 times as many workers in planning and accounting, and 8.2 times as many top administrative workers. Unfortunately, these important and generally progressive processes are not always correctly interpreted. The reason is that the new social nature of the socialist intelligentsia is not wholly understood, on the one hand, and that quantitative changes are confused with changes in quality. This would not have happened if the *no less impressive growth of the working class, of its skilled section, would have been examined at the same time.*

In 20 years before the war (up to 1941) the working class nearly tripled in number. And in 30 years since the war (from 1945) the average annual number of workers increased by 50 million, that is, 250 per cent. The number of highly skilled workers in industry increased at a very high rate, while the number of unskilled workers rose at a lower than average rate.

In 1970, 653 people per thousand employed had a higher or secondary (complete or incomplete) education. For those employed in predominantly manual labour this figure was 540 and for those employed in predominantly mental labour 952.<sup>1</sup> A close second to the latter group are such working-class groups as tram, trolley-bus, and subway drivers; milling machine operators, electricians, railway engineers and their assistants, lathe operators, compositors and printers, fitters, and mechanics, out of whom 800 and more per thousand have a higher or secondary (complete or incomplete) education. Seven hundred and more per thousand have a higher or secondary education (higher than the average for the country as a whole) among workers in the distributive trade and public catering, chemists, iron and steel workers, metalworkers, store keepers, weighers, acceptance clerks and distributors, fitters, toolmakers, machinists, rolling mill operators and others. Professional skills are also rising.

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<sup>1</sup> By 1975 the educational standard rose still higher, with 751 per thousand employed having a higher or secondary education, and the other two indicators being 664 and 965 respectively.



*Along with other groups of builders of communism, the working class is rightly regarded as the bearer of the creative intellectual potential of Soviet society.*

For one thing, workers are deeply involved in the massive technical movement. In 1976 the membership of the USSR Society of Inventors and Innovators, functioning under trade union auspices, stood at 8,945,700; more than half were worker innovators. In the ninth five-year plan period members of this society introduced in production more than 195,000 inventions and 18.5 million innovations, with the overall economic gain passing the 19 billion rouble mark.

What the working class is for Soviet society may be seen from the example of the peasantry, which has performed a tremendous qualitative evolution under its leadership. Out of a class of petty proprietors with a distinctly capitalist tendency, it has turned into a class whose objective conditions daily cultivate habits of collective labour and a collectivist mentality. With farm labour moving closer to industrial labour in technical terms, the collective farmers are getting to look more and more like the working class. Two typical processes are under way. First, the total number of peasants is shrinking due to the outflow from rural to urban areas and the conversion of part of the collective farms into state farms (in 1976 collective farms had 15 million people, against 29 million in 1940). Second, among farmers the number of skilled specialists, those handling modern machinery, is rising steadily.

True, the seasonal nature of farming, which differs from industry also in the breakdown of working and free time, absence of the steady rhythm of work seen in industry, and so on, strongly affects the life style and make-up of the farmer. Not surprisingly, the problem of converting agricultural production to modern industrial principles, bringing the conditions and standards of life in rural areas closer to urban conditions, is now on the order of the day, with an accent on the priority development of social, cultural, and community services in villages.

There are those who regard the formation of a socially homogeneous society as a process in which all classes and social groups assimilate each other's finest qualities and not simply those of the most advanced class, the working class. There is no denying that such a mutual enrichment is under way in Soviet society among socialist classes and groups. But, clearly, there is a *basic, dominant tendency*. Take the mutual influence of workers and peasants: it reveals this tendency quite definitely. Not industrial and state-farm workers learn from peasants in Soviet society, but, on the contrary, peasants assimilate the qualities and features of industrial workers, acquiring a higher social-political and cultural-technical level which offers greater scope to the socialist potentialities of farmers.

This 'likening' of the peasantry to the working class should not be conceived in any vulgarly empirical sense. The working class, too, like any social stratum, has its advanced and its backward section. Marx, Engels and Lenin had never deified the proletariat and had al-

ways firmly combatted 'tailism' and worship of the accidental and extraneous, including petty-bourgeois, sentiments among workers, as well as any opportunist reluctance to assess them in the light of the long-term interests of the working class and revolutionary theory. But they also repulsed all attempts at belittling the virtues of the proletariat, at portraying the working class as a 'mob of ruffians' or as passive sufferers, and as ignorant victims of capitalism incapable of standing up for their interests.

The latter-day anti-Marxists, too, are using this argument to falsify the social nature and ability of the working class. Ernst Fischer used it to refute the historical mission of the proletariat, maintaining that 'troublesome intellectuals' were the vanguard 'in East and West'. The Maoists use it to further the petty-bourgeois utopia of 'barracks socialism'. But it has nothing in common with either the make-up of the proletariat, the backbone of the production apparatus under capitalism and natural vanguard of the working masses, or the status of the working class that is at the helm of power in the socialist countries.

The world-historic significance of the example of the working class and the objective need for the other sections of the working people to follow it, should not be reduced to the vulgar idea that people of all professions must be made to do unskilled physical labour. That is something 'left' revisionists impute to Marxism, but it is profoundly hostile to it. What we are referring to is, above all, the revolutionary mission of the proletariat, supporting which is nowadays a most impor-

tant (if not *the* most important) criterion of allegiance with the forces of progress. The working class, and this means mainly its advanced, politically conscious and skilled section, is *the most typical mass of workers in modern, scientifically organised industrial production*—with which no other section of working people can compete in social and labour initiative, versatility, and social and professional efficiency in the setting of rapid scientific and technical progress and of revolutionary changes in social relations.

Since the mid-sixties it has been suggested that a new social-historical category of people with features of workers of communist society should be singled out in Soviet society alongside the two labouring classes and the intelligentsia. It is being assumed that this group, which embraces people from all sectors of society, shares the leading role with the working class. There is no denying the definite factual grounds for this view, namely, the emergence of highly cultured workers who harmoniously combine functions of mental and manual labour, and activity in production with social-political activity. But the theoretical interpretation of these facts is obviously incorrect.

First, it is tacitly assumed that elimination of substantial distinctions between mental and manual labour cannot occur within the classes of workers and collective farmers, whereas the heightening of the intellectual content and skill of these social groups shows that the process is, indeed, taking place within each of them, and then only in the sphere of their relations with the intelligent-

sia. Second, *workers of the communist type may be contrasted to the working class only by a misconception, because they become such precisely by embodying its finest qualities in their life activity.* This is why the appearance of workers of a new type fits into the framework of our earlier generalisations. Any other approach will only betray a narrow understanding of what the modern working class really is.

The three-member formula, 'working class—kolkhoz peasantry—people's intelligentsia', does not strictly abide by the rule of mutually exclusive elements. It fits the two classes but not the intelligentsia. The latter is not and cannot be a class,<sup>1</sup> because it is distinguished from the mass of working people *not due to class criteria, but due to its professional and only professional place in the sphere of predominantly mental labour.*

The already complicated lot of the intelligentsia is made still more complicated by two highly typical tendencies. First, the processes of industrialisation, the scientific and technical revolution and the building of the material and technical basis of communism, coupled with the intensively rising educational, cultural and technical level of the masses, bring millions of people of non-intellectual occupations into the orbit of mental labour of one form or another. There is an intellectualisation of many new trades, and so on. Second, the intelligentsia itself, once a small social stratum, is growing into a substantial

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'Concerning an Article Published in the Organ of the Bund', *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, pp. 379-80.

and highly heterogeneous social group, which, in the USSR, is numerically greater now than the class of kolkhoz peasants due to the growing demand for competent mental labour.

In practically any exploiting society the intelligentsia serves the interests of the dominant classes and gravitates towards them in status and way of life. The bourgeois system, however, and this only after passing its peak and beginning to decline, causes considerable changes in the structure and social status of the intelligentsia. Lenin referred to the sources of this tendency. He said: 'In all spheres of people's labour, capitalism increases the number of *office and professional workers* with particular rapidity and makes a growing demand for intellectuals. The latter occupy a special position among the other classes, attaching themselves partly to the bourgeoisie by their connections, their outlooks, etc., and partly to the wage-workers as capitalism increasingly deprives the intellectual of his independent position, converts him into a hired worker and threatens to lower his living standard.'<sup>1</sup> The dependent economic status of the intelligentsia, its indefinite relation to the means of production under capitalism, naturally lead to vacillation between the two antagonistic classes.

The socialist intelligentsia differs from the bourgeois intelligentsia first of all because, being mainly 'recruited' from the midst of the working class and peasants, it is part of the single labour collective of the whole people and by social origin fairly accurately reflects

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Review of Karl Kautsky's Book' *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 202.

the characteristic features of the social structure of Soviet society. The vast majority is employed in the state sector of the economy, in the cultural field, and in the services industry. Another group is in cooperative production. Both segments are in no way intermediate strata. *They are on an equal footing with other categories of working people in the corresponding economic branches or cultural fields in relation to the means of production*, and differ from them only in such historically secondary features as employment in a definite area of the division of labour, education, a higher professional culture, and the like. Depending on whether they work in the state sector or the kolkhoz-cooperative sector of the socialist economy, these groups of the intelligentsia *already possess to one or another degree the basic class criteria of either the working class or the kolkhoz peasantry, and gravitate towards them*.

In the setting of the scientific-technical revolution, skills that rise in step with the technical advance play an ever greater role in the manufacture of the social product. The gradual growth of science into a direct productive force means that mental rather than muscular effort is becoming increasingly more effective. This may be illustrated with examples from industry. At the Elektrostal plant, near Moscow, skilled workers run a plasmatron, a device that only physicists could cope with some time ago. It was developed by scientists together with workers; it took them over a year to design it. Thereupon they built the plasma furnace, and learned to control the electric vacuum smelting processes. In cultural and technical level these

workers are on a par with researchers. The team leader has an academic degree. Yet he never left his work place for a single day. He is a worker-intellectual. And with the advance of the scientific-technical revolution the number of such workers who combine mental and manual labour is rising rapidly. Already by 1970, 25.6 per cent of all qualified technicians in Soviet industry were employed as workers.

In the new, progressive branches of production the ratio of engineers and technicians to the executive personnel is changing visibly: qualified specialists often constitute half or even more of the staff. *Mental labour in science and technology is becoming productive to an ever greater degree.* As a result, their relation to the means of production being the same as that of the workers, a definite section of engineers and technicians who are directly engaged in the technological process merge in effect with other categories of the industrial personnel, among which, naturally, the determining place is held by industrial workers.

We deliberately use the concept 'productive labour', because it has been underestimated so far as a methodological instrument helping to define class identity more accurately.<sup>1</sup>

For Marx productive labour is the only effective, continuously pulsating agent of social production creatively processing natural material, the bedrock of social development. Productive labour is an extremely

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<sup>1</sup> The useful idea of using the concept of 'productive labour' to define the boundaries of the working class was put forward in the seventies by V. G. Gelbras, who refers to S. G. Strumilin.



abstract concept, but its definition has both empirical and ethical significance. To distinguish between productive and non-productive labour is necessary for effective management and correct evaluation of the role and merits of different economic and other spheres, and of the people employed in them.

Having analysed and critically assessed all previous political economy, notably the views of Adam Smith and David Ricardo, Marx suggests a *dual* type of definition of productive labour:

a) from the point of view of the plain process of labour creating use values, irrespective of any definite social form;

b) from the point of view of the social form of labour and the economic relations of the corresponding social system that mediate it.

That these propositions do not (or may not) coincide Marx notes in Chapter Five of the first volume of *Capital*. 'If we examine the whole process from the point of view of its result, the product,' he writes, 'it is plain that both the instruments and the subject of labour, are means of production, and that the labour itself is productive labour.'<sup>1</sup> But Marx adds in a footnote that 'this method of determining from the standpoint of the labour-process alone, what is productive labour, is by no means directly applicable to the case of the capitalist process of production,'<sup>2</sup> and repeats the same in the beginning

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 176.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176.

of chapter Fourteen, citing both the above passages from Chapter Five.<sup>1</sup>

Let us examine the *first* definition. It follows directly from the already mentioned (chapter IV, § 4) concept of the ultimate, absolute aim of all social production, consisting in the creation of objects satisfying human needs, that is, use values, and recognises as productive only that labour 'which maintains and increases the value of *materialised* labour rendered independent in relation to labour-power.'<sup>2</sup> Generally speaking, accretion of value is not a necessary token of the thus defined productive labour. 'If a day's labour only sufficed to keep the worker alive, that is, to reproduce his labour-power,' 'speaking in an absolute sense his labour would be productive because it would be reproductive; that is to say, because it constantly replaced the values ... which it consumed.... (It produced in fact no new value, but only replaced the old; it would have consumed it—the value—in one form, in order to reproduce it in the other. And in this sense it has been said that a worker is productive whose production is equal to his own consumption, and that a worker is unproductive who consumes more than he produces.'<sup>3</sup>

Here Marx presents his viewpoint in a purely abstract and paradoxical form. The economic law of rising labour productivity, the whole mechanism of laws governing extended reproduction, and the growing range of social

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 476.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part I, Moscow, 1975, p. 396.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 152-53.

and personal needs—for all this, naturally, mere replacement of consumed goods is not enough. Nor does Marx insist on that. He simply wants to express the idea as clearly as possible and separates productive labour in the absolute sense, possible in principle even in the case of (such is its lowest qualitative limit) ordinary reproduction, *and* productive labour in the capitalist sense, impossible without the production of surplus value.

It is proper to stress that all scientific ideas about productive labour were continuously modified. The *mercantilists* held that labour was productive only in fields whose exported products yielded more money than they had cost. For the *physiocrats* the only productive labour was performed in agriculture. Smith transcended these limits. He took a broader methodological approach and proceeded to prove the productiveness of the labour of non-agricultural, industrial labourers, giving Marx the proper grounds for the following conclusion: 'a productive labourer is one whose labour *produces commodities*; and indeed such a labourer does not consume more commodities than he produces, than his labour costs'.<sup>1</sup> He amplified that the peculiar thing about this labour is its fixation and objectification in a thing that can be sold or exchanged, and also the fact that the worker performing it continuously produces the *fund* which pays him, 'which maintains and employs him'.<sup>2</sup>

'In so far therefore,' says Marx in his *Theories of Surplus-Value*, 'as we leave labour-

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

power itself out of account, productive labour is labour which produces commodities, material products, whose production has cost a definite quantity of labour or labour-time. These material products include all products of art and science, books, paintings, statues, etc., in so far as they take the form of things.<sup>1</sup>

By *unproductive labour* Marx meant useful and purposeful human activity that is not crystallised in things and possesses use value not in respect of its end result but as a process. This is labour designated under the head of *services*—labour that has no protracted objectified embodiment and that disappears at the instant of its performance. Under this head Marx put a large range of services brought into being by genuine or false, sensible or perverted, freely developing or artificially implanted needs—the need for a waiter or hospital nurse, or for a fortune-teller or priest, or the needs connected with the activity of performing artists or the existence of imperial officials. ‘The former includes (except for that labour which creates labour-power itself),’ Marx says about the distinction between productive and non-productive labour, ‘all material and intellectual wealth—meat, as well as books—that exists in the form of things; the latter covers all labours which satisfy any imaginary or real need of the individual—or even those which are forced upon the individual against his will.’<sup>2</sup> In this sense, non-productive labour differs from productive also because it does not create

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part I, p. 173.

any directly material funds out of which the labourers who perform it are paid; this means that it is not supported at its own expense, but at the expense of productive labour. 'All productive labourers,' says Marx, 'when all is said and done, produce firstly the means for the payment of unproductive labourers, and secondly, products which are consumed by those who *do not perform any labour.*'<sup>1</sup>

Certainly, the non-productive labourers of the services sphere 'do not receive their share of revenue (of wages and profits), their co-partnership in the commodities produced by productive labour, gratis: they must buy their share in them; but they have nothing to do with their production.'<sup>2</sup> Neither have they any relation to the production of the social product, though their activity may be socially necessary. The value, and for that matter the very existence of servants and mistresses, says Marx, depends entirely on the 'net product' of productive labourers. He adds: 'Their price and their value have little in common with each other.'<sup>3</sup>

The essential difference between productive and non-productive labour is that the former creates *objectified* use values that are different from it, that is, 'immediate, material wealth consisting of *commodities*, all commodities, except those which consist of labour-power itself.'<sup>4</sup> *Non-productive labour*, on the other hand, *is itself a use value* and is useful, as has been said, by virtue of its process, its dura-

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161

tion, its live functioning. 'The labour-power of the productive labourer is a commodity for the labourer himself,' Marx said. 'So is that of the unproductive labourer. But the productive labourer produces commodities for the buyer of his labour power. The unproductive labourer produces for him a mere use-value, not a commodity, an imaginary or a real use-value. It is characteristic of the unproductive labourer that he produces no commodities for his buyer, but indeed receives commodities from him.'<sup>1</sup>

Certainly, production of material goods is for Marx primary and decisive as the key area of productive labour. But he does not stop there. We already know that Marx also refers material products of *spiritual production* (works of art and science, books, paintings, statues, and the like) to the results of productive labour.<sup>2</sup> The question of mental labour, too, which participates in the creation of the material product, of the objectified use value, is also clear. Along with the workers, Marx refers engineers and organisers of production (non-capitalists) to the category of productive labourers.<sup>3</sup> In the narrow sense of the word, Marx regards as productive labour 'labour which enters into the production of *commodities* (production here embraces all operations which the commodity has to undergo from the first producer to the consumer) no matter what kind of labour is applied, whether it is manual labour or not (including) scientific

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part I, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 172, 285, 295, 410.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 156-57, 295.

labour), and labour which does not enter into, and whose aim and purpose is not, the production of commodities. This difference must be kept in mind and the fact that all other sorts of activity influence material production and vice versa in no way affects the necessity for making this distinction.<sup>1</sup>

Viewed from this angle, the labour of an ironsmith and that of a sculptor correspond equally to the Marxian concept of productive labour. Furthermore, due to changes in production technology some formerly productive functions die away, while some types of formerly non-productive labour become productive. Take singers or musicians. In the nineteenth century Marx held that out of the people professionally involved in music the composer (who recorded his creations on music paper which continued to exist irrespective of the composer's activity) and the maker of musical instruments could be considered productive labourers, whereas performers, who merely reproduce someone else's music, and this anew in every case, were non-productive labourers.<sup>2</sup> The invention of sound-recording changed matters radically. The interpretative arts are now as objectified as the art of Bach

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part III, p. 432.

<sup>2</sup> 'It may seem strange,' Marx writes, 'that the doctor who prescribes pills is not a productive labourer, but the apothecary who makes them up is. Similarly the instrument maker who makes the fiddle, but not the musician who plays it. But that would only show that "productive labourers" produce products which have no purpose except to serve as means of production for unproductive labourers' (Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part I, p. 185).

or Stradivari. The singer's voice recorded on disc or tape is in principle reproducible without the performer's participation any number of times, while the performer participates in the manufacture of these material products, which are sold and bought as commodities. That non-productive labour can thus dialectically become productive has got to be borne in mind when analysing the present epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale, of which the scientific-technical revolution is an essential component. To recognise this is not contrary to the Marxist method, and is based on other principles than the attempts to indiscriminately proclaim all labour as being productive.

Marx's *second* definition of productive labour, unlike the first, depends not on the final but the direct aim of social production conditioned by the interests of the economically, and consequently also politically and ideologically, dominant class. 'Productive and unproductive labour,' Marx says of bourgeois society, 'is here throughout conceived from *the standpoint of the possessor of money, from the standpoint of the capitalist*, and not from the standpoint of the labourer.' And he explains: 'The use-value of the commodity in which the labour of a productive worker is embodied may be of the most futile kind. The material characteristics are in no way linked with its nature which on the contrary is only the expression of a definite social relation of production. It is a definition of labour which is derived not from its content or its result, but from its particular social



form.'<sup>1</sup> It is precisely for these reasons that in capitalist production labour is recognised as productive not because it creates an objectified material or spiritual work, but because it 'produces a surplus-value, a new value over and above the equivalent which it receives as wages'.<sup>2</sup> This is why, indeed, productive labour from the standpoint of the plain process of labour does not coincide here with productive labour from the standpoint of its social form.

Marx writes in the *Theories of Surplus-Value*:

'An actor, for example, or even a clown, according to this definition, is a productive labourer if he works in the service of a capitalist (an entrepreneur) to whom he returns more labour than he receives from him in the form of wages; while a jobbling tailor who comes to the capitalist's house and patches his trousers for him, producing a mere use-value for him, is an unproductive labourer. The former's labour is exchanged with capital, the latter's with revenue. The former's labour produces a surplus-value, in the latter's, revenue is consumed.'<sup>3</sup> The tailor who works at the home of his client is not, from the capitalist point of view, a productive labourer because he does not meet the basic criterion of a hired labourer, that of producing 'wealth for another',<sup>4</sup> does not serve as a means of

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part I, p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part I, p. 202.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225.

increasing that wealth and thereby as a means of the extended reproduction of the entire system of capitalist economic relations. On the contrary—and here, as in many cases before, we turn to something we have already discussed—in substance senseless and even anti-humane activity which, though it inflicts obvious harm on the health of society, helps maintain the historically outdated system, serves here as the true pillar of the exploiting system. Small wonder that the military-industrial complex has grown so cancerously on the body of the national economies of developed capitalist states along with all the ramifications of the mind-warping ‘industry’—the omnipresent advertising claiming to program all human needs, the massive production of ‘horror’ movies, the moral and physical depreciation of man, and the quasi-scientific propaganda of the deliberately anti-scientific, anti-communist ideology.

In short, so long as the wealth of society is based on the quantity of the directly expended working time, productive labour in its *absolute* expression is, according to Marx, *labour that produces material values*. It is precisely with such labour in large-scale capitalist industry that Lenin associated the *proletariat*.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, it follows from the contradiction between the final (absolute) and direct (relative) aim of production under capitalism that here labour yielding a *profit* to the owner of the means of production is

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<sup>1</sup> ‘The proletariat,’ says Lenin’s definition, ‘is the class which is engaged in the production of material values in large-scale capitalist industry’ (*Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 65).

*directly* productive labour, irrespective of whether it provides material goods, aesthetic pleasure or useful services. Marx explains: 'If we may take an example from outside the sphere of production of material objects, a schoolmaster is a productive labourer, when, in addition to belabouring the heads of his scholars, he works like a horse to enrich the school proprietor. That the latter has laid out his capital in a teaching factory, instead of in a sausage factory, does not alter the relation. Hence the notion of a productive labourer implies not merely a relation between work and useful effect, between labourer and product of labour, but also a specific, social relation of production, a relation that has sprung up historically and stamps the labourer as the direct means of creating surplus-value.'<sup>1</sup> Clearly, under socialism this situation of the productive labourer comes to an end. *Productive labour in the absolute sense* becomes directly productive labour.

Marx showed that in the conditions of highly-developed machine production (and doubly so in the conditions of the scientific-technical revolution) material values are created not by manual labour alone, but by *combined* labour (sometimes with mental elements predominating), and that as a result the role of engineers and technicians looks different from what it was before. The production collectives are increasingly more *complex* and their nature is incompatible with any privileges for mental workers, requiring extensive democratisation. Marx

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 477.

wrote: 'As in the natural body head and hand wait upon each other, so the labour-process unites the labour of the hand with that of the head. Later on they part company and even become deadly foes. The product ceases to be the direct product of the individual, and becomes a social product, produced in common by a collective labourer, *i.e.*, by a combination of workmen, each of whom takes only a part, greater or less, in the manipulation of the subject of their labour. As the cooperative character of the labour-process becomes more and more marked, so, as a necessary consequence, does our notion of productive labour, and of its agent the productive labourer, become extended. In order to labour productively, it is no longer necessary for you to do manual work yourself; enough, if you are an organ of the collective labourer, and perform one of its subordinate functions.'<sup>1</sup>

This expansion of the concept of productive labour accords with the essence of socialist production, in which there is no room for class antagonisms and the antithesis between mental and manual labour is being gradually overcome. Engels's words are coming true. 'In a rational order which has gone beyond the division of interests...' he said, 'the mental element certainly belongs among the elements of production and will find its place, too, in economics among the costs of production.'<sup>2</sup> The still existing greater or less closeness of labourers to the immediate mani-

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 476.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick Engels, 'Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 428.

pulation of the subject of their labour should no longer be perceived in the spirit of their social class incompatibility; there are no longer any social grounds to oppose them to one another as bearers of different subordinate functions of productive labour. More, this would now be detrimental if not reactionary.

Under socialism, however, labour in non-material production should not be put under the head of productive labour. First of all because *society has not yet attained material abundance and the direct labour performed by man himself is still the main basis of production and wealth*. The time is still relatively distant when production and wealth will be based on 'appropriation by man of his own universal productive force, and when his understanding of nature and domination over nature will result from his being as a social organism—in short, the development of the social individual.'<sup>1</sup> And though 'production reposing on exchange value collapses', man will, paraphrasing Marx, *succeed in eliminating from the direct process of material production the form of antagonism sooner than that of relative scarcity*.<sup>2</sup> This is the *restricting agent* that prevents us so far from recognising all useful labour meeting various human needs as productive labour and that requires us to refer as workers only to those who create material goods.

The processes we have discussed above are still far from having run their course and their present degree of development must not

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<sup>1</sup> Marx, *Grundrisse... Op. cit.*, p. 593.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

be exaggerated. For Soviet scholars they are an object of hot discussion. For example, it is still necessary to study and understand the effect on the structure of society of the dialectical law revealing the *dual tendency of the composition of productive workers to expand through the inclusion among them of productive mental workers and through the intellectualisation of the labour of an ever greater part of industrial workers.*

The convergence of technicians and the working class shows that the various 'elitist' concepts of the intellectual exclusiveness of 'technocratic' sections of society, and so on, are untenable. On the other hand, it requires that individualist tendencies among part of the intelligentsia should be overcome and that all mental workers should acquire a sense of belonging to the great army of the working people of socialist society, to the 'aggregate labourer' which, along with the rural intelligentsia, also includes the kolkhoz peasantry.

At the present stage of our society we see more and more distinctly that 'division of labour brings about very *different* modes of work within the *same* class,'<sup>1</sup> with the result that many non-class, particularly occupational, distinctions often make themselves felt to an even greater degree than the gradually disappearing class distinctions. The highly skilled section of workers, for example, is closer to engineers and technicians in production, education and culture than to unskilled manual workers. The operators of farm machi-

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, 'Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality', In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 330.

nery on the collective farms are closer to industrial workers than to those farmers who perform the old farm jobs where modern machines are not yet used.

The intelligentsia, too, is not homogeneous in this respect. With parts of it gravitating either to the one or the other class of Soviet society, a discussion is underway, in which Lenin is often quoted, to the effect that the intelligentsia is 'a separate social stratum, which will persist until we have reached the highest stage of development of communist society.'<sup>1</sup> But is this meant to apply to the *whole* intelligentsia? Will it persist in the same form and what groups will it consist of? Unfortunately, these questions, which reflect the substance of the matter, are not always asked. Yet, it is *absolutely clear that there must be a concrete, differentiated approach.*

Such large groups of the intelligentsia as teachers and medical workers will, for example, still for a long time, doubtless remain stable specialised groups. This applies equally, if not more, to people engaged in certain areas of scientific research and to those professionally associated with such a specific field as the arts. As for those groups that now belong to productive personnel, their development in the now already foreseeable future should be primarily analysed in close association with the development of those classes which they adjoin, modifying evaluations as the two

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Draft Theses on the Role and Functions of the Trade Unions under the New Economic Policy', *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, p. 384.

classes come closer to one another.<sup>1</sup>

The modification and convergence of the social strata of socialist society occur in a setting of a general heightening of wellbeing and culture, an extraordinary rapid change of life style, its reconstruction on a modern industrial and urban pattern. The level of social homogeneity achieved so far is expressed in the typical features of the Soviet way of life of workers, peasants and the intelligentsia. And this way of life is affected, among other things, by the diminishing mem-

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<sup>1</sup> M. Lötsch, H.-G. Meyer and F.-H. Schröder seem to have been right when they said that 'belonging to a class or a stratum is not necessarily a mutually exclusive alternative. Though there is a special round of problems relating to the intelligentsia it is no more right to maintain that the intelligentsia is part of the working class than to absolutise the intelligentsia as a special stratum. First of all because then the working class would be necessarily reduced to workers in the narrow sense of the word.

'This is why', the GDR scholars hold, 'the first step in resolving this problem must be to define the working people employed directly in the process of production in large-scale industry as the social-economic nucleus of the working class. This, however, must not lead us to identifying the nucleus of the working class with the class as a whole. Thus, at first we must determine the basic elements in the social structure of the working class. Partial affinity of strata to a class does not contradict logic and wholly accords with the criteria of the Marxist theory of classes, which is based on the relation of various social groups to the means of production and on their role in the social organisation of labour.

'It would be wrong to conclude that such important social and economic processes as scientific work, technical and cultural development, and productive activity with a high coefficient of mental labour occur only outside the working class' (*Rabochy klass i sovremennyy mir*, No. 2, 1973, p. 19).



bers of 'purely working-class', 'purely peasant' and 'purely intellectual' families. The interpenetration and fusion of classes and strata, occurring in different ways, speaks of a *social diffusion* that is serving notice of the gradual shaping of premises for classless society. This is a specific phenomenon typical of the Soviet people as a new historical community of people, whose emergence we may legitimately regard as a kind of summary result of the economic, social and political changes witnessed in the Soviet Union under Soviet power.

As L. I. Brezhnev said, 'this means that the common features of behaviour, character and world outlook of Soviet people, features which they have in common irrespective of social or national differences, are becoming increasingly marked. This means that the alliance of the working class and peasantry, which has always been the basis of the socialist system, has found its development in the indestructible political and ideological unity of these classes with the intelligentsia, which has long since firmly adopted socialist positions. And today we can rightfully speak of the strong alliance of all working people, workers by hand and brain, the alliance of the working class, the collective-farm peasantry, and the people's intelligentsia, as a fact of our life. This alliance, in which the working class plays the leading role, is strong and inviolable.'<sup>1</sup> And it is legitimately proclaimed in the new Constitution of the USSR

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<sup>1</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course, Speeches and Articles (1972-1975)*, p. 446.

as the social basis of the Soviet state of the whole people (see Article 19).

In substance, these judgements no more than sum up what is really happening in the Soviet Union. Yet they do evoke objections and attacks abroad by 'left' extremists who interpret the scientific registration of the objective process of the elimination of class distinctions as a renunciation of class positions. This is evidence of the simplistic prejudice that associates consistently socialist interests exclusively with activity of manual workers, or, in other words, the very category of people whose situation socialism alters most of all.

The concept of social 'diffusion' applies to one of the conditions of developed socialist society. It implies not a chaotic 'mixture' of all social strata, but a natural, aim-oriented tendency of their evolution. *This historical change may be briefly described as a re-smelting of the working people into highly cultivated labourers of the working-class type, which in no way tolerates conservation of the backwardness of unskilled workers and is, at the same time, fundamentally hostile to intellectual individualism.* Some sociologists tried to express this in the concept of an emerging 'one-class' society. But it will probably be wiser to turn to one of Engels' propositions which, referring to the working class, reads: 'The time will come when it will no longer be a class and will encompass all society.'<sup>1</sup>

The effect and sign that the movement follows precisely this direction is the conver-

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<sup>1</sup> Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 19, p. 287.

sion of the working-class party into a party of the whole people and of the proletarian dictatorship into a socialist state of the whole people. This 'universality' of the key political institutions of the Soviet social system should not be opposed to their class essence. It expresses the fact that the economic and political interests, ideology and ethics of the working class and the economic, political, state and public organisations created under its leadership have been accepted by all strata of the working people as their own and occupy the dominant place in society.

In short, there is an extension of the massive social basis of proletarian, socialist class interests rather than its reduction. There are no objective grounds at all for interpreting this differently, as though there was an 'abdication' of the purely working-class point of view, a rejection of the 'class element', and so on. 'The Party,' it was noted at the 24th Congress of the CPSU in 1971, 'will continue to direct its efforts to securing the growth and strengthening of the influence of the working class in all spheres of the life of our society and to making its activity and initiative more fruitful.'<sup>1</sup> Those who do not understand that *precisely this is the line of building classless society* have no idea of what scientific communism is all about.

Having built a society with gradually disappearing class distinctions and an extraordinarily high social mobility of people, the Soviet Union made a historical step forward to a socially homogeneous population structure.

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<sup>1</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, p. 88.

But to rest content would mean stopping half-way. This is why the Communist Party devotes itself to solving all the major social problems. This expedites the eradication of class distinctions in the developed socialist society of our time.

## **2. Class Education and Continuity of Generations**

It is one of the radical advantages of socialism that it secures a fundamental solution of the youth problem. The relationship between generations is based on the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and of age discrimination of all forms, the universality of labour, the privileges given to youth in production and the provision of broad educational opportunities. The destiny and the class interests and aims of different generations are the same; all working people irrespective of age are rallied round the Communist Party. These are natural standards of the socialist way of life.

The other basic advantage of socialism is that by nature it harmonises to the maximum with the inquisitive, searching character of youth, with its love of adventure. Socialism is a system of innovators, their eyes directed to the future. It develops by scientific anticipation and sets a variety of intricate and interesting problems each day that require prompt creative solution. Improving the socialist system and building communism is a gigantic, truly humane undertaking, giving boundless scope to the socially conscious effort of Soviet youth.

Does this mean that the question of youth, the question of its bonds with the older generations, is redundant in socialist society? Certainly not. In Soviet conditions, the Communist Party sees the key in the class education of the young builders of communism which, as all will agree, takes time and effort.

The ideological opponents of socialism have their own way of looking at this problem. It is no accident that the heavy artillery of anti-communist and opportunist propaganda is aimed chiefly at the revolutionary unity of generations in the socialist countries. Conscious of its own rapidly waning historical perspective, the capitalist class portrays its irreconcilable controversy with the rising generation as something that is common to all classes and all states.

Unable to sow suspicion between the working class, the collective farmers and the people's intelligentsia, that is, to split Soviet society on the social principle, our enemies are trying to capitalise on age distinctions, hoping for a bourgeois-oriented evolution of the consciousness of youth. These designs are doubly dangerous because they exploit the emotional make-up of young people, their receptiveness to radical or spuriously radical ideas, their temperament, their credulity and absence of any deeply understood experience in politics and life. This means that in the present conditions the political, philosophical and ethical education of the rising generations in the socialist countries is no abstract, purely academic, task. It is closely associated with the present-day class struggle which, as the

sixties and seventies have shown, is apt to rise to crescendo not only internationally, but also within the separate socialist states.

Lenin's idea of introducing scientific socialism into the movement of the working masses, propounded in *What Is to Be Done?*, is of timeless significance not only in the period preceding socialist revolution. The task of joining Marxism-Leninism and scientific socialism with the activity of the masses faces the ruling communist and workers' parties, the youth leagues, the public organisations and the whole system of ideological institutions again and again as new generations rise, and this in a specific form suiting the higher educational standard, the new social-psychological complex, and the attitude towards past and present. The form is in accord with the changed economic, political and cultural conditions of society, which are starting points for the rising generations brought up by the new system. And it is dangerous to underestimate this form. But it is also wrong to think that introduction of the scientific, socialist ideology in the public mind in any of the socialist countries is something that Communists of the first generation have, in effect, accomplished once and for all, and no less dangerous to consider ideology as something that is passed on automatically from generation to generation and is part of the genetic constitution of young people.

It will do untold harm to forget Lenin's view on this score and just as much harm if it is ineptly carried into effect. Not only because part of the youth will then abstain from their civic, socialist duty and the nation's

undertakings, but also because this leaves them defenceless in face of anarchist, anti-social activity. When the ideological education of youth is neglected or when it ignores the specifics of the situation in which children assimilate the world outlook of their parents, there appears an 'ideological vacuum' that is instantly filled by the opponents of communism. Frequently, they capitalise on the special place of youth in the ranks of the generations of builders of socialism, and its peculiar perception of existing social values.

That the Marxist-Leninist ideology dominates public thinking in socialist countries does not mean that moulding the socialist consciousness of citizens just entering on adult life does not need hard work. It is specific, intricate and contradictory. And the difficulties derive not only from factors of a subjective nature or from mistakes, but also from certain objective circumstances.

One of these is that generations which have grown up in conditions of victorious socialism cannot have any personal experience of class relations and conflicts, for there no longer is any class antagonism. The situation in the field of ideological education is therefore entirely new. Speaking in dialectical terms, there is a visible contradiction between the necessity for the class education of working people and the objective process of abolishing classes and class distinctions in socialist society.

Under capitalism, as we know, the bulk of the proletariat is conscious of its hostility to the capitalist class, which it confronts daily, if only by virtue of the empirical condi-

tions of its existence. It is conscious of this at *social-psychological level*. Lenin put it thus: 'In a representative of the oppressed and exploited masses, this hatred is truly the "beginning of all wisdom", the basis of any socialist and communist movement and of its success.'<sup>1</sup> Here the Marxist party introduces the proletariat, and all working people to the *scientific, socialist ideology*, for which there is the prepared psychological soil of hostility towards the capitalist class. In the *immediate* sphere of material relations of friendly social groups and classes of socialist society which is entering its time of maturity the *spontaneous class* feeling and awareness that the interests of the working people are opposite and hostile to those of the capitalist class appears much more slowly. It is brought in mainly from the sphere of social science through the deliberate, purpose-oriented activity of the Communist Party and the socialist state.

There results a peculiar correlation between the labour and struggle of the socialist classes and the fundamental elements of their social mass consciousness—psychology and ideology. Under socialism the new collectivist man, master of all social wealth and of his own destiny, is shaped above all by the way of life resulting from the building of the new society. The scientific and educational activity of the ruling parties and the youth organisations, as well as public and government bodies, cultivates his Marxist-Leninist principles, his moral image, and his knowledge

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder', *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 80.



of current and long-term policy. This activity is also the chief source of his conscious anti-capitalist outlook on the ideological, as well as *social-psychological*, plane. And since this attitude remains the key element of class consciousness even after the victory of socialism inside the country, the standards set for the content and form of youth education keep rising continuously.

To live up to its purpose this youth education must be based not only on the power of logic, but also on emotional power. Lacking this, Marxist-Leninist ideas will not grow from a sum of assimilated knowledge into *knowledge-based convictions*. This is why ideological and educational work must be differentiated according to age and social, professional and cultural background of different groups of youth. And the main thing here is to take account of and use the system of material and ideological relations in which the rising generation of builders of socialism and communism is active today. The specific conditions in which the youth acquires its socialist ideology and its proletarian class hardening explains why revolutionary and labour traditions hold such a prominent place in the educational work of Marxist-Leninist parties and communist youth leagues. True, this method will not yield the desired results unless it is organically linked with the everyday life and activity of youth and the economic and cultural objectives they take part in reaching. This is why the practice of the present day must never be contrasted with the glorious achievements of the past; this would strip the present of its own 'heroics'.

Neither must we ever forget Lenin's warning that class propaganda will not yield the desired results if divorced from the practical experience of the working people.

The goal of the working class and its mission in history is to build a developed socialist and, later, a communist society. This means that it needs politically, philosophically, professionally, technically, culturally, and ethically trained young people—and this not only to destroy the old way of life, but also to build a new life competently and creatively. These young people must be able to relate their every step and action to the interests of this undertaking. It would harm the communist cause, Lenin warned at the historical 3rd Congress of the Komsomol, if young men and women assimilated nothing but communist slogans without a firm grasp of human knowledge and culture, without blending knowledge and practice, knowledge and the diversity of everyday work.

Certainly, it is easier to cultivate the proletarian class psychology and consciousness in people who are economically, socially and politically exploited. But, mildly speaking, it would be strange to wish such a school of life on our youth. No, it is not a flaw, as Maoists are trying to prove, but on the contrary an advantage of the Soviet system of education that it is based on the great social gains of the working people, who have been putting scientific communism into effect for now well over sixty years. It is an advantage of the Soviet system of education that no one is allowed to flaunt the rights or the dignity of youth, to call in question its material

wellbeing, or to deprive it of access to knowledge.

It does not follow, however, that the rising generation in the Soviet Union does nothing but enjoy the blessings of life and has no responsibilities of its own. Certainly, the exploit and sacrifice of the older generations have spared it the daily risk of direct clashes with the class enemy. But, as a concomitant, they have imposed on youth the important and difficult duty of cultivating in peaceful construction features equivalent to those that originate in severe class struggle.

Before becoming fully trained Marxists-Leninists (which takes years), it is psychologically peculiar for youth to decide who to imitate, who to learn from, who to follow on the road to civic and professional maturity. This is why it is so important to keep alive the image of the heroes of the revolution.

The history of the USSR should be for every Soviet boy and girl not a mere chronicle of events and dates, but an immortal exploit of selfless patriots and internationalists, champions of freedom and socialism. It is one of the most accurate signs of a normal society that its citizens cherish the memory of national heroes and pass down their admiration to the rising generations. Youth, which is only entering on its civic duties, will treasure the inherited social relations only if it respects those who established these relations before it.

The latest experience of a head-on clash between the Soviet people and the class enemy was that of the Great Patriotic War. Even those who were children at that time, are

now in their forties. But well over half the population of the USSR today is under 30 years of age. It follows that the class education of youth must aim at giving young men and women a knowledge of the *positive content of socialism*, and not only cultivate a negative attitude to imperialism in the struggle of the Soviet and other peoples for peace, democracy and social progress.

The political and philosophical education of youth will not, it seems to us, be satisfactory if it does not learn the fundamentals of scientific criticism of capitalism, if it has only a vague knowledge of the anatomy of socialist society, of its natural laws of development, and if it does not learn how to explain the superiority of the socialist system over the capitalist. An understanding of socialism as a system of the most sensible and humane social relations in the modern world is acquired by young men and women not only from education and propaganda, but also from their own practical experience, from participating in the labour of the people.

Imperialist propaganda seeks to impose the view that though capitalism has its flaws, so does socialism, that the world is always divided into good and bad people. This camouflaged preaching of the apolitical outlook the youth counters with socialist, Marxist-Leninist criteria, assessing events *through the prism of socialism as the embodiment of the interests of the working class and all other working people*. This, indeed, is the present form of the class approach, and every Soviet young man and woman must know how to use it. It is a vision of the world *through the*

*prism of the values of freedom that is being asserted in practice.*

Bourgeois ideologues ascribe to Soviet society a 'conflict' with youth, tracing it to the higher educational standard of the rising generations than that of the older generations. For us, however, steady improvement of the conditions for the development of people is a standard of the socialist way of life. We are proud of it. These days, jointly with the trade unions and public education agencies, the Komsomol is furthering the mass drive for secondary education for all young workers. The drive was mounted by 700,000 school-teachers and teachers and instructors of vocational schools. One out of every three specialists with a higher or specialised secondary education is under 30.

Lenin held that an educated specialist, though lacking practice in class struggle, can espouse communism through the prism of his science. This road to scientific communism is within reach of all people in our country, which is completing the transition to universal secondary education. Lenin's words that mastering the communist world outlook presupposes enrichment of the memory with knowledge of all the values produced by mankind, are as relevant as ever. Sociologists who allege that the rising generation is getting too much education, that the level of knowledge of the youth is far in advance of the technical needs of present-day production, are wrong. First, in this age of the scientific and technical revolution, when science is getting to be an immediate productive force, it is impossible to achieve technical progress with-

out a 'surplus' of knowledge among the basic mass of workers. Second, under socialism education is not mere training of qualified labour power. Its most important function is to prepare the rising generation for learning the fundamentals of scientific communism, the world outlook of the working class. This helps resolve an important political problem, that of strengthening the revolutionary continuity of generations through enlightenment and education. Lastly, the wish to 'relieve' working people of 'surplus' knowledge goes against the programme aim of communism—to provide for the all-round, harmonious development of the personality.

In socialist society the prime condition for and key indicator of the revolutionary continuity of generations is consistent and principled guidance of the youth movement by the Communist Party.

The Party in all its activity combines the innovating initiative and energy of the youth with the knowledge and wisdom of more advanced age, the creative efforts of people of all age groups. The Communists have always generously shared their knowledge with youth, passing down the lessons of their diverse political experience, teaching young men and women to be ideologically stable and skilled fighters for the cause of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

The older generation of revolutionaries has always considered it its duty to critically generalise what has been done and to pick out the valuable elements of their own experience that can serve the progress of socialism, giving preference not to their own presti-

ge but to the interests of communist construction. Nothing can substitute for the scientifically verified experience of past generations. By assimilating this experience youth is spared the search for what is already known, and learns to administer social development by advanced methods. In this way it shares in the life and struggle of the builders of the new society who had had to act in other, usually less favourable, conditions. It depends largely on the older generation to what extent youth learns the lessons of history. To cultivate this ability is a difficult and responsible task.

The virtues and services rendered by the older generation of Communists are in no way depreciated by the fact that the rising generations surpass it in education and competence. On the contrary, these qualities of their successors are for the older generation a mirror of their own achievements and the earnest of success in the cause to which they devoted their lives.

The Communist Party does not base its trust or mistrust of cadres on their age. Long service is no absolute measure. The Party's personnel policy is directed to using the experience and knowledge of old cadres and promoting young, promising workers. This is an essential condition for securing continuity in the Party's political course.

The Party's critical revolutionary spirit has always attracted the youth. The Communist Party has always been the keeper of the valuable experience accumulated since the turn of the century—through three revolutions and well over 60 years of socialist and com-

munist construction. At all stages the CPSU concentrated its attention on the main thing—continuous and effective implementation of the principles of scientific communism. It relied not on just one generation, but skilfully united and merged the forces of different generations, obtaining a valuable alloy of their strong points and neutralising their weaknesses. Nothing but this alloy can guarantee the immortality of the traditions of the October Revolution, the existence and development of socialism as the best organised society.

### **3. The Political Factors of the Emancipation of Labour**

The problem of freedom has always rightly been treated as an object of bitter class struggle rather than of orderly academic discussion. Its practical solution has a bearing on the basic issues of the existence of the opposite classes, which naturally resort to the most effective political means at their disposal, including the main one—state power and all its attributes (the army, judiciary, counter-intelligence, and so on)—to promote their cause. The cardinal condition for social freedom—abolition of exploitation—under any, whether peaceful or non-peaceful, form of socialist revolution is evidently always secured against the will of the dominant exploiter class. The compulsive force that disregards the economic interests of the minority is concentrated, above all, not in individuals or narrow groups, but in the laws of social



development embodied in the activity of the working class and the mass of working people that it leads.

Few bourgeois democrats (even of the most sincere and progressive) fail to rebuke Communists for their gravitation to force, to 'suppression' of freedom, and still fewer of the best of them ever stop to consider the true logic of the class struggle and the essential ways of destroying the exploiting system.

Communists have said time and again that force has no part in their ideal. Yet, the working people were compelled to resort to force by the exploiting classes who were being or had been overthrown and who had exercised force over the mass of the people for many centuries.

Bourgeois propaganda is betimes glad to discourse on the incompatibility of coercion and individual freedom. But never has it clearly and specifically shown the true social content of coercion and force as applied by one or another class. Is the resort to force justified? For what purpose is it applied? Is it reactionary or revolutionary? This is the only way to approach the matter. There is force and force. In one case it expresses the essence of the relation of the dominant class to the oppressed and seeks to preserve the system of wage slavery. In the other it is a response by the exploited to the brute force of the exploiters as a means of asserting social freedom and is conditioned by the resistance of the exploiters.

Encountering stubborn political resistance of reactionary forces, freedom cannot assert

itself in any other than the political way, through the new forms of power, the dictatorship of the proletariat that overcomes the dictatorship of the capitalist class and that restricts and suppresses the freedom of action of the enemies of freedom.<sup>1</sup>

The polemics over questions of freedom between anarchists and Bolsheviks occupied a prominent place in the ideological struggle before and immediately after the October Revolution in Russia. The anarchists opposed the idea and practice of proletarian dictatorship. They advanced a theory of 'chiefless' (that is, stateless, wholly decentralised) communism and proclaimed the primacy of emancipating all individuals belonging to the mass. They did not care *what* individual, of *what qualities*, raised in *what surroundings*, they were going to emancipate. The anarchist attempts to carry into effect the slogan of

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<sup>1</sup> Every struggle for freedom has required coercion in order to establish and preserve its victories. This is not felt to be inconsistent with the freedom fought for by such men as Milton and Locke, and later by Washington and Lincoln' (John Lewis, *Socialism and the Individual*, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1961, pp. 78-79). Let me add that the condemnation of revolutionary coercion by the capitalist class is not condemnation of coercion that is in the interests of capitalists. It is a political action in the ideological struggle against communism: 'You cry anathema upon Paris, because Paris destroyed the Vendome Column and the house of Thiers. Have you ever seen a whole village destroyed by the flames for having given shelter to a volunteer, or a *franc tireur*? And that not only in France, the same in Lombardy, in Venetia. As to the palaces set fire to in Paris by petroleum, let them ask the priests, who, from their intimate acquaintance with the hell-fire about which they preach, ought to be good judges, what difference

boundless and unrestricted freedom of the individual who scorned the authority of science and ethics, the authority of organisation and labour, often boiled down to the most commonplace banditry. The individual brought up in capitalist conditions, burdened with many of the vices of the exploiter society, was in most cases incapable and unwilling to use complete freedom of action sensibly. The temporary flaw of freedom—lack of self-discipline, which is a most important feature of the free individual—Soviet power was compelled to compensate with sometimes fairly severe organisation, a degree of regulation of individual behaviour, and outside control.

During the period of transition from capitalism to socialism personal freedom was not in all things identical to personal freedom in the conditions of already built (let alone developed) socialism. In the former the accent was on creating universal conditions for the liberation of the masses, which only gradually developed into the concretely special and individual conditions for the freedom of the individual. In the latter the free development of each is gradually becoming a crucial condition for the free development of all. This is

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there is between petroleum fire and those fires which the Austrians lit in order to burn down the villages in Lombardy and Venetia, when those countries were still under the yoke of the men who shot Ugo Bassi, Ciceruachio and his two sons, and thousands of Italians who committed the sacrilege of demanding a free Rome and a free Italy.' (Quoted in: *The General Council of the First International 1871-1872. Minutes.* Moscow, 1974, p. 289.)

due to the fact that the socialist revolution, when it comes, has a relatively small number of individuals with a socialist mentality to rely on (chiefly professional revolutionaries and the foremost section of the working class) and deals with 'human material' shaped under capitalism. Suffice it to recall the drive to overcome the estranged attitude to labour of those who worked and the need for compulsion, turning idle people (also 'estranged' from labour) who had belonged to the exploiting classes and the declassed elements into workers and peasants (for other means of abolishing classes there are none).

Excessive condemnation of force on the part of the socialist state, it is only fair to note, would obscure and conceal the fact of force on the part of the exploiter classes in the past, and dampen attention to the difficulties of building the new society; it is disrespectful to the victims of the revolution and wars, and may confuse the revolutionary movement in countries where the working class is still to take power.

Certainly, in our time, in the late seventies, it would look strange for anyone to condone the use of force in socialist society in the same forms as were witnessed in the early years of the new system. Where socialism has triumphed open struggle of class against class is a thing of the past, and the dictatorship of the proletariat grows into a state of the whole people. Here, force is applied by the whole people chiefly against the few criminal and other hostile elements, who do not make a specific social stratum.

But, referring to the experience of the

socialist countries, it would be no less strange of anyone with an eye on a peaceful passage to socialism to preach the thesis that class force is not needed where workers, peasants and the intelligentsia daily experience the class coercion of the capitalist class. There are many cases in the history of the revolutionary movement where by hesitating to use compulsion the progressive forces missed their chance, where a revolutionary situation was forfeited, dooming the mass of the people to more needless decades of suffering and poverty. This is why when settling the question of whether revolutionary force is lawful or unlawful (or, more precisely, timely or untimely) where the exploiter system still exists, a concrete historical approach is of paramount importance. 'So long as there is an opportunity given to the people to obtain peaceful victories,' Engels warned, 'they will never raise their cry "to arms"; or if, nevertheless, provoked into an émeute, they will fight with very little chance to victory.'<sup>1</sup> Lack of political intuition, neglect of the concrete historical approach when passing on the experience of the more advanced detachments of the working-class movement to those that are only setting out, may cause all but irreparable harm to the revolutionary forces in individual countries. Correct solutions in each specific case of the revolutionary struggle for freedom is one of the most accurate indicators of the maturity of the Marxist-Leninist parties.

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<sup>1</sup> F. Engels, 'Letters from France'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 31.

Examining the political means for the emancipation of labour, we gave priority to the question of revolutionary compulsion and force not because it occupies any exclusive place in the Marxist-Leninist teaching, but because much of the anti-communist speculation is being based on it. Yet, if we approach it scientifically, neither freedom nor democracy (concepts that are very close) rule out compulsion.

The question of force during the choice between one or the other social system in the world—a choice that predetermines the political and class content of further development—is a highly complex question. Certainly, the choice must be free, and democratic in form, but whether it is in *content* a choice for true democracy depends on how well people understand the true interests of society for which they should fight. There can be two extremes: a 'free' expression of will in favour of reaction, as in the case of the majority of the German nation in the early thirties, with the nazis coming to power or, conversely, 'dictatorial' compulsion on the part of the working class to make former exploiters participate in building socialism. Those who believe in purely formal democracy may find (and often have found) themselves on the side of those who had set fire to the Reichstag, the executioners of Europe. Because by clinging to formal democracy they often fail to take the side of true democracy, democracy in essence.

Democracy cannot be guaranteed by merely observing the fixed voting procedure or the prevailing views and sentiments whose origin

may partly depend on accidental circumstances and partly on the interests of those who control the media shaping public opinion. It would be wrong to measure the degree of democracy by any empirical, transient criteria, no matter how attractive they may look at first glance. It is the substance of the choice, not its trappings, that affects the destiny of people, and how democratic this choice depends on how fully the true, not illusory and extraneously imposed, interests of the working people, the majority of the nation, are expressed and implemented.

Democracy has meaning only if it is not contrary to freedom, which organically includes the truth of social cognition. Socialist democracy is not a cacophony of diverse and divergent ideas, but the maximum concentration of the majority of wills for the sake of 'euphonic' and concerted action for progress according to a single plan drawn up on the basis of scientific concepts about the nature and regularity of social development.

Does such democracy ignore the right of the individual to a personal opinion? Certainly, not. On the contrary, a diversity of opinions is essential when the collective or society are occupied in settling some problem. A variety of approaches helps the right solution to crystallise or, at least, to pick the solution best suited at the moment. Naturally, once this solution is adopted as a basis for action, any community (and doubly so a socialist society) is interested in its organised and aim-oriented implementation, and seeks to restrict all attempts at degalvanising or fragmentising the collective will. Search on a different.

plane, that of optimising personal actions in order to secure the best possible implementation of the jointly adopted solution—remains unrestricted.

If reliance on the broadest possible mass of the working people is the first pillar of socialist democracy, its second pillar is reliance on progressive social science, which studies the needs of the masses and charts the most effective ways and means of satisfying them. In a certain sense, socialist democracy coincides with scientific organisation of the life of society.

Truth, science, freedom and true power of the people, all of which are embodied in socialist democracy, are indivisible. Breaking its alliance with science not only endangers the socialist system, but leads to a degeneration of democracy; to free expression and furtherance of designs and interests that are contrary to the interests of the people. This is the objective logic behind the petty-bourgeois demand of 'liberalising' socialism in the modern world, in which a 'vacuum' in the class struggle is obviously impossible.

In an attack on the Marxist-Leninist concept of freedom, the clerical 'expert' in dialectical materialism, Gustav A. Wetter, set out to malign life in the socialist countries and the unity there of science and democracy, scientific ideology and the freedom of the mass of the people, by juggling about with Engels's tenets concerning freedom and necessity.

Wetter went through the motions of commending Engels's definition of freedom, and spotted in it a double meaning: freedom is



both cognised necessity and the ability to adopt competent decisions. In the first case (here Wetter discovered a flaw in the purely epistemological interpretation of the issue) it is not freedom itself, but only its necessary spiritual premise; only conscious adoption of decisions (not knowledge alone) expresses the essence of human freedom.

Wetter drew this subtle distinction not for an objective examination of Marxism, but for a much more prosaic purpose, that of declaring that in the Soviet Union the mass of the people knows freedom only in the first sense, that here 'the essence of freedom is understood only as "cognised necessity", as knowledge of nothing but necessary regularities'.<sup>1</sup> The masses, according to Wetter, have only the right to know everything, while the adoption of the more important decisions (and, consequently, the true freedom) is the monopoly of the Communist Party. In this fashion a seemingly harmless abstract exposition of the Marxist concept of freedom, appropriately doctored, fulfilled the highly specific propaganda purpose of at least in words opposing the people to their inalienable part, their foremost detachment and collective leader, the Communist Party.

Wetter the anti-communist 'espied' in the Soviet Union a division of freedom into a freedom 'to know everything' for the masses and a freedom 'to decide everything' for the Party. The true tendency is, however, quite different. There is a distinct convergence of

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<sup>1</sup> G. Wetter, *Sowjetideologie heute*, Fischer Bucherei, 1963, p. 98.

the intrinsic nature of the activity of Communists and of those outside the Party on the basis of the essential unity of their interests; there is constant joint participation in the scientific administration of society, in creating conditions that would prevent narrow group interests from taking the upper hand over the collective interests, the interests of the whole people in communist construction, and that would rule out subjectivism and the concomitant depersonalisation of the mass of the people.

The issue of the democratism of the socialist system has long since been settled not merely in theory, but also historically. Basing their activity on the scientifically cognised interests of the working masses and organising society on the principles of public property and universal labour, the ruling communist parties of the socialist countries have given effect to higher forms of democracy than those heretofore known in history. Yet they are being fiercely attacked for alleged 'anti-democratism'. Those who attack them make the most of the residual philistine individualism that still survives among part of the population.

History has proved the superiority of socialist democracy, a democracy for the working people, over the bourgeois 'democracy' for those who own capital and for their henchmen. To replace class criteria with any other yardstick is wrong politically and equally wrong scientifically. It is the historical right of the builders of socialism and communism to measure all social phenomena with the criterion of socialist democracy, which serves the

people by deed and accords with the interests of the vast majority of mankind. This is not to say, of course, that socialist democracy as it exists needs no improving. We know from experience that often the enemy speculates precisely on the difficulties that arise in its development. But it should always be borne in mind that the democracy of the new society has no use for injections of 'liberalism', has nothing to borrow from the bourgeois world, and that it secures progress in accordance with its own intrinsic laws. And learning these laws is the highly important job of social science.

The bourgeois press never tires of charging the communist parties in the socialist countries of restricting the freedom of speech, press, and assembly, the freedom of the personality, human rights, and so on. Yet, in fact, it is not these freedoms as such that are being restricted, but their use for anti-socialist purposes. One cannot conceivably waive juridical regulation of social (including ideological) processes in the setting of the acute struggle between the two world systems. It would be strange indeed for a party to do so if it is guided by scientific theory and is aware of its responsibility to the people which entrusted it with administering the state.

It is certainly not 'neglect' in developing democracy that explains the abolition in socialist society of such 'advantages' of the capitalist 'free world' as legalised gambling dens, crooked lotteries, societies of 'witches', 'certified' fortunetellers, astrologists, and the like. Powerful syndicates making a billion-

dollar business out of murder, smuggling, pornography, drugs and other rackets, are part of, and function freely within, the system of bourgeois social relations. Do these 'freedoms' deserve to be permitted in a sensibly organised society? Certainly, not. It is only for demagogical and selfish ends, simply to make cheap politics and earn cheap publicity, that some intellectuals advocate an equal degree of freedom for science and for mysticism, for knowledge and ignorance, for the promotion of morality and the promotion of immorality, for art of humane content and beauty of form and for 'art' in which disintegration of form causes disintegration of content.

What can this diversity of 'freedoms' serve? In each separate case it confuses public opinion, and on a more general scale it impairs the education and ethical development of entire generations.

Why are these 'freedoms' so cherished by capitalist propaganda? Simply because the 'spiritual cacophony' of capitalist society, its streams and currents of social thinking that collide and merge, that intertwine and separate, causing the uninitiated to lose their bearings—all this tends to obscure the truth. In this clamorous diversity it is much easier to promote views that, taken by themselves, obviously contradict not only science but also common sense. And considering that the moral and aesthetic principles, and the social psychology are undermined in this way, that the mentality of people is fragmented and depreciated, that people lose their immunity to obviously reactionary ideas, that indiffe-

rence is bred to public affairs, it is easy to see how profitable it is for the exploiting class. For it is an atmosphere in which the bourgeoisie can, contrary to science and true freedom, exercise its spiritual dictatorship with greater ease.

This is why ideological 'pluralism' in socialist society, even if urged by mistake or infatuation with faddish rhetoric, would lead not to more democracy, but to greater influence of bourgeois ideology and ethics. This is why it is *a step backward in a social system whose very existence depends on authentic knowledge of social realities.*

Exercise of freedom is inconceivable outside the organisational forms of the movement of the masses. It is a very complicated process that runs at different rates in the different stages of building socialism and communism.

As we see it, social development, to be correctly understood, must be seen in the light of historical materialism and scientific communism. But if general regularities defined in science are used in disregard of local features, that is, of their particular and singular manifestations, if they are treated as stereotypes, then, as social freedom develops, there may even occur certain infringements on the freedom of the individual. And this, after a time, is bound to affect matters on a broader social scale.

Both scientifically and politically, it is vitally important to remember the peculiar 'duality' of laws and regularities: that it is impossible to carry out the necessity implicit in them outside the accidental. The very combination and conflicting unity of necessity

and accident is also a *necessity*, one that integrates within itself these polar opposites. No discussion of, say, personal freedom can be competent unless this is understood. Because personal freedom in scientific terms consists in that accidental circumstances, features, aptitudes and acts of an individual form a unique optimum complex, coupled with an as complete as possible expression in the individual's life activity of the foremost and leading trends of social progress.

How is this complex secured from the point of view of organisation? The answer to this, it seems, is best formulated by answering a completely different question:

How is the capitalist society, the perfect exploiting society that directly precedes socialism, organised?

In its pre-monopoly period there was anarchic decentralisation that suited the needs of free competition and the spontaneous market. Monopoly capital, on the other hand, seeks to offset the effects of the competitive struggle by introducing bureaucratic centralism, and this on an ever increasing scale. Monopoly groups, which have extended their monopoly to political and ideological affairs, are asserting their omnipotence. And though anarchic decentralisation and bureaucratic centralism exclude one another, this does not prevent them from coexisting within the borders of the same states because their substance is the same—arbitrary rule of the capitalist class (either in a 'democratic' or bureaucratic form) and wage slavery meeting the needs of capital.

Neither principle is suited for socialist

society. Democratic centralism is for it the only fitting principle. And the level of personal freedom depends at any given period on the concrete correlation of democracy and centralism. 'We are for democratic centralism,' Lenin said. 'And it must be clearly understood how vastly different democratic centralism is from bureaucratic centralism on the one hand, and from anarchism, on the other. The opponents of centralism continually put forward autonomy and federation as a means of struggle against the uncertainties of centralism. As a matter of fact, democratic centralism in no way excludes autonomy, on the contrary, it presupposes the necessity of it.'<sup>1</sup>

It is in the centralist principle of the organisation of socialist society that the universality of regularities governing the passage from capitalism to communism finds its practical expression. Scientific guidance from one centre is the crucial guarantee that the most essential social relations are controlled by the countrywide collective of the working people, that these relations are constantly and consciously improved, and that development is oriented on communism.

Still, it should always be borne in mind that the common regularities of socialist and communist construction operate differently in different places, and that their optimum effect in the activity of nations, collectives and individuals may differ very strongly from

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Original Version of the Article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government"', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 207.

their effect on the scale of whole societies, and much more on the scale of a world system. And it is precisely because common regularities are impossible outside their particular and individual expression that cognised necessity can be put into effect only through democracy, that is, the granting of broad independence to collectives and to individuals.

If centralism is unjustifiably raised to an absolute, for example, this may restrict the initiative of the rank and file, and hence lead to subjectivism. Anarchy, the opposite to excessive centralism, may result if democracy does not get a dependable, scientifically grounded organisational structure, and if working people do not, by reason of poor educational work, acquire the requisite skills of running society. It may lead to disorganisation and partial loss of control over social relations, and may make some social processes ungovernable. For these reasons, *determining and maintaining the right correlation of democratism and centralism suiting the development level attained by society is one of the main aspects of improving the entire social system of socialism.* In effect, this is the chief issue of political guidance in the new society.

Centralism conceived in a truly democratic sense presupposes complete and unimpeded development not only of local features, but also of local initiative, and variety in the ways, methods and means of advancing to the common goal.<sup>1</sup> It makes for the most

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'Original Version of the Article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government"', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 208.



effective organisational pattern of mass activity.

Democratic centralism does not tolerate stereotype or neglect of majority will. It does not tolerate the interests of local organs or work collectives being opposed to the interests of the whole people.

'Communism requires and presupposes,' Lenin stressed, 'the greatest possible centralisation of large-scale production throughout the country....

'To deprive the all-Russia centre of the right to direct control over all the enterprises of the given industry throughout the country ... would be regional anarcho-syndicalism, and not communism.'<sup>1</sup> But this is not 'bureaucratic centralism', which levels and reduces to naught any and all particular and individual distinctions. 'Local distinctions, specific economic formations, forms of everyday life, the degree of preparedness of the population, attempts to carry out a particular plan,' Lenin wrote, 'all these are bound to be reflected in the specific features of the path to socialism of a particular labour commune of the state. The greater such diversity—provided, of course, that it does not turn into eccentricity—the more surely and rapidly shall we ensure the achievement of both democratic centralism and a socialist economy.'<sup>2</sup> Because the initiative of the masses is the basic factor of the

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Comments on the Draft "Regulations for the Management of the Nationalised Enterprises"', *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Original Version of the Article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government"', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 208.

new community. Because bureaucratic automatism is hostile to the spirit of the new system. Because living and creative socialism is a creation of the mass of the people.

Democratic centralism presupposes an organic blend of initiative and search with rigorous discipline and model organisation based on meticulous observance of the laws and standards of the socialist way of life. Democracy without discipline and 'limitless collegiality' without accountability on the part of individual executives lead to disorder and chaos. 'Collective discussion and decision of all questions of administration in Soviet institutions,' Lenin pointed out, 'must be accompanied by the precisely defined responsibility of every person holding any Soviet post for the performance of definite, and clearly and explicitly specified, functions and *practical jobs*'.<sup>1</sup> The most dangerous of evils was how Lenin described executives who disclaimed responsibility by pleading collegiality.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, discipline by compulsion, under bureaucratic pressure, barring individual or collective initiative, is liable to deteriorate into bureaucratic wilfulness, because it raises no obstacle to subjectivism and the 'accidents of centralism'. Only by combating both extremes can there be success in creating a new social connection, labour discipline, and organisation of labour combining the last word in science and technology

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Rough Draft of Rules for the Administration of Soviet Institutions', *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 349.

<sup>2</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'All Out for the Fight Against Denikin', *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 437.

with the mass association of conscious labourers engaged in large-scale socialist production.<sup>1</sup>

The most effective correlation of democracy and centralism in the life of a socialist society takes shape gradually and is continuously corrected by practice, with democracy always gaining additional ground. Centralism is increasingly concentrated in the key positions, which ensure the socialist character of the social system. The orientation on independent action by individuals and collectives gains ever greater scope. The trust in them of society increases. So does their responsibility to society. And this trust and responsibility are two sides of the increasing freedom. Speaking of improvements in the organisational structure and in methods of management, L. I. Brezhnev said: 'We shall have to reinforce both principles of democratic centralism simultaneously. On the one hand, centralism must be developed and a barrier thereby raised to departmental and parochial tendencies. On the other, it is necessary to promote democratic principles and local initiative, to relieve the upper echelons of management from petty concerns and ensure speed and flexibility in decision-making.'<sup>2</sup>

The creative personality of the 'man of the masses', rapidly gaining in stature, is rapidly becoming the focus of the social interests. The basic economic law of socialism is gaining

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'A Great Beginning', *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 423.

<sup>2</sup> *Documents and Resolutions. XXVth Congress of the CPSU*, p. 72.

new facets: the aggregate physical and cultural needs are taken into account more and more fully, but so is the need of every individual for independent search, for freedom and for creative endeavour.

The modern world and the contending social systems are best characterised by two events of 1977, the year of the 60th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia:

— the world's first socialist country adopted the new Constitution—the most advanced charter of the rights and freedoms of the individual at the present level of human civilisation;

— the decision was made by the leading imperialist state to begin production of the neutron bomb, seen by the knights of profit as the perfect weapon of mass annihilation.

Here we have Shakespeare's great question on a universal scale: to be or not to be? The socialist and capitalist systems give anything but similar answers to it.

When in his day Marx began his study of capitalist relations of production, he first of all analysed their primary 'cell'—the separate commodity, which he defined as the elementary form of wealth in capitalist society. 'Our *mutual* value,' Marx wrote about man's relation to man under capitalism, 'is for us the *value* of our mutual objects. Hence for us man himself is mutually of *no value*.'<sup>1</sup>

A commodity cannot be the starting point

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, 'Comments on James Mill. *Éléments d'Économie Politique*'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*. Vol. 3, p. 227.

in the analysis of production relations under socialism, because the elementary form of social wealth here is fundamentally different. What is it? Economists have struggled over this question for a long time. The answers suggested by analogy with the capitalist economy are unconvincing. And every time we are impressed by one and the same thing: it is impossible even in the very beginning and even if the approach is purely economic, to sidestep the 'human factor', the existing aggregate of human aptitudes and their manifestation in the aggregate concrete labour creating use values. Perhaps it is these aptitudes that are the elementary form of wealth of socialist society? Perhaps this is the underlying meaning of Marx's thesis about the victory of the political economy of labour over the political economy of property?

It is easy enough to see the intrinsic harmony between the above and the following provision of the Soviet Constitution (which, in effect, reproduces the thesis of the Programme of the CPSU quoted here in Chapter III): 'The supreme goal of social production under socialism is the fullest possible satisfaction of the people's growing material, and cultural and intellectual requirements' (Article 15). The orientation of the socialist social system on man, on developing his abilities and on satisfying his needs, is treated in the Constitution with impressive thoroughness, even though in precise, academically dry, juridical formulas.

The Greek Protagoras, whom a court in Athens sentenced to death for impious references to the immortal gods four and twenty

centuries ago, is the coiner of the proverb that has not, evidently, been wholly understood to this day: 'Man is the measure of all things.' Generations of philosophy students heard their professors censure Protagoras for his subjectivism. And from the purely idealistic angle, seeing nothing but man's spiritual essence, the professors were right. But suppose we look at man as the 'aggregate of all social relations', that is, according to Marx, according to the rules of materialist dialectics? Doesn't Marx's definition of communism as real humanism suggest that the proverb 'man is the measure of all things' has a second—this time not illusory—life in the conditions of the communist society? It is man who is the measure of all things, not things that are the measure of man, of his qualities, of his worth, his dignity. This is now the boundary that divides the communist and the bourgeois individualist conception of social realities.

On the face of it the adoption of the new Soviet Constitution and the US bid for a new spiral of the arms race are things that defy comparison. But this is not so. The codification of socialist social relations, securing for the man of labour constitutional guarantees of wellbeing carries a historical charge that is diametrically opposite to the development and production of a 'pure' nuclear weapon.

The main argument made in favour of the neutron bomb is that it is 'humane', that it kills people in a matter of a few hours, leaving intact for the 'victor' the buildings, machines, furniture, and works of art. Yes, this is what

they are 'humanely' worried about, these men who dream of capitalising on war. The relation to things is here declared the measure of humanity—a logic of scavengers raised to an ideological principle. One cannot help asking if those who think along these lines and who, by the way, are not loath to discourse about 'human rights', have an at least elementary idea of social responsibility and humanism? It seems to us that no social system that still had something to its credit would ever even whisper of legalising a new method of exterminating human beings superior to any method known so far, when the opposite system is offering a new, more comprehensive and diverse code of democratic principles and norms than any that ever existed. It seems to us that in the United States we see what Marx observed in the Paris of Louis Bonaparte's time. 'The people of this city,' he wrote, 'are in general so fed up with the successes of freedom abroad that they almost forget to observe the successes of slavery at home.'

A word about the 'humanity' of the neutron bomb. One can hardly suspect Harold Wust, the general inspector of the West German Bundeswehr, of incompetence. Yet, he said in so many words: 'Neutron arms cannot be considered either more or less humane than other weapons.' And he added: 'The neutron weapon acts not only by radiation, killing people, but also causes destruction where it hits, destroying everything, including houses.'

To be sure, the halo of 'purity' was given to the neutron bomb with no uncertain purpose. First, it was meant to dampen the

public outcry, easing the way for the military-industrial complex in raising its profits. Second, its reputation of 'purity' would make the bomb more acceptable to the people, clearing the way for legalising its use, and this not only in the world at large but also, perhaps, on the internal class front. This has very little in common with any progress of democracy.

After the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe there were many ill-wishing diatribes about the Soviet way of life and the rights and duties of citizens under socialism. But do people favouring a system that does not even guarantee the right to life have any moral right to criticise anybody? There is no denying that the right to life was recognised as self-evident back in 1776 in the American Declaration of Independence. But what does this recognition mean for those who live by selling their labour power, but who are denied the right to a guaranteed job? If there is no right to work there is no right to the means of subsistence and, therefore, no right to life. Only those have it who have wealth and non-labour incomes.

For socialist legislation, on the other hand, the right to work is primary and basic. Compared with the previous Constitution, the new Soviet Fundamental Law has formulated it more fully, reflecting the broader opportunities the country has gained in the stage of developed socialism. Guaranteed work paid for according to its quantity and quality also provides for the right to choosing one's trade or profession in accordance with one's inclina-



tions, abilities, training and education, with due account of the needs of society (see Article 40). Under socialism man is not dependent on any factors other than his own conscientious work. 'Socially useful work and its results,' it says in the Constitution, 'determine a person's status in society.'

Absence of the right to work, on the one hand, and worship of the right to private property, on the other, rule out any serious consideration of economic and social equality in capitalist society. The actual, 'preordained' inequality there is camouflaged by a formal juridical equality and is the fundamental sin of bourgeois democracy.

Alexander Blok, the great Russian twentieth-century poet, made the following observation in his notebook: 'Only one thing makes man a man: his knowledge of social inequality.' For this mercilessly sincere poet such knowledge was neither frigid nor abstract. It had the heat of his heart behind it and was vitalised by his fiery lust for action—'to arrange matters so that everything would be new; so that our specious, dirty, boring, ugly life should become just, pure, joyous and beautiful.' And the new USSR Constitution is the embodiment of this in the stage of developed socialism, expressing the will of the whole Soviet people in clear legal formulas. For the first time the communist ideal has been raised to a constitutional principle: 'The free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.' It is proclaimed as an aim of the state to extend opportunities for citizens to develop and use their creative powers, abilities and gifts.

Before this became possible there were decades of arduous effort. The young proletarian state established public ownership of the means of production, pushed out the remnants of exploiter relations, turned the peasantry into a socialist class alongside the industrial workers, and promoted culture among the mass of the people. Now that socialism has won completely and for good, the process is intensively under way of eradicating class distinctions, the remaining distinctions between town and country, and those between manual and mental workers. And it is on this social foundation that the creative individual, the unique aptitudes and unrepeatable abilities of every man, stand in the centre of public attention. This turn derives not only from the humane nature, the 'anthropocentrism', of the socialist social system, but also from the fact that for the system itself the development of the individual is a fresh source of strength and influence, the motor of its continuous improvement.

The socialist system has imparted to the slogan of freedom of the individual an accuracy, definiteness and solidity that it lacked under the private property systems. In the capitalist world freedom of the individual can mean many things—freedom to plunder and freedom from plunder, freedom of oppression and freedom from oppression, freedom of sense and freedom of nonsense, freedom to preach the truth and freedom to lie, the 'right of the strong' and the 'right of the weak', and so on. Socialism has put an end to this anarchy, and considers that one of its main achievements. Lenin said: 'Needless

to say, for every revolution, socialist or democratic, freedom is a very, very important slogan. But our programme says that if freedom runs counter to the emancipation of labour from the yoke of capital, it is a deception.<sup>1</sup> That emancipation of the masses and of the individual is identified with the emancipation of labour means that it has been radically secured. Not capricious willfulness, that imitation of personal freedom advertised in the capitalist West, but the free, creative self-assertion of the personality for the good of the people—such is the ideal which socialist society has always followed and always will follow.

The two worlds, the two systems facing one another, have each its own answer to the question, 'to be or not to be?'

Socialism's answer—'to be' for the labouring masses, 'to be' for nations in conditions of peace, freedom and progress, deciding their own future—is obviously contrary to the wishes of the monopoly bourgeoisie.

The latter's reply is primitive and egoistic, grim and sinister: 'to be' for exploitation of man by man, 'to be' for the arms race and monopoly profits.

The peoples of the non-socialist part of the world still face a choice. And their final option is sure to be influenced by the new Soviet Constitution.

According to the Constitution, 'the leading and guiding force of Soviet society and the

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'First All-Russia Congress on Adult Education', *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 351.

nucleus of its political system, of all state organisations and public organisations, is the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The CPSU exists for the people and serves the people' (Article 6). The revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party, the in effect first organisation of freedom, united the politically conscious fighters for a new life on the principles of scientific socialism even in the conditions of capitalist society. It was a close-knit league of the bearers, keepers and disseminators of the cognised necessity of abolishing capitalism and establishing social relations of practical humanism, notably the universality of creative labour.

The Party embodies not only the spiritual unity of the followers of scientific communism, but also the material unity of their organisation. An especially stable organism that arose and develops in the framework of the working-class movement as an aim-oriented political association, it has set out to emancipate labour, which mission it performs on becoming the ruling party of the state, the primary institution of the new social system. Small wonder that enemies of socialism see it as their main obstacle and make it the target of ferocious attacks.

The historical responsibility that devolves on the Communist Party is all-encompassing and universal. Everywhere in society the Party establishes social freedom not only in its capacity of the leading political force of the working masses, but also as the initiator in developing socialist democracy.

Hence the direct relation of the actual level of freedom in society to the degree of corres-

pendence of inner-Party relations to the ideal of communist freedom. The scientific standard and collegiality of leadership in general depend on the scientific standard and collegiality of the Party's leadership.

In seeking to raise the scientific standard of the guidance of social change, the Party first of all analyses its own activity. In doing so it begins with self-criticism. And this is as it should be. The Communist Party would not be able to guide the organised building of the realm of freedom if it had not itself been a kind of creative laboratory devising new and better forms of organisation and testing them before they are put into effect on a mass scale. The Party is on guard against conservative tendencies contrary to the liberation of the initiative of the masses and of individuals. It combats them firmly in its own ranks at first and also on the scale of all society. The embodiment and bearer of cognised necessity and focus of the most advanced forms of social relations, the Party retains importance in all the stages of building socialism and communism. Out of all the associations of working people the Party is the one that above all others is *the being of freedom in organisation* and the highest expression of people's domination over their social relations in present conditions.

In their attempts at discrediting the communist parties, bourgeois ideologues often portrayed Communists as robots lacking individuality, who blindly carry out orders coming from the centre. 'The Communist,' wrote the West German anti-communist Ludwig Schulte in his book *The Dynamics of the*

*Free World*, 'learns from the Party the necessity whose understanding is to make him free. Because it is the Party that decides what is necessary. The free man is not, it is true, subordinated to any party, but is instead subject to the influence of the social environment.'<sup>1</sup>

There are at least three faults in the above. First, the Communist owes his knowledge of necessity not only to the Marxist-Leninist party, but also to social science, which guides the Party and which the Party promotes and disseminates. Second, the contention that the Party decides what is necessary may be variously interpreted: the definition of necessity may be the result of objective scientific analysis or the result of arbitrary thinking when that which is called necessity is such only from the subjective point of view, that is, is a pseudo-necessity. By failing to explain which necessity Communists accept, Schulte demonstrates the sophistic inventiveness of anti-Sovieteers. Unable to 'prove' the uniformism of Communists in any other way, he charges the communist parties with voluntarism and denies them any link with science.<sup>2</sup> This is true of most of the anti-communist attacks on the Marxist-Leninist parties.

Third and last, the idea of opposing affiliation with the Party to the influence of the social environment looks more than strange.

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<sup>1</sup> L. Schulte, *Dynamik der freien Welt*, Verlag A. Fromm, Osnabrück, 1961, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> 'The necessity is in no case the truth itself, but the Party's directives for action,' writes Schulte (*Op. cit.*, p. 68).

While, according to Schulte, affiliation with the Party is unacceptable for the free individual, the influence on him of the environment is recognised for a fact. But is not affiliation with the Party a particular case of the influence of the environment? Do the two rule out one another? By constructing his arguments faultily even from the point of view of formal logic, the anti-communist forfeits the moral right to his readers' trust.

Schulte may be excused in just one respect: his ideas about parties, which he tried to apply to communist parties, originate from his observations of bourgeois parties, which have no scientific programmes and no scientific organisation. But this does not absolve him of guilt for his unpalatable methods.

The slander of anti-communist critics is refuted not only by the high scientific standard of the policy of communist parties, which has nothing in common with bourgeois policy-making, but also by the mechanism of decision-making based on criticism and self-criticism, democratic centralism, subordination of minority to majority, and unity of will and action in the advance to the common goal.

In the framework of a Party organisation freedom of the individual is expressed in a conscious orientation of his actions in keeping with the progressive tendencies of society's development. The decision to join the Party is one of the most important decisions in the life of any man. It signifies readiness to assume a share of the collective responsibility for building communist society. The trust put in the individual by the Party organisa-

tion when admitting him to its ranks is evidence of his having attained a high degree of personal freedom. The unity of trust in and the personal responsibility of the Communist is secured by Party discipline, which is the necessary condition of free activity and initiative.

Each Communist faces the challenge of using the personal freedom implicit in the Party's trust to the best possible advantage for the purpose of securing the freedom of society. The essence of communist activity is always the same: to forge humane social relations that will give scope for the creative abilities of each individual, and to establish a positive and sensible human freedom. It is to achieve this goal that the efforts of all Communists are directed to changing the inner world of people.

The awareness of the citizen of socialist society is not the mere result of much reading and of education, and of ideological training, and not only of an ability to learn the formulas of communism from books and pamphlets. It is also a new body of habits and traditions, emotions and tastes. And in this sense only those people are truly free whose communist beliefs are not contrary to their daily behaviour and whose communist views and sentiments are well expressed in their communist deeds. This quality is usually described as commitment to the Communist Party, irrespective of whether the person concerned is inside or outside the Party. *Communist commitment is the content of the highest of the present forms of the spiritual freedom of the individual*, a powerful stimulus for the con-



tinued successful emancipation of labour and improvement of socialism as the initial stage of the realm of freedom.

The ideological foes of communism cast doubt on the socialist system and whitewash the tyranny of capitalism. For this they juggle with the highly popular topics of democracy and human rights. Soviet measures buttressing discipline, law and order they portray as anti-democratic. But in the absence of these measures democracy would resemble anarchist chaos and become [impracticable. The responsible approach of every citizen to his duties and the people's interests, the 25th Congress of the CPSU pointed out, is the only dependable foundation for the fullest possible implementation of the principles of true, socialist democracy and true freedom of the individual.

SOME GENERAL PROBLEMS OF THE  
FIRST PHASE OF COMMUNISM

**1. The Logical and the Historical.  
The Part Played by Socialisation of  
Production 'In Fact'**

Socialism does not spring full-grown from the brow of capitalism as did Athena from the brow of Jove. This is why in a formula it would be too simplistic to present it merely as C-C-C (labour made collective by the instruments of production, labour made collective by its organisation, and collective forms of appropriation of its results) with no complementary details. This would be an abstract antithesis to capitalism lacking the wish and skill of reaching down to the concrete forms and degrees of transition from capitalism to socialism. Lenin once wrote: 'The teachers of socialism spoke of a whole period of transition from capitalism to socialism and emphasised the "prolonged birth-pangs" of the new society. And this new society is again an abstraction which can come into being only by passing through a series of varied, imperfect concrete attempts to create this or that socialist state.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Left-Wing" Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 341.

The vast spaces inhabited by dozens of nations that are now in the act of passing from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom possess a staggering variety of conditions and of cultural and historical features. This cannot but reflect on the patterns of the separate socialist societies. And we must bear it in mind if we want to avoid stereotype in our judgement of the emergence of universal freedom and the progress made in this direction in different countries.

History had willed that when working-class dictatorships were established in the countries of the socialist world system the collective character of labour (the first C in our formula), usually conditioned by a high degree of mechanisation, was not even predominant in most of them, let alone undividedly dominant. This means that the socialist system began developing on the basis of the technology corresponding to socialism only in part of the national economies, whereas the other, usually greater, part had the kind of technology that corresponds, in substance, to private proprietary relations.

For a time after the Revolution the economy of Russia, for example, consisted of a mosaic of *five* modes of production: 1) patriarchal, i.e., to a considerable extent subsistence, farming; 2) small commodity production (which included the bulk of those peasants who sold their grain); 3) private capitalism; 4) state capitalism; 5) socialism.<sup>1</sup> The fourth and to some relatively small degree the third of

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'The Tax in Kind', *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 331.

these had the productive forces, technology and pattern of production that were ready for socialist socialisation. So, of course, did the fifth. The first and second were wholly based on individual means of labour, that is, on manual and not machine labour, and, at the same time, predominated in terms of quantity. This also applied to a large extent to the third.

In sum, there were the following types in the country:

- 1)  $\begin{matrix} C \\ I \end{matrix} \rangle C-C$  (the *fifth* mode: nationalised industry, state and cooperative socialist enterprises; the I, i.e., individual character of labour.

is here coupled with the first C because even in the most advanced enterprises there was much manual labour, while a good many enterprises had manual labour only);

- 2)  $\begin{matrix} I \\ C \end{matrix} \rangle C-I$  (the *fourth* and *third* modes: state-capitalist enterprises, private-capitalist enterprises, and kulak farms; the last I stands for individual

appropriation of the results of labour);

- 3) I—I—I (the *second* and *first* modes: chiefly peasant farms with no hired labourers; here the second I stands for their organisationally individual character of labour).

This is a summary picture of the transitional period. Politically, its content was dictatorship of the working class. Economically, it saw the spread of the socialist mode of production (C—C—C), while the other listed modes of production were gradually eliminated. Closeness to this aim was an objective

indicator of the degree of society's socialist maturity.

Lenin said: 'The most difficult task in the sharp turns and changes of social life is that of taking due account of the peculiar features of each transition. How socialists should fight within a capitalist society is not a difficult problem and has long since been settled. Nor is it difficult to visualise advanced socialist society. This problem has also been settled. But the most difficult task of all is how in practice, to effect the transition from the old, customary, familiar capitalism to the new socialism, as yet unborn and without any firm foundations. At best this transition will take many years, in the course of which our policy will be divided into a number of even smaller stages. And the whole difficulty of the task which falls to our lot, the whole difficulty of politics and the art of politics, lies in the ability to take into account the specific tasks of each of these transitions.'<sup>1</sup>

In the above passage two points are especially important for us.

*First*, it is not difficult to visualise advanced socialist society (note that Lenin said this in 1920).

*Second*, the most difficult task in the passage to developed socialism is that of taking into account the specific features of each stage of transition.

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Report on the Work of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars Delivered at the First Session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, Seventh Convocation, February 2, 1920', *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 330-31.

It is important to emphasise the first point because these days the image of developed socialist society, which it was not especially difficult for Lenin's contemporaries to visualise, may at times in some countries be covered over with all sorts of sediments; certain efforts have to be made by Communists to restore it to its original pattern. The reference is to the influence of 'left' and right revisionists, and to the many schools of non-Marxist socialism that have mushroomed in the past 15-20 years.

The second point is, in a way, a reminder of the need for observing a sense of proportion in determining the current stage of development and its scope, a reminder of the need for realism. It is naive to think that on crossing the threshold of socialist society people will immediately understand everything, and will neither exaggerate nor minimise their achievements. That there can be miscalculations Lenin warned all revolutionaries: 'We are afraid to look the "vulgar truth" squarely in the face, and too often yield to "exalting deception". We keep repeating that "we" are passing from capitalism to socialism, but do not bother to obtain a distinct picture of the "we".'<sup>1</sup>

The experience of the Communist Party and the Soviet state shows conclusively that *socialism is in vital need of precise and systematic self-analysis and all-round self-perception if only because it is a scientifically organised society*. This enables it to leave as yet impracticable

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'The Tax in Kind', *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 349.

tasks well enough alone and to show requisite audacity in matters already objectively ripe.

The theoretical picture of developed socialism produced by Marx, Engels and Lenin presupposes that certain socio-economic processes are essentially completed. This applies first of all to the spread of machine production and the accompanying rise of the cultural and technical standard of all labourers; ousting of unskilled manual labour, and technical and organisational socialisation, as well as centralisation, of the economy.

Given these premises, the period of proletarian dictatorship is conceived as necessarily short, because its main and essentially sole function would be to convert the means of production from private property into the property of the whole people (and, naturally, to organise the appropriate people's control and accounting of the measure of labour and the measure of consumption, coupled with individual distribution of products in accordance with the quantity and quality of work). 'The first act by virtue of which the state really constitutes itself the representative of the whole of society,' Engels wrote, 'the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society—this is, at the same time, its last independent act as a state.'<sup>1</sup>

This *logical* approach to the establishment of the new social system expresses *a law as such*. During the lifetime of Marx and Engels, in the early period of Lenin's activity, and

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1975, p. 322.

up to the October Revolution, it could not be otherwise. This was completely confirmed by the history of the victorious proletarian dictatorship in the USSR, the first experiment in building socialism, but did not coincide with it as regards the order and time of the transformations.

This *discrepancy* has been widely discussed in the USSR and abroad. Tendentious interpretations were given by anti-Marxist, anti-Leninist, anti-communist propaganda. The discrepancy between the logical (scientific prognosis) and the historical (fulfilment of the prognosis) in the passage from capitalism to socialism is, indeed, obvious. Theoretical forecasts may give a correct picture of the content of future events but, anticipating them dozens of years in advance, usually present some problems a bit differently from what they look like in practice later. But only the superficial critics would conclude therefrom that there is disagreement between theory and practice. This is refuted by the fact that *the theory of Marx, Engels and Lenin was conceived for a longer (and more eventful) stage of the movement of the masses than has already been passed by the new system.*

Furthermore, we would do well to recall what Marx wrote about the relation of the logical to the historical in the case of his contemporary (and probably any other) society. 'It would therefore be impracticable and false,' he wrote, 'to let economic categories follow each other in the order in which they were historically the determining ones. Their order depends much more on their relation to one another in modern bourgeois society,



which is the very opposite of the natural or of the one that corresponds to the order of historical development. It is not a matter of the place which the economic relationships held in the various successive historical forms of society. Still less is it a matter of their order "in the idea" (*Proudhon*), a vague idea of historical movement. It is a matter of their place inside the modern bourgeois society.<sup>1</sup>

And this applies not only to capitalism. Socialism, for example, as it emerged and is developing historically in some countries, is compelled to tackle social problems whose solution should in substance have been a precondition for its emergence. Take industrialisation or conversion of farm labour into a variety of industrial labour, or electrification of production and the home, elimination of illiteracy, urbanisation, development of modern communications, and so on. Logically these are tasks of the capitalist system. And in the developed imperialist countries the capitalist system has, indeed, essentially fulfilled them. In the part of the world where the working people had come to power, however, and where the pre-revolutionary level of social-economic development was lower than in the West, *socialism is often compelled to complete what capitalism had failed to complete.*

This complicates the mission of the working-class dictatorship. It goes far beyond the socialisation of the means of production predicted by Engels. But this does not mean

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse... Op. cit.*, p. 28.

that Engels had been mistaken. In the case of the industrial countries of Western Europe and North America his prognosis is wholly valid because there, as a result of state-monopoly capitalism, the working class will, following the revolution, inherit a production apparatus that is almost wholly complete and almost wholly adapted for running a socialised economy. The working people in these countries will need no gigantic effort to level out the economic development of separate regions, to eliminate a diversity of modes of production, to spend years on combatting ignorance or eradicating the distinctions between town and country. Here the history of proletarian dictatorship will essentially coincide with the logic of the scientific prognosis.

But let us go back to socialism as it emerged. The young Soviet republic was in a situation, Lenin wrote after the October Revolution, when a whole set of initial preconditions for the passage from capitalism to socialism was, in fact, to hand. 'On the other hand,' Lenin wrote, 'quite a number of these preconditions are absent in our country, but can be borrowed by it fairly easily from the experience of the neighbouring, far more advanced countries, whom history and international intercourse have long since placed in close contact with Russia.'<sup>1</sup> This dialectical dependence of the new system on both the internal and the external conditions referred to a country where capitalism had reached a medium level of development and had only

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin. 'Original Version of the Article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government"', *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, p. 71.

partly come to its monopoly stage, where there was the world's highest concentration of workers in large industrial enterprises and a fairly strong working-class movement that had learned from the class struggle of the West European proletariat and had a good stock of its own experience.

The above is even more true of, say, China where capitalism was at a relatively lower level, where the proletariat was just about 0.5 per cent of the population, and the liberation movement was largely anti-colonial, anti-feudal, national-democratic, and agrarian in class content. More, while due to the imperialist blockade the Soviet Republic had to build the new society chiefly on the basis of internal preconditions and therefore encountered tremendous difficulties, and while the 'storming of heaven' by the Russian proletariat in alliance with the working peasantry did culminate in victory, this variant of development had been impossible in China due to the weakness of these very internal preconditions for socialism. The very idea of building socialism could arise here only by virtue of the probable assistance of the Soviet Union, the socialist industrial giant, and that of the fraternal people's democracies.

At one time the Chinese leadership brandished the slogan of 'reliance on home forces'. But this concept was false from start to finish. *First*, because for at least ten years after the 1949 revolution it was *reliance on outside socialist forces, in addition to home forces* that enabled the People's Republic of China to overcome the country's incredible backwardness, to lay the industrial founda-

tion of socialism, and to build up a modern scientific, technical and cultural potential. At that time 'reliance on home forces' was not official policy. It was the Maoists who made it such, figuring that enough had been received from the socialist countries. They were guided by purely pragmatic considerations, flouting the interests of international solidarity, the tradition of socialist cooperation, trampling upon its very memory and using the slogan of 'reliance on home forces' as camouflage for nationalist designs and for rupture with the socialist community.

*Second*, the concept of 'reliance on home forces' was false because, while appearing to further the nation's responsibility for building socialism, it caused stagnation of socialism in China and countries of the same type, and was, in fact, irresponsible in the context of safeguarding and consolidating the new system. Stagnation has been in evidence for as long as 20 years, and it is hard to say when it will end, considering the sustained self-isolation of the PRC from the socialist world system.

The danger of this self-isolation from its natural allies extends these days to a far wider sphere than foreign policy and inter-state relations. In China socialism cannot attain mature forms unless there is interaction, fusion, and 'integration' of its internal with international preconditions. The only thing the Peking leadership can boast of so far is the gigantic social-economic form of social appropriation, which has still to be complemented with techno-industrial, organisational, cultural and scientific content. And any further delay imperils the survival of this form, for it cannot

be maintained indefinitely (or chiefly) by means of purely political factors—government, army and propaganda. The natural thing for it is to seek correspondence with the existing productive forces.

The socialist maturity of a country, as proved by the doctrine of historical materialism and by social practice, depends first of all on the quality of, and the stage reached in, the socialisation of economy. The varied and long international experience of building the new society has shown the fallacy of reducing all problems of socialisation to mere nationalisation of any means of production or to setting up cooperatives. Once the means of production become collective property it is not enough to set them in motion with the best possible results in new economic, organisational, juridical and political conditions. They have to be made to correspond to the scientific and technical demands of socialism's techno-material basis. Lenin distinguished between nationalisation, i.e. confiscation of large capitalist and landlord property by the people's power, and socialisation in fact. To socialise production *in fact* and secure a smooth, organic passage to the socialist mode of production, Lenin pointed out, it was necessary in the conditions of Russia to do two things in addition to socialising the means and objects of labour: 1) ensure strict and wholesale accounting and control of production and distribution, and 2) secure on a countrywide scale continuous heightening of the productivity of labour.

What the first condition amounted to was that all work in the economy, and all available resources, should be subordinated to the socia-

list aim of satisfying human needs. The approach of the Chinese leaders is fundamentally different. They disguise non-socialist aims by pleading the people's interest.

In general, any mention of the people is a travesty here, because for the people all it amounts to is what Marx and Engels spotted in the anarchist 'programmes' of Bakunin and Nechayev a hundred years ago: 'Work much, so as to consume little'.<sup>1</sup>

Everything is subordinated to paramilitary control with the purpose of building a powerful techno-military, nuclear-missile potential, using the form of social appropriation for squeezing out more funds for the militarised economy, and restricting the operation of the main economic law of socialism (satisfaction of the people's needs) in order to satisfy the artificially inflated, putatively social but in fact caste needs of the military.

That the economy has drifted away from the aim of socialist production and, consequently, the fact that accounting and control over the production and distribution of products has acquired a clearly irrational trend, have literally frozen the potentialities and advantages of socialism in China. Practice shows that the problem of raising the productivity of labour, which Lenin considered the ultimate and most important condition for the victory of the new system, cannot be normally resolved there. By flouting socialist international solidarity and permitting the productive forces and culture to degenerate, the Peking leadership has caused true socialisation to decline

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<sup>1</sup> Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 18, p. 426.

and has put socialism in jeopardy in its country. Maoist practice is a striking example of the discrepancy between the historical and the logical. Socialised property, which had thanks to outside assistance considerably outstripped the development of its own internal original cause—the industrial productive forces—is stagnating due to the declining rate of growth of industry and has been denied the chance of showing its lofty social and humane qualities. This proves that *the indicator of the degree of socialisation of an economy is not an infallible criterion of the maturity of socialism in a country.*

In method, the distinction drawn by Lenin between nationalisation and confiscation, on the one hand, and socialisation in fact, on the other, can be traced back to the Marxist teaching on the *formal and real subordination of labour to capital*. This warrants an at least brief examination.

When a peasant who had previously been independent and produced for himself becomes a day labourer working for the tenant; when the hierarchical division of producers in the guilds gives way to the antithesis between capitalist and artisan, whom the former compels to work as his hired hand; when the former slaveowner uses his former slaves as wage labourers, and so on, Marx writes, *socially otherwise determined* production processes turn into the capitalist process of production.<sup>1</sup>

Certainly, this 'socially otherwise determined' labour loses none of its relevance. This

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<sup>1</sup> See *Marx and Engels Archives*, Vol. 2 (7), pp. 90-91.

is why Marx names such subsumption of labour under capital as 'formal'. But the spread of capitalist relations levels its participants. They become agents of the purchase and sale of labour power, whereas 'within the process of production they confront each other as personified functionaries of the factors of this process, the capitalist as "capital" and the direct producer as "labour", and their relationship is determined by labour as the mere factor of self-increasing capital.'<sup>1</sup>

Experience shows that in the course of the socialist socialisation of production the victorious proletariat, too, has to deal with pre-industrial and pre-capitalist 'socially determined' processes of production (qualities, properties, and the like). The modes of production that capital subsumes only formally were still in existence in countries where socialist revolutions have occurred so far. And the more difficult their *real socialisation* has been, the more grounds there were to distinguish preliminary approaches to socialisation, the formally legal measures of the new power, from real socialisation (*socialisation in fact*).

Marx noted that no substantial change occurred in the methods of labour, the actual process of production, immediately after labour was subsumed by capital. On the contrary, in the beginning capital subsumed *the existing process of labour*, say, artisan labour or the method of farming corresponding to the small independent peasant farm.

The fact that labour becomes more intensive or that its duration is increased, that it be-

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*



comes less intermittent and more orderly under the supervision of the capitalist does not *per se* alter the nature of the *labour process, the actual method of labour*. This situation is in contrast to the later development in capitalist production of the specifically *capitalist method* (labour on a large scale, and so on), which *revolutionises* the method and real character of the whole labour process. In contrast to this labour transformed by capital Marx describes the subsumption by capital of the mode of production that existed before the appearance of capitalist relations as formal subsumption of labour by capital.<sup>1</sup>

One of the distinctions of labour subsumed by capital at least *formally* as compared with its previous state is, as Marx notes, the scale on which this labour is performed. 'What appears as the maximum on the basis of, say, guild production (e.g., as regards the number of journeymen),' he wrote, 'can hardly be the minimum under capitalist relations.... It is this expansion of the scale that forms the real basis on which, given other favourable historical conditions, the specifically capitalist mode of production arises'<sup>2</sup>. And need anything be said about the importance of expansion of the scale of social labour for socialism, the system that replaces capitalism.

Marx associates the emergence of the specifically capitalist mode of production with a revolution in technology, with machine production. 'The general characteristic of *formal subsumption* remains, id est, direct *subordina-*

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<sup>1</sup> *Marx and Engels Archives*, Vol. 2 (7), p. 90 (91),

<sup>2</sup> *Marx and Engels Archives*, p. (90) 91.

tion of the labour process, no matter how technologically performed, to capital,' he writes. 'But on this basis there arises a technologically and otherwise *specific* mode of production which transforms the *real nature of the labour process and its real conditions*.<sup>1</sup> And Marx amplifies: 'There develop the *social* productive forces of labour and with the larger scale of labour science and machinery get to be employed directly in production.'<sup>2</sup> Then he said: 'With the actual subsumption of labour by capital there is a whole revolution (which continues and repeats itself constantly) in the mode of production itself, in the productivity of labour and in the relationship of capitalist and worker.'<sup>3</sup>

At this stage there appear '*social* productive forces of labour or productive forces of directly *social, socialised* (common) labour; they appear through the cooperation or division of labour inside the workshop, use of *machinery* and, in general, the transformation of the production process into conscious use of natural science, mechanics, chemistry, etc., for definite purposes, *technology*, and so on, as well as the corresponding *labour on a large scale*, etc. (it is only this socialised labour that is able to use the common products of human development, such as mathematics, etc., in the direct process of production; whereas, on the other hand, the development of these sciences presupposes a definite level of the material process of production).'<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. (118) 119.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. (120) 121.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. (98) 99.

These are the productive forces that form the material and technical foundation and the scientific and technical potential on which the economic basis of socialist society can develop rapidly following the revolutionary substitution of public for private property. Only these productive forces can, after the working people headed by the working class come to power, be socialised in fact relatively quickly, without any delay at the stage of nationalisation, without formal socialisation, and the like. Not surprisingly, Lenin considered state capitalism permissible on certain terms under the dictatorship of the proletariat. More, he considered it closer to socialism than small-scale proprietary and private capitalist enterprise. For him state-monopoly capitalism was outright material preparation for socialism, the threshold to socialism.<sup>1</sup>

But what about the socialist revolution in countries that have, on a mass scale, gone no farther than formal subsumption of labour by capital and where subsumption in fact has shaped in only a small part of the economy?

Marxism-Leninism sees the key to this problem in nationalising industry and collectivising small-scale 'commodity production with the essential aim of raising them to a higher, modern technical level through sweeping electrification and mechanisation of production, securing scientific organisation of labour and management, and a steep rise of the cultural and technical level of the work

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<sup>1</sup> See the following works of Lenin: 'The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It', "'Left' Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality', 'The Tax in Kind'.

force. This, as we have said, is *essential*, and should never be forgotten or regarded as secondary. The building of socialism in the USSR and in most of the people's democracies has proved the worth of this approach.

There are those who think that it is enough to turn the means of production into collective property; then the transitional period is over and it only remains to bring the superstructure in line with the basis and go on directly to building communism. That is how the Chinese leaders conceived the process in the mid-fifties. And that in the sixties they changed their tune and began saying that the socialist stage with features of the transitional period would still last for dozens of years, perhaps centuries, confirms the fact that an important element was overlooked in the theoretical analysis in both cases.

'Socialism is impossible,' wrote Lenin on this score, 'unless it makes use of the achievements of the engineering and culture created by large-scale capitalism.... Only those are worthy of the name of Communists who understand that it is *impossible* to create or introduce socialism *without learning* from the organisers of the trusts.'<sup>1</sup>

The only correction history has made here, and one that would have benefited the Chinese leaders, is that they need not have adopted the experience of capitalist management of large-scale production, and should have taken account of the experience of planned *socialist* economic management already available in

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Left-Wing" Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 350.

the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. In all other respects the problem is the same. *A party carrying out socialisation where labour has predominantly reached no farther than the stage of formal subsumption by capital, must prevent this socialisation from becoming formal.*

The absence of the corresponding productive forces and culture and the related low intensity of social relations prevent the advantages of socialist ownership to assert themselves in full over private ownership. To put it figuratively, the primitive techniques of artisan production which, naturally, do not involve extensive use of science, have too much scope in the integument of socialist appropriation. In such a situation public ownership is a size too large or amounts to *social assimilation far in advance of technical assimilation*. This is probably one of the main contradictions of the emerging socialist way of life. The best way of consolidating it is to build a large-scale industrial scientific-technical potential. Conversely, it is easily crippled if this potential is neglected or subverted.

We know from a history that there were fads and extremes in the Soviet Union during the collectivisation of agriculture in the early thirties. One extreme was that kolkhozes were overestimated and idealised as a socialist form of organising the economy; it was thought to ensure good management, correct planning, and growth of model agricultural enterprises. 'The collective farm,' Stalin said at that time, 'is a socialist form of *economic* organisation just as the Soviets are a socialist form of political organization. Both collective farm and

Soviets are a tremendous achievement of our revolution, a tremendous achievement of the working class. But collective farms and Soviets are only a *form* of organisation—a socialist form, it is true, but only a *form* of organization for all that. Everything depends upon the *content* that is put into this form.<sup>1</sup> Stressing the political aspect, Stalin said that 'from the point of view of Leninism collective farms, like the Soviets, taken as a form of organisation, are a weapon, and only a weapon. Under certain conditions this weapon can be turned against the revolution.'<sup>2</sup> The likelihood of socialisation being used in this way, both economically and politically, has arisen in modern China. The drawn-out manipulations there with forms of social property, which are not given the corresponding content, manipulations directed exclusively to accumulating material resources for purposes hostile to the people and to socialism are in substance a petty-bourgeois variant of socialist forms of organising economy.<sup>3</sup> This is something to be reckoned with, something that has got to be studied and understood, for, among other things, petty-bourgeois nationalist reaction, along with reactionary im-

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<sup>1</sup> J. V. Stalin, 'Work in the Countryside. Speech Delivered on January 11, 1933', *Works*, Vol. 13, Moscow, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 233.

<sup>3</sup> By the mid-seventies military expenditure in the People's Republic of China was thrice that of 1960. Today, it amounts to nearly one-third of the budget. It exceeded total investments in the national economy and was several times greater than investments in industry (see *Ekonomicheskaya gazeta* (Moscow), No. 30, 1973, p. 21).

perialism, tends to be a source of international tension in present conditions.

A political leader who claims that 'speaking of property, socialist transformations are on the whole already completed' (Mao Tse-tung) ought to make sure beforehand whether the process of socialisation has really run its course and is really serving the needs of the working people. In China's case, public ownership brought economic relations into line with the level and character of only part of the productive forces, those created by capitalistic machine production. *For their bigger part, socialisation created a disalignment, and it was not production or economic relations that were behind, this time, but precisely the productive forces, based as they were on routine technology.* Historically, it was the productive forces that had to be raised to the level of the new economic organisation.

Restricting consumption and maximally reducing the 'necessary product'<sup>1</sup> while enlarging the 'surplus product' is one of the leading trends in the economic policy of the present Chinese leadership. However conventional these concepts of capitalist political economy may be in reference to a socialist type of society (in which, if it functions normally, both the 'surplus' and 'necessary' products belong to everybody, with the former differing from the latter only in that they are consumed not individually but collectively), they are wholly warranted for the situation in China.

The Maoist regime has gone out of its way

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<sup>1</sup> The average monthly wage of 54 yuan did not rise from 1958 to 1971 (see *Ekonomicheskaya gazeta*, No. 30, 1973, p. 21).

to keep socialist property at the stage of formal socialisation. It did so by delaying industrialisation and outright deindustrialisation; by unleashing a drawn-out and brutal counter-revolution in the cultural field speciously styled a 'great proletarian cultural revolution', and by channelling tremendous resources into nuclear armaments, the last thing the Chinese people need. This is dragging down the already low living standard. It could be reasonably explained and justified if the matter concerned necessary defence. But what can be said of colossal spending in the name of nationalistic prestige, totally senseless from the socialist point of view? In terms of its impact on the material condition of the working people it is hardly different from the exploiter's parasitical appropriation of the surplus product. Such is the logic of a petty-bourgeois disposal of public property in means of production.

Given the formal subsumption of labour to capital that prevailed in China before the revolution, with pre-machine routine technology dominating, 'surplus value can be produced only by *lengthening working time*, or, in effect, in the form of absolute surplus value'.<sup>1</sup> But under the specifically capitalist mode of production there are also other ways of obtaining surplus value. Given a developed technical basis, which capitalism creates by itself, surplus value is obtained by intensifying labour. 'Real subsumption of labour by capital,' Marx writes, 'develops in all the forms that produce relative, as distinct

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<sup>1</sup> *Marx and Engels Archives, Op. cit.*, p. (94) 95.



from absolute, surplus value.<sup>1</sup> In our time monopoly capital finds various concealed forms of exploitation, profiting from the latest achievements of the scientific and technical revolution and seeking to benefit from the increasingly productive effects of intellectual activity.

To further the aims they have set themselves at the existing social and economic level of China, the Peking leaders have had to reproduce (and this was more easily done by inertia than by introducing new principles), in conditions of socialised production, the pattern of obtaining surplus value typical when labour is formally subordinated to capital. In this respect, they were in a sense heirs to the pre-revolutionary practice. But despite this striking resemblance of new and old, the cardinal difference is that now China has a different, in essence collectivist, structure of property, a 'skeleton' of the socialist basis, which could, given a correct policy, easily eliminate this resemblance. In other words, if obtaining absolute surplus value had been objectively necessary in the capitalist framework, at present it is merely the effect of subjectivist practices. It is the result of the activity of the social-militaristic regime of Mao's successors, its economic foundation, and can be removed by altering internal and foreign policy and the methods of leadership.

When real subsumption of labour by capital predominates (e.g. in the economically developed capitalist countries), post-revolutionary socialisation has *one and only one direction*,

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. (120) 121.

leading to the consolidation of social property with all the concomitant social and economic consequences (from changing the aim of production to changing cultural policy).

When real and formal subsumption of labour by capital exists side by side (as in capitalist countries at a medium level of development, as in Russia in 1917 and in some Latin American countries today), the situation is less simple: along with the above-mentioned direction there is a *second* one, where nationalisation is not the effect but the premise for the creation of socialist productive forces. This aim is not necessarily tackled at once. It takes a certain time before the formal socialisation of part of the economy turns into real socialisation through industrialisation and cultural development, and the country becomes a wholly developed socialist land.

Lastly, if due to a country's backwardness formal subsumption of labour by capital predominates or, still worse, there are remnants of pre-capitalist structures not yet integrated in the system of capitalist economy, socialisation of property by the people's power does not yet mean that the socialist transformations are complete. On the contrary, this is when they can only begin to unfold in depth. Though the *visible* transitional period, associated with the elimination of private property and settlement of the issue of who beats whom in favour of the working people, is over, the process of socialisation continues. Labour formally subsumed or not yet subsumed by capital can be socialised at first only formally. Due to the weakness and dispersion of the

production resources working people cannot use the tangible fruits of socialisation. One more stage is needed to fill the integument of socialist property with socialist productive forces and socialist culture.

## 2. Socialism as One Whole

In the Soviet Union the victory of socialism was secured in the latter half of the thirties. Nearly forty years of heroic labour and struggle have passed since then. The Soviet economy of that time and the present-day economy are based on one and the same type of production relations and follow the same, socialist, economic laws. But important new elements distinguish the present-day economy from that of the late thirties. Seen from this angle, the building of developed socialist society is, in substance, equivalent to achieving *a high degree of real socialisation of labour*. Its main criteria are the following.

To begin with, a *new scale of the national economy*, enormous economic power based on a diversified industry and large-scale socialist agriculture, advanced science, a skilled work force, highly qualified specialists and managers.

Then, the much greater *opportunities and resources*, coupled with society's rising demands on the economy. One of these new demands is to devote ever more energy and funds to work for the *wellbeing of the people*, while also ensuring a margin for future economic growth, technically re-equipping production, and allocating large sums for science and education.

The demands on planning, management, and methods of management are also rising speedily in view of the rapid scientific-technical revolution and the Soviet Union's active involvement in the integration of the socialist world economy.

Studying the current problems of building communism from the angle of the historical creative initiative of the masses, the 25th Congress of the CPSU called attention to the specific operation of the law of the socialisation of labour in the present-day Soviet economy.

But does this mean that the process of socialisation has been completed in all respects? Certainly not. The technical, technological and organisational socialisation of production is continuing. This is evidenced by changes and improvements in its specialisation and cooperation. There are new types of 'merged' enterprises belonging to different forms of socialist property. Not only theoretical research but also daily practice involving many millions of people shows that the level of the socialisation of economy continues to rise in developed socialist society.

The steadily continuing socialisation of labour is that deep-down process on which the emergence of communist relations of production reposes under socialism. Closely associated with the growing scale of socialist production, socialisation expresses itself in the concentration of production, especially rapid in industry.

The socialisation of labour introduces far-reaching changes into the agrarian cooperative sector of the socialist economy. Its develop-

ment rests on an ever broader use of the country's general economic potential and the establishment of various types of associations— involving either several kolkhozes, or several state farms (known as sovkhoses), or both. This form of organising production expedites the maturing of socialist property relations in the countryside.

Of the more palpable tendencies accompanying the socialisation of labour and causing far-reaching changes in a broad range of social relations and, consequently, in people's way of life, the following are the most pronounced:

—*industrialisation*, which has reached from the sphere of production into the sphere of everyday life, especially with the new types of housing, and the broad introduction of up-to-date domestic appliances on the basis of the country's sweeping electrification;

—*urbanisation*, which means a reconstruction of man's environment, of the sphere of his daily life activity, and the means of satisfying his needs; the spread of the highest-grade conveniences of modern living and splendid facilities for man's leisure. The determining influence here was exercised by the gradual eradication of the antithesis of town and country, on the one hand, and the radically improved conditions of city life, on the other;

—*internationalisation* of the life of society, based on the common features natural for socialist society, a society without class or national antagonisms; these features are taking ever deeper root with the increasingly intensive cooperation within large, medium-sized

and small multinational collectives, and the constant friendly exchange of activity, and of material and spiritual values, between the Soviet nations;

—*integration* in the field of social relations based on the above-mentioned basic tendencies and expressed in a progressive convergence of the working class, the kolkhoz peasantry and the people's intelligentsia, and the elimination of the remaining substantial distinctions between town and country and between manual and mental labour.

*Industrialisation* in the above broad sense was examined by the 25th Congress of the CPSU in relation to the goal of accelerating scientific and technical progress. Congress produced a fundamental and far-reaching Marxist-Leninist formula, which related this process to changes in social relations.

The present-day scientific-technical revolution offers society unprecedented opportunities for using science to harness and protect the forces of nature, and to solve the social problems. In view of the ever greater impact of industrial development on man's environment, Congress also dealt with the problem of the socialist use of nature. This proved possible by virtue of the scientific and technical revolution under way in the Soviet scientifically organised society that is building communism, the most humane of all social-economic systems.

*Urbanisation* as a social problem was treated by the 25th Congress in the light of the general task, set by Lenin, of combining industry and agriculture through conscious use of science, and combining collective labour and

a new resettlement of people with the battle against the seclusion of village life, its isolation from the outside world and against the concentration of gigantic populations in large cities. Congress examined the ideological and political, as well as economic, aspects of the *internationalisation* of the life of society. The economic and social progress of Soviet society is progress in the Russian Federation, the Ukraine and Kazakhstan, Byelorussia and Moldavia, the Central Asian republics, the Baltic republics, and the republics of Transcaucasia. The single economy that has taken shape within the boundaries of the Soviet Union is a dependable material foundation for the friendship and cooperation of the nations living in the USSR.

An examination of *social integration* in developed socialist society demonstrates the present state of class relations and the process of overcoming the basic class distinctions in the Soviet Union. Lenin's proposition on the working class being the main guarantor of the achievement of a classless society is coming true in the course of communist construction. In the conditions of developed socialism this proposition reposes on two mutually complementary processes.

*On the one hand*, the finest social-political and moral features of the working class are spreading to the kolkhoz peasantry, the people's intelligentsia, and all sections of the working people in step with the unfolding of the scientific-technical revolution, the building of the material and technical basis of communism, the convergence of the two socialist forms of property—that of the whole

people and the cooperative form—and the moulding of the communist attitude to labour and to the wealth of society.

*On the other hand*, serious quantitative and qualitative changes are taking place within the working class itself: it has become the most numerous class in Soviet society, its educational standards, professional skills, and political activeness are rising continuously. The notion of a worker's being someone engaged in purely manual labour is hopelessly outdated. Nowadays, not only growth of the country's material wealth, but also growth of its intellectual potential are inconceivable without the direct participation of the working class—the leading social force, an active fighter for scientific and technical progress, and the subject of massive scientific and technical initiative. For this reason the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, which is a fundamental principle of the socialist system, has now, in effect, shaped into a close 'alliance of the scientists, the proletariat and the technologists' that, as Lenin envisaged, has emerged in socialist conditions.<sup>1</sup>

These are some of the premises for the important theoretical conclusion of the 25th Congress of the CPSU concerning the new historical community, namely, the Soviet people, which reposes on the indestructible alliance of the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia with the working class at their head, and on friendship of all nations

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'Speech Delivered at the Second All-Russia Congress of Medical Workers, March 1, 1920', *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 402.



and nationalities of the USSR. This is how the Communist Party of the Soviet Union visualises the present stage of the advance to the social homogeneity of Soviet society and to the programme aim of social equality.

Here, attention should be drawn to the vistas opening for researchers with the introduction in Party documents of the concept of 'the new historical community—the Soviet people.' Everything that occurred in the social structure of the Soviet population was, as a rule, considered in the light of the evolution of relations between the working class, the kolkhoz peasantry and people's intelligentsia, the changes in their quantitative and qualitative composition, and the processes of their development and convergence. But there is this other fruitful approach: analysis of social processes not from the particular to the general but vice versa, from the common features that the Soviet people has already acquired as a social and international entity (for it is in this framework that the classless society is taking shape) and from the standpoint of extending and consolidating those of its features that correspond with the finest qualities of the working class, with its socialist interests and communist ideals.

This review of the specific features of developed socialism is probably too brief to produce an exhaustive picture. But we did not set out to produce an exhaustive picture. Our review shows—and that is all that it was intended to show—that the features envisaged by Marx are surfacing more and more distinctly in Soviet society. People want to

know whether developed socialism is ultimately destined to coincide in its main features with Marx's vision or whether progress will follow some other trajectory? Many people ask this question, and answer it variously.

From the very beginning, we may recall, communism was visualised by Marxists-Leninists as *a classless social system with one type of ownership of the means of production, that of the whole people*. This prompts the following theoretical and political question: when, in the historical framework of which phase, does society acquire this quality?

Indeed, if socialism can exist *only* on the basis of two forms of property and if communism is impossible unless there is the single form of property of the whole people, how are we to conceive the *transition* from the former state of society to the latter? We seem to have the choice of either recognising the necessity for bringing together and merging the two forms of property, for overcoming the distinctions between classes, when *still* in the socialist stage (evidently directly before passing to communism) *or* of recognising that these problems are solvable only under communism.

In the first case we would have to assume in the socialist phase a *stage of complete socialisation* of the means of production in the framework of an already classless social structure, while the second allows for a 'communism' with two forms of property and with division into classes. As a result, at least *two* mistakes are made: *first*, for some reason we take what is said of socialism in the ideal 'model' of Marx, Engels and Lenin as impos-

sible even in the final count; *second*, the Marxist-Leninist idea of the distinctions between the higher and lower phases of the communist social system is considerably distorted.

Surely, in the light of the practical and theoretical experience accumulated so far the feasibility of the scientific vision of socialism should be viewed differently now from, say, 15 or 20 years ago. And the judgement may be based on the example of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries seeking to build developed socialism, on the one hand, and on the example of the developed capitalist countries that are economically and culturally best prepared for socialist reconstruction.

The fact that the mass of the people in the USSR is being intensively integrated with property in the means of production shows the direction of progress.

To be sure, this does not mean that the cooperative form of socialist economy is no longer relevant or is about to become so. Due to the rapid growth of the services industry and of its importance in the life of society it may be necessary to use the group method of socialist association and, therefore, to promote rather than roll up the cooperative sector—not in the countryside as before, but in the city. Here, however, we are dealing with agriculture, a definite field of production in which certain definite and obvious tendencies have now come to the fore.

Certain quarters in the West tend to dissociate themselves from the 'Soviet model' of socialism, giving preference to some as yet

untested 'model' for highly-developed countries. But their disquisitions on this score smack of scholasticism, because their ideal 'model' is still in the not very effective drafting stage, while in the Soviet Union socialist society has existed and made visible headway for dozens of years. Besides, history has already adjusted and 'shaken down' the new system, so that socialism, when it triumphs in countries where it will replace economically developed capitalism, will differ from the Soviet system in just those points which Marxist-Leninists do not consider decisive but which anti-communists seek to portray as an insuperable watershed.

The practice of developed socialist society bears out Lenin's thought concerning the worldwide influence of our example both in the broad sense of the impact on other countries of all the basic and many of the secondary features of the October Revolution and 'in the narrowest sense of the word, taking international significance to mean the international validity or the historical inevitability of a repetition, on an international scale, of what has taken place in our country'.<sup>1</sup>

If we were to attempt some sort of prognosis of what will happen in the economically developed capitalist countries following a socialist revolution, we should assume in the case at least of most of them a somewhat different structure of public property and a somewhat different social structure from that of the USSR and the other socialist countries. Where

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder', *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 21.

in the structure of capitalist society the peasantry has been reduced to the minimum and the class of small producers consists of artisans and workers of the services industry and distributive sphere, we may expect the cooperative type of socialist property to figure for a more or less considerable period in mainly the so-called non-productive sphere.

Since socialisation on a countrywide scale will from the start be of a broader nature than in countries that set out on the road to socialism from medium-level or only slightly developed capitalism, or even from the pre-capitalist stage, it is safe to assume a greater degree of similarity to Marx's blueprint. On the other hand, since the cooperative form of property will encompass a fairly large mass of service workers, which in some countries surpasses the productive work force, they will face a problem much like the one facing those socialist countries that have a considerable cooperative sector. In any case, there will for a long time still be empirical material to which those questioning the Marxian 'model' of socialism will be able to refer. But life and socialisation are sure to come into their own in the long run.

Some people draw a line between Lenin's vision of socialism and that of Marx and Engels. They claim that Lenin devoted incomparably more attention than his great predecessors to the problems of economic policy in the era of proletarian dictatorship. They seize on the fact—and this does, indeed, strike the eye—that socialism is much more dependent than visualised in theory on cate-

gories such as commodity, value, price, money, and so on, to service its planned economy. But as we have endeavoured to show (in chapter 2), Marx's vision was wholly realistic, considering that he had no other material to go by *save his own anticipation*. To understand Marx better, we ought to recall that, as he saw it, commodity-value categories lose their *essential* meaning for society and do not reflect the *qualitative* side of economic and other social relations after capitalist private property and the commodity nature of labour power, the culmination point in the historical development of commodity production, are finally abolished. Whether they survive in the above sense or are replaced by more effective instruments of commercial responsibility and economic stimulation (many Socialists thought, for example, that they would be replaced by work hours, and the like) must have seemed irrelevant from the summits of Marx's methodology. Nor could it seem otherwise. Marx was interested in the *historically conditioned* content of the matter, not in the economic organisational aspect. As for Lenin, he added to the former conception and filled out Marxism with a doctrine on the latter.

The fact that Lenin is recognised a faithful follower of the Marxian concept of socialism does not detract from his own contribution to scientific communism. If there are discrepancies, these are just that Marx and Engels were masters of scientific prognosis and theorists of a *consummated* socialist society (in the philosophical sense, that is, one which in the process of *consummation* acquired all

the essential features possible in the framework of one quality). To Lenin, on the other hand, it fell to develop and, by virtue of varied experience, put the finishing touches to the 'model' of the future created by Marx and Engels, to work out the theory of *emerging* socialism—notably the political economy of the transitional period, the economic policy of the proletarian dictatorship, the teaching on the functioning and development of the socialist social system, and the fundamentals of running it.

The need for strict continuity in the development of Marxism-Leninism is no more dogmatic than the conclusions drawn by Lenin are a revision of Marxian propositions. Simply, the frontiers of the epoch in which scientific communism is being applied have widened. This does not lessen the *heuristic value* for the future of Marx's analysis of capitalism or his vision of socialism. They are still a dependable antidote for the methodologically impotent attempts condemned by Lenin at obfuscating the political-economic and social-political content of the issue with hundreds of technical details.

Socialism is incomplete communism. But like the first phase of the new social system it has not so far taken on mature forms in all spheres and has nowhere yet come to the wholly complete and consummate state when it 'sublates' itself and becomes communism. Attempts at raising some stage of it to an absolute are incompatible with the dialectical and historical materialist method, and hem in the potential of theoretical search and the horizons of practical activity. And they are

especially unacceptable if they contrast hastily generalised practice, practice limited by nation-state frameworks, over a relatively short term, to scientific anticipation (often poorly studied and inaccurately interpreted) of the basic features of the new society, as outlined in the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin. To 'finalise' the classical prognoses there must be immaculately justified grounds, lest the result leads to an unjustified replacement of the many-coloured spectrum with just the two or three colours of a national flag, whereupon the hasty conclusions will later have to be dropped all the same.

Socialism as such (after its complete victory, of course—that is, after the transitional period is over) is a long stage in the process of the new society's final transformation into communist society. It does not claim, nor can claim, to be an independent social-economic system, because both scientifically and in practice it is but a phase in which social relations and forms of consciousness accumulated by mankind in its pre-history are overcome, abolished, or transformed—a phase in which the sprouts of a *conscious historical way of life*, a fundamentally new organisation of human community and culture—communism, communist civilisation—are systematically and deliberately cultivated.

Study of the highly diverse 60 years of experience of socialist and communist construction in the Soviet Union offers extensive opportunities for both a retrospective and prognostic vision of history. The important point here is that the Soviet Union has covered the greatest distance so far on the road to the



end goal of the working class. Among other things, this justifies use of the Soviet example in attempting to divide *the first phase of communism into periods*. Assuming, as we have said before, that the stage of socialist development can follow the lines drawn by Marx, these periods could be the following.

1. First of all, there is the *period of transition* from capitalism to socialism, a period in history whose *economic* content is to consolidate socialist forms of economy and the corresponding social pattern in society, and whose *political* content is dictatorship of the proletariat. The necessary juridical socialisation acquires ever greater economic and social content during this period as the material and technical basis corresponding to socialism (if society did not have it before) is being built. This may take longer than just the transitional period if building the material and technical basis of socialism takes longer than nationalisation and cooperation of production.

2. *The transitional period and the full victory of socialism* is followed by a period in which the new social-economic forms are consolidated, the productive forces are brought up to date and other problems are solved, securing *socialisation in fact*. Socialism proves its superiority over capitalism in the *given* country by securing a higher level of labour productivity than that before the revolution.<sup>1</sup> A non-antagonistic social structure takes sha-

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<sup>1</sup> The pre-revolutionary productivity of labour was not surpassed in the Soviet Union until the early half of the thirties.

pe, consisting of friendly classes, strata and groups of a socialist nature.

3. *Developed socialism*, which continues socialisation in breadth and depth, eliminates its formal elements and leads in its final stage to a communist structure of property and a corresponding social structure; organic fusion of the achievements of the scientific-technical revolution and the socialist economic system serves as its techno-economic foundation. As a definite period of history it breaks down into two less protracted stages:

a) the stage of the convergence of the two forms of socialist property, their fusion under the impact of the rising material and technical basis of communism, coinciding with the intensive eradication of class distinctions which, nevertheless, are still substantial;

b) the stage when socialist property of the whole people becomes all-embracing and society becomes classless, i.e., 'when there is no distinction between the members of society as regards their relation to the social means of production'<sup>1</sup>; this does not yet, however, signify final transformation into a socially homogeneous society.

Judging by the rate of the transformations now under way, these aims will take a relatively shorter time than achieving complete social homogeneity as a precondition of communist equality.

This is because, judging from the current pace, the above transformations will take less time to complete than to overcome the

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<sup>1</sup> Lenin, 'The State and Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 462.

remnants of the old division of labour into mental and physical, creative and reproductive (mechanical), organisational and executive. Yet this, according to Marx, Engels and Lenin, is a crucial watershed between the first and second phases of communism.

'Politically, the distinction between the first, or lower, and the higher phase of communism will in time, probably, be tremendous,' Lenin wrote shortly before the October Revolution. 'But it would be ridiculous to recognise this distinction now, under capitalism, and only individual anarchists, perhaps, could invest it with primary importance....'<sup>1</sup> Nowadays, however, in the conditions of developed socialism, it is a sign of a truly serious attitude to the problems of building communism to examine the tremendous political difference between the first and second phases of communism.

It was no accident that Lenin referred to *political* distinctions. During the gradual passage to the second phase of communism, it is the very basis and source of politics—the class structure of society—that undergoes radical change. Functions that had earlier been political are inherited by a system of administration that still retains the characteristics of a state but expresses interests of the working class that have become the interests of the whole people; it still needs a specialised full-time administrative staff but gradually acquires features of self-administration by the whole people.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 470.

The difference in quality between socialism and communism chiefly concerns labour relations and relations of distribution. Communism is impossible until there is an abundance of material and cultural goods meeting the diverse needs of harmoniously developed individuals. It is also impossible until the mass of the people is ready to work irrespective of earnings, that is, until labour becomes a prime need of the spirit for the majority and until they learn to regulate all their other needs sensibly. These problems are politically important because they are decisive for control over the measure of labour and the measure of consumption—the chief function of the socialist state—and because the introduction of communist distribution according to need also depends on them, meaning the end of the socialist phase and the beginning of the higher phase of communism.

It is said sometimes that Marx and Engels visualised communism as a system organised practically on identical lines in both phases. But this is a misconception. The organisation of production based on state enterprises and cooperatives and the organisation of production based exclusively on ownership of the means of production by the whole people cannot be identical; the organisation of an economy based on distribution according to labour and thus requiring control over the measure of labour and the measure of consumption and of an economy based on distribution according to need and no longer needing such control cannot be identical; a state economy (under socialism) and an economy without a state, a self-managing economy

that will evolve under communism (once the danger of outside capitalist restoration is lifted) cannot be identical.

The passage from the first type of organisation to the second requires, among other material and productive conditions, a manifold increase of the intellectual and creative content of the labour of the bulk of the productive work force and also requires, with the growth of large-scale industry, that 'the creation of true wealth', to quote Marx, should be 'less dependent on working time and on the quantity of expended labour than on the power of those agents which are set in motion during the working time and which themselves, in turn (their powerful effectiveness), do not correspond to the direct working time needed for making them, and rather depend on the general level of science and the progress of technology or on the use of this science in production.'<sup>1</sup>

The myth about the identical organisation of socialism and communism collapses when you look at the problem of social equality. Socialism is a still imperfect communist society 'which is *compelled* to abolish at first *only* the "injustice" of the means of production seized by individuals, and which is *unable* at once to eliminate the other injustice, which consist in the distribution of consumer goods "according to the amount of labour performed" (and not according to needs).'<sup>2</sup> 'And so,' Lenin wrote, 'in the first phase of communist society (usually called socialism)

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse...*, *Op. cit.*, p. 592.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'The State and Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 466.

"bourgeois right" is *not* abolished in its entirety, but only in part, only in proportion to the economic revolution so far attained, i.e., only in respect of the means of production.<sup>1</sup> Certainly, this 'extent' is not constant. The consolidation of socialism and the emergence of communist social relations extend these limits. The historical qualitative leap prepared by all preceding growth leads to the repeal of the above-mentioned legal regulators *also in relation to objects of consumption*. This is only a different way of expressing the passage to communism which, due to the above-mentioned change, must be organised *in an essentially different way* than socialism.

Any feature distinguishing socialism from communism that we may take, is also associated with human nature, the qualities of the mass of the people that, being qualities *precisely of the mass*, are an objective factor of development. The Central Committee report to the 24th Congress of the CPSU stressed: 'A great project—the building of communism—cannot be advanced without the harmonious development of man himself. Communism is inconceivable without a high level of culture, education, sense of civic duty and inner maturity of people just as it is inconceivable without the appropriate material and technical basis.'<sup>2</sup>

This basis can play its historical role only as part of the communist productive forces, the main one of which is *man*. How the emer-

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p. 467.

<sup>2</sup> *24th Congress of the CPSU, Documents*, Moscow, 1971, p. 100.

ging material conditions of communism will 'function' depends on the extent to which they are oriented on the progress of communism. Moulding man with a scientific, Marxist-Leninist, world outlook and skills of administering the affairs of society, with a high level of general and professional culture, a highly developed need for creative labour and the ability to use the benefits of socialism and communism sensibly, is a proposition that will take many years. The way this proposition is handled by different generations of builders of the new society has some specific features. Yet all generations must effectively meet one requirement: the individual has less and less grounds to regard himself a passive product of circumstances, and his development may be rationally understood only in the light of *revolutionary practice*, namely, as a coinciding change in circumstances and in human activity.

Socialism as the first phase of communism is the beginning of a truly collective life of nations. The objective grounds for this are:

—technics, technology, and modern machine production, which predetermine joint unintermittent and intensive labour of large masses of people;

—collective, social appropriation of the means, objects, and products of labour, coupled with determination of the contribution of each worker to the sum of material and spiritual goods in direct relation to the quantity and quality of the work done by each;

—practice of the principles of the socialist way of life first of all by the working class, the motivated mass bearer of collectivist

principles, labour ethics and the spirit of collective cooperation.

Of course, socialist society has not yet fully uprooted remnants of individualism. They surface quite visibly from time to time. But this does not alter the essence of socialism as a truly collectivist system which secures this essential property in the entire system of social relations and institutions, the type of culture, and the standards of morality and law.

The Communist Party concentrates attention on the economic indicators of the maturity of socialism, both the initial and the basic. But it does not confine itself to just this. It is impossible to judge more or less conclusively about a developed social system by just one factor, however important it may be. Because it is a system. The other signs of socialism's maturity, apart from the economic ones, must also be analysed.

These days most Soviet sociologists consider fruitful, though needing much additional research, the way shown by Marx in reference to the formation of any new social system. 'It must be remembered,' he wrote, 'that the new productive forces and relations of production do not develop out of nothing, not out of the air or the womb of any self-assumed idea; they develop inside and in conflict with the existing development of production and the inherited, traditional property relations.'<sup>1</sup> This determines the link of the new system with the past, the elements of continuity, and the negation of the past.

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse...*, *Op. cit.*, p. 189.



Marx continues: 'If in a consummated bourgeois system every economic relation presupposes another in a bourgeois economic form and thus every proposition is also a premise, then this is the case with every organic system. This organic system itself as a totality has its preconditions, and its development towards totality consists precisely in subordinating all elements of society or in creating organs that are still missing. In this way, in the course of historical development, the system turns into a totality. The emergence of this totality is a moment of its process, of its development.'<sup>1</sup>

These propositions are evidently also applicable to socialism. After its full victory and, consequently, its growth into an 'organic' social system, each socialist social-economic relation presupposes (to an increasing degree) other relations and is their precondition, while simultaneously flowing out of them as its own precondition. The socialist system, too, tends to become a definite qualitative totality, subordinating to its principles and norms different spheres of social life one after the other, and forcing out all kinds of recurrences of the proprietary system, all kinds of alien social phenomena.

Socialism's organic social system growing into a totality, the core of which is an in fact socialised economy, is increasingly marked by a natural mutual correspondence between its parts and elements, which gradually spreads to a wide spectrum of relations of production—technical and technological, admi-

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

nistrative and economic—and in general to the whole set of social relations—relations of production, socio-political and ethico-legal, material and ideological relations. The stage when the system becomes a totality is the stage of developed socialism. At this stage all elements of society's way of life are already converted to collectivist principles and the homogeneity of 'direct' and 'reverse' links is already apparent.

'Developed socialism..., ' L. I. Brezhnev said in his report on the draft Constitution of the USSR and the results of its countrywide discussion, is 'that stage of maturity of the new society at which the structuring of the entire system of social relations on the collectivist principles intrinsic to socialism is being completed. Hence the full scope for the operation of the laws of socialism, for bringing to the fore its advantages in all spheres of the life of society. Hence the organic integrity and dynamic force of the social system, its political stability, its indestructible inner unity. Hence the drawing ever closer together of all classes and social groups, all the nations and nationalities, and the formation of a historically new social and international community, the Soviet people. Hence the emergence of a new, socialist culture, the establishment of a new, socialist way of life.'<sup>1</sup>

The gravitation towards integrity, while wholly in harmony with the law of the socialisation of labour and production, also im-

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<sup>1</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, *On the Draft Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Results of the Nationwide Discussion of the Draft*, Moscow, 1977, p. 25.

plies headway, on the basis of the industrialisation of all economic branches, of the convergence processes of the cooperative property form and property of the whole people, of culture and life in town and country, establishment of an identical relation to the means of production of workers, peasants and the intelligentsia, and a gradual eradication of social distinctions between classes and between mental and manual labour. Those are the socially-based premises. This accords with socialism's growth in its developed stage into a totality, with the growth of socialist democracy and the workers' state into democracy and the state of the whole people—an important step closer to future communist public self-administration.

A substantial role in the development of socialist social relations is played by the consciousness in general, and state legislation in particular. Legislation stimulates the processes of knowing existing social relations, on the one hand, and, on the other, helps improve them by making some of them a standard sanctioned by state and people. Now, after the new USSR Constitution has entered into force, a political, juridical and methodological foundation has been secured for the further elaboration of Soviet legislation.

The active codification of socialist social relations and of many norms of morality and the way of life shows that they are gradually approaching maturity. The now emerging single system of legislative acts proves the integrity of developed socialist society, which the 25th Congress of the CPSU described

as gradually growing into communist society.

The development of socialism is accompanied with the gradual surfacing and growth of its advantages over the proprietary system. The striving of the socialist nations to surpass capitalism in all economic and cultural areas is natural and necessary, and the successes achieved are apparent: the rates of long-term economic growth are high and stable, there is stable employment, the standard of living is rising steadily and according to plan, the mass of the people have unimpeded access to spiritual values, and are guaranteed personal rights and freedoms, which are fully reflected in the new Soviet Constitution. Even with the so far relatively lower productive potential, the socialist system is able to afford cumulatively more material and spiritual goods to the working people than capitalism, and better social opportunities and prospects. The rising quantitative results and the competition in raising the quality of consumer goods, however, must not obscure the main thing: *the characteristic content of the socialist way of life, its social-psychological climate*, the synthetic conception of the conditions of work and life, of man's inner world and his relations with other people, which under capitalism breed pessimism and under socialism, on the contrary, produce *social optimism*.

Take the abolition of exploitation of man by man in socialist countries. Its tremendous beneficial effect on the creative and moral qualities of the citizens of the new society is incontestable. They know nothing of the dispiriting and crippling effects of economic,

political and national oppression and discrimination which are an inescapable elements of life in exploiting societies.

The relatively prosperous sections of working people in the industrialised capitalist countries pay a high price for their material well-being. Only partly can it be expressed in terms of money; *neither can the social stress and chronic social-cultural underconsumption* be defined in terms of quantity. The bourgeoisie would like nothing better than to conceal this, because paying the bill in full would spell bankruptcy for it. Precisely this is what Gus Hall had in mind when he said at the 24th Congress of the CPSU that 'what is placed on the scales now is the overall quality of life. Standards of physical comforts remain very important in determining the quality of life, but the yardstick is much broader now. It includes the total spectrum of human values, the order of priorities, dictated by the inherent laws of each system. It includes the moral cultural and philosophical concepts nurtured by each system. Many of the new components that add up to a quality of life cannot be measured by charts.'<sup>1</sup> It is in this broad and solely correct comparison of the two systems that socialism—as an integrity—demonstrates and will ever more convincingly demonstrate its unquestionable advantages.

In abstract terms, any human community—be it society as a whole, a generation, a nation, or a class—has *productive* capacity, i.e., a definite sum-total of means and objects of

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<sup>1</sup> *Our Friends Speak. Greetings to the 24th CPSU Congress, Moscow, 1971, pp. 344-45.*

labour, skills and habits, power capacities, and the like, on the one hand, and a historically conditioned *consumer* capacity, on the other. It is typical of exploiting antagonistic class society to place these capacities at different poles and to allocate the productive duties mainly to the have-nots, and the opportunities of using consumer benefits mainly to the owners of the means of production. This establishes the measure of needs imposed on the oppressed class by the norms and forms of consumption suiting the interests of the exploiters—at first ascetically primitive, then programmed by omnipresent advertising, while the dominant class is given unrestricted scope for luxury and new, refined types of enjoyment. Marx wrote that ‘the enjoyments themselves are indeed nothing but social enjoyments, relations, connections.’<sup>1</sup>

Socialism as the social system of the working people abolishes this contradiction inasmuch as it abolishes exploitation in general. But this does not mean that the problem of needs loses urgency. On the contrary, now everybody gains the opportunity to satisfy them in keeping with the capacity of social production and the personal creative contribution to the common labour of the association. Now it is this contribution that determines personal wellbeing and worth. Again, we see the principle of the totality of the organic social system, which concerns all social phenomena and processes that must ultimately be coordinated and aligned with

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, ‘Wages’. In: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 422.

one another. This is why the interests and needs are measured differently than under capitalism.

In the new society full scope is given to *the law of heightening needs* discovered by Lenin, according to which the spectrum of intellectual, socio-cultural and creative needs expands relative to the satisfaction of sensibly comprehended 'needs of existence'. In the final analysis, this is the law that makes the need for meaningful and socially useful labour a prime and vital need of the individual. Which means that *for the new man labour acquires the social property of a use value.*

Socialism has borne out Marx's prediction that the negation of the negation, such as the socialist revolution, 'does not re-establish private property for the producer, but gives him individual property based on the acquisitions of the capitalist era: *i.e.*, on co-operation and the possession in common of the land and of the means of production'.<sup>1</sup> The nature of socialism is hostile to acquisitiveness, to the lust for personal comfort, and to living beyond one's means. That there still are individuals who, besides socialist sources of income (*i.e.*, distribution according to labour), also have 'extra' earnings from profiteering, deceiving customers, filling private orders with state-owned machinery, from bribes, and the like—all this is, as a rule, the consequence of sometimes insufficiently effective ideological and educational work, on the one hand, and of poor public control, administrative oversight, and neglect of law-

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 715.

enforcement agencies, on the other. Still, *in the conditions of developed socialism things must be so arranged as to make the formation of personal property completely and forever independent of non-socialist forms of income.* All channels through which these things occur must be put under control and locked, and so secure the high *density* of socialist social relations without which communism is inconceivable.



# SOCIALISM IN THE SOCIAL-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE TRANSITIONAL EPOCH

### 1. Modern Forms of the Realm of Freedom

Until recently Marxist literature did not often call attention to the distinction between societies in the act of transition from capitalism to socialism and societies that have already passed the transitional stage. Both were called socialist, which was sooner a political description that *defined their aim but not their current state*. The importance of the latter point, however, was brought home by the problems that arose in the sixties in the search of an optimum combination of the general, internationalist interests of the socialist world with the specific interests of the separate countries that were part of it. If we want to resolve these problems we cannot visualise the past, present and future in a 'monotonous grey' and cannot afford any dogmatic canonisation of forms of organisation anywhere.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism', *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 70.

The fraternal parties that have taken the responsibility of guiding the construction of the new society, naturally benefit from one another's experience and cannot fulfil their mission unless they verify their own progress with that of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. But far from eliminating, this only accentuates the need for comparing all the concrete-historical societies building socialism with one another and with the theoretical vision of the new system in the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin. This brings us to what L. I. Brezhnev said during his visit to Yugoslavia in 1971: "We as Communists-Marxists know well that there are definite general laws of socialist construction and general fundamental features and attributes of socialism without which no socialism at all is possible. As for the choice of concrete forms of organisation of social life this is the internal affair of every Communist Party, every people..."

'We are against counterposing to one another the practice of socialist construction in different countries and even more so against anyone imposing his concrete methods of development on others.

'For us Communists, Marxists-Leninists, what is fundamental is that our countries belong to one socio-economic formation. And this, comrades, is in the final count, the most important thing.'<sup>1</sup>

The question of socialism's single essence and the inevitable diversity of its forms of

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<sup>1</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course*. Speeches and Articles. Moscow, 1972 p. 485.

emergence is not novel. It was dealt with, to suit the times, in the Programme of the Communist International,<sup>1</sup> Which said: 'The international proletarian revolution represents a combination of processes which vary in the time and character: purely proletarian revolutions; revolutions of a bourgeois-democratic type which grow into proletarian revolutions; wars for national liberation; colonial revolutions. The *world dictatorship of the proletariat* comes only as the final result of the revolutionary process.

'The uneven development of capitalism, which became more accentuated in the period of imperialism, has given rise to a variety of types of capitalism, to different stages of ripeness of capitalism in different countries, and to a variety of specific conditions of the revolutionary process. These circumstances make it historically inevitable that *the proletariat will come to power by many different ways and degrees of rapidity*: that a number of countries must pass through certain transition stages leading to the dictatorship of the proletariat and must adopt *varied forms of socialist construction*.'<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly, all countries were divided into three main types: a) countries of highly developed capitalism, b) countries with a medium development of capitalism, and c) colonial and semi-colonial countries. The countries in

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<sup>1</sup> The Communist International was an international revolutionary proletarian organisation of the communist parties of different countries. Founded in 1919, it was dissolved in 1943.

<sup>2</sup> *Programme of the Communist International*, Moscow, 1932, pp. 41-42.

which socialist revolutions took place at different times belonged to different types (in the context of their pre-revolutionary classification): Czechoslovakia and Germany to the first type, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, Russia, and Yugoslavia to the second type, and Albania, China, Cuba, Korea, Laos, Mongolia and Vietnam to the third. The incorporation of these countries (or parts of them) to the socialist world system changed the whole picture radically: the law of the uneven economic and social-political development operating in the capitalist world system in the imperialist epoch gave place to the law of levelling the development of all aspects of social life, the operation of which is immediately connected with the principle of proletarian internationalism.

Applying the same concrete historical approach in the new stage of the passage from capitalism to socialism on a world scale, the CPSU says in its Programme: 'The fact that socialist revolution took place at different times and that the economic and cultural levels of the countries concerned are dissimilar, predetermined the non-simultaneous completion of socialist construction in those countries and their non-simultaneous entry into the period of the full-scale construction of communism.'<sup>1</sup>

In the Soviet Union, the world's first socialist country, a developed socialist society has already been built. The Soviet people continue to consolidate and to improve all elements of the new system and are making

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<sup>1</sup> *The Road to Communism*, p. 512.

good headway in laying the material and technical basis of communism. *The problems of developed socialism in the current period amount in many ways to securing a 'marginal reserve' in building communism*, which, indeed, conforms with the following important item in the Programme of the Communist Party: 'The CPSU being a party of scientific communism, proposes and fulfils the tasks of communist construction in step with the preparation and maturing of the material and spiritual prerequisites, considering that it would be wrong to jump over necessary stages of development, and that it would be equally wrong to halt at an achieved level and thus check progress.'<sup>1</sup>

And this is not the only example. 'The 1960s will occupy a special place in the history of world socialism,' L. I. Brezhnev said at the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1969. 'It is in this decade that many fraternal countries have completed the foundation of socialism and proceeded to the building of developed socialist society. As it matures, the socialist system more and more fully reveals the advantages of its economic, social and political organisation and its genuine, intrinsic democracy.'<sup>2</sup>

The common features of these countries are: a highly developed industrial, scientific and technical potential which enables them to fruitfully resolve the problems of the current scientific and technical revolution in the

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<sup>1</sup> *The Road to Communism*, p. 512.

<sup>2</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, *The CPSU in the Struggle for Unity of All Revolutionary and Peace Forces*, Moscow, 1975, p. 60.

setting of the socialisation of the basic means of production in industry and agriculture. These countries tend to gravitate more and more towards socialist international economic integration, whereby they are laying the foundation for the future communist world economy.

How do the ruling parties in this segment of the socialist world system visualise the current period?

*Bulgarian Communist Party.* Todor Zhivkov's report to the 11th Congress of the BCP (March-April 1976): 'The period until 1990 will be one of new, far-reaching qualitative and quantitative changes in all spheres of our social development. These changes will gradually lead to the completion of the material and technical basis of socialism, to a further improvement of social relations, to a many-sided development of the individual. In general terms, the People's Republic of Bulgaria will become a country of mature socialism, which is the highest and last stage of socialism's development as the first phase of the communist social-economic system.'

*Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party.* Janos Kadar's report to the 11th Congress of the HSWP (March 1975): 'As the vanguard of the working class and the guiding force of society, our party bears the obligation, while keeping in sight the affairs of the present day, to show the way to the future. The draft of the Programme Statement submitted by the Central Committee contains the long-terms aims, the tasks whose fulfilment in the coming 15-20 years will serve the further development of our socialist society, the wellbeing of our

people, and the further advancement of our motherland.

'By fulfilling the tasks set in our Party's new Programme Statement, by building developed socialist society, we will come closer to our final goal, communism.'

*Socialist Unity Party of Germany.* Erich Honecker's report to the 9th Congress of the SUPG (May 1976): 'Leaning on what we have already achieved, our 9th Party Congress is setting new and bigger tasks. The Socialist Unity Party of Germany is setting the goal of continuing the construction of developed socialist society in the German Democratic Republic and thus creating the basic premises for a gradual passage to communism. In short, we are tackling the tasks of the present day at a higher level of development and turning our eyes to the future, to our great goal, communist society.'

*Party of Labour of Korea.* Kim Il Sung's report to the 5th Congress of the PLK (November 1970): 'Having fulfilled the historic task of industrialisation, our country has become a socialist industrial state.... At present, our Party and people face the urgent task of securing a further consolidation and growth of the socialist system in the People's Democratic Republic of Korea on the basis of successes already achieved in the revolution and in construction, and thereby bring closer the final victory of socialism.'

*Polish United Workers' Party.* Edward Gierek's report to the 7th Congress of the PUWP (December 1975): 'Our motherland, people's Poland, is entering a new, higher stage of socialist development, the stage of building

developed socialist society. This is opening broad vistas and wide new horizons....

'Building developed socialist society is a programme for a whole generation in terms of both the magnitude of the effort and the depth of the transformations.'

*Romanian Communist Party.* Nicolae Ceausescu's report to the 11th Congress of the RCP (November 1974): 'Our further activity will be based on the Party Programme, which gives the theoretical grounds for, and illuminates the ways of our practical activity directed to building a fully developed socialist society and to furthering Romania's advance to communism.'

*Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.* Gustav Husak's report to the 15th Congress of the CPCz (April 1976): 'In the coming period we will continue building developed socialist society. This means, therefore, that we will continue the line of the 14th Congress, but already in the present internal and international conditions and at a higher level.'

Needless to stress the fundamental resemblance of the tasks facing the various parties any more than to set out the specific conditions in which they work. The latter would be more justified in relation to parties that cannot for various, primarily objective, reasons as yet set the goal of building communism or developed socialist society. There is a rigid logic to this. The socialist phase has its degrees of maturing, which depend on the level of the productive forces, improvements in the relations of production, and the concrete historical situation.

Take the facts. The postrevolution develop-



ment of such countries as Albania, China, Cuba, Laos, Mongolia and Vietnam was greatly complicated because they started at a low base line. Besides, in the years of the people's democratic system in these countries (excluding Mongolia), the situation was aggravated by extraordinary circumstances that are still, in some of them, impeding a normal solution of the tasks of construction. This applies to the military-bureaucratic deformations and harmful self-isolation from the socialist world in Albania and China, and in the case of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Laos and Cuba to the consequences of US imperialist aggression and blockade which Peking's aggressive policy prevents the first two listed countries from rectifying. Incompleteness of the material and technical basis consonant with the socialist system and, at the same time a more or less intensive resolution of the problems of the transitional period —these are their distinctive features. While still compelled to devote tremendous efforts to further industrialisation, they have already begun, more or less distinctly, to acquire some of the features of societies where socialism has already been built.

What are the features that could come under this head? According to L. I. Brezhnev, they are 'the power of the working people with the vanguard role exercised by the working class and the leadership of social development provided by the Marxist-Leninist party; public ownership of the means of production and, on its basis, the planned development of the national economy on the highest technological level for the benefit

of the whole people; the implementation of the principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work"; the education of the whole people in the spirit of the ideology of scientific communism, in the spirit of friendship with the peoples of the fraternal socialist countries and the working people of the whole world; and lastly a foreign policy founded on the principles of proletarian, socialist internationalism.<sup>1</sup>

The development of these features is not automatic. It begins from the moment of the socialist revolution (or in the socialist stage of the people's democratic revolution) and the establishment of people's power (one or another form of working-class dictatorship), and varies in intensity from period to period. Apart from the objective factors that complicate matters, success depends in many ways on the class-oriented consistency, fidelity to principle, scientific approach and political flexibility of the ruling Marxist-Leninist parties, and their fidelity to proletarian internationalism. Conversely, neglect of these requirements may retard or stop socialist progress in some spheres of society, disorganise it and, worse still, reverse the course. This may call in question the very survival of some of the features of the already constructed socialism. Take the tendencies witnessed in the People's Republic of China since the late fifties. If these tendencies are not stopped before it is too late, they will gravely endanger the new system as a whole.

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<sup>1</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, *The CRSU in Struggle for Unity of All Revolutionary and Peace Forces*, Moscow, 1975, p. 177.

The Mongolian People's Republic offers a graphic example of how socialist construction may proceed in these countries, given relatively favourable internal and external conditions.

The 15th Congress of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (June 1966) recorded the fact that 'the historic transition from feudalism to socialist society was a triumph for the Party's general line of taking the country to socialism bypassing capitalism'.

The next, 16th Congress (June 1971) noted that, having built the foundations of socialism, the Mongolian People's Republic entered a new stage of development in the early sixties—the stage in which it will complete fashioning the material and technical basis of socialism. This takes much time and much constructive effort. *To complete the building of socialism*, a country goes through a whole historical period of development and a number of stages of economic growth. The initial stage, as pointed out in the Programme of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, consists in turning Mongolia into an industrial-agrarian country in the close future, with a rational structure of extractive and processing industries and a correct, effective combination of the main branches of socialist economy.

Socialist construction in Poland has some distinctive features. In the past 30 years the growth dynamics there was among the highest. The Polish economy, which had formerly been agrarian and pre-industrial, has already passed the first phase of industrialisation. The country is approaching the level of the highly indus-

trialised states, and is doubling production on average every eight years. The country is already able, by virtue of its economic, scientific, technical and cultural potential, to begin shaping developed socialist society. On the other hand, however, it is still also dealing with problems of the transitional period from capitalism to socialism.

The fact that the main social stratum in the countryside consists of middle peasants is of no small importance for a clear picture of economic and social relations in the Polish People's Republic. What is the policy of the Polish United Workers' Party towards this social group? They have been integrated in the general economic system of socialist planning and are associated with it intimately through annual and longer-term contracts, the marketing system, and the system of supply. New elements of socialist relations are being introduced into the life of the countryside through the development of ties with socialist industry, modernisation of the material and technical basis, and expanding cooperation.

The agricultural development programme adopted by its 15th Central Committee Plenum (October 1974) is regarded by the Polish United Workers' Party as an important element in the drive to make Poland a land of developed socialism. Edward Gierek stressed at the Plenum that the Party supports producer cooperation and joint forms of crop and animal husbandry. In due course Poland will have a highly productive socialist agriculture supplying the nation with the requisite amount of food and ensuring farmers with

good working conditions and a prosperous and cultured life.<sup>1</sup>

It is often pointed out that there is a contradiction between Poland's highly developed socialised industry and its still largely private, small-scale farming. Attention is called to the long duration of this combination in the light of available experience. And on this account the feasibility of building developed socialism in Poland is being questioned. Edward Gierek replied to this at the 7th Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party. 'As we begin building developed socialist society,' he said, 'we must remember that despite the general high level of our country's socialist development, the level of individual social-economic spheres varies. In many fields we already tackled tasks that belong to the new stage, tasks that our country as a whole is already quite prepared to tackle. In other fields, notably agriculture, we are still settling problems of the preceding period, because stages of development in socialist society are not clearly demarcated. Solving some of the problems of the preceding stages in appropriate forms at a higher stage of development is a natural and entirely feasible thing. This is facilitated by the greater economic potential and the higher political maturity of society, and—which is highly important—by the relation of world forces favouring socialism.'

It should be noted, however, that the Polish example is unusual not only from the point of view of past and present, but also

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<sup>1</sup> *Trybuna ludu*, 23 October 1974.

of the future. This makes it especially interesting. As we see it, the highly developed capitalist countries, notably those of Western Europe, will in the beginning, when they finally tackle socialist reconstruction in practice, face much the same contradiction. Because socialisation of capitalist monopoly property will evidently take much less time than the integration in the socialist cooperation pattern of the small-scale independent private proprietors (in many Western countries active chiefly in the greatly expanded service industries rather than agriculture). Hence, public ownership of the means of production will here, for a considerable time, inevitably be of a somewhat different structure than in most of the now existing socialist countries. It is quite obvious that the communist and workers' parties in the zone of developed capitalism have to work very seriously in shaping the long-term policy designed to secure voluntary participation in the building of the new way of life by the large and relatively stable middle strata, which, as distinct from the past, are mainly urban. And the realism of their programmes depends equally on their scientific grounding and on Marxist-Leninist consistency in implementing them.

The social and economic system of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, too, is still a transitional one.

According to the 9th Congress of the League of Communists (March 1969) Yugoslavia has risen to a level of medium development. Speaking at the 10th Congress of the LCY (May 1974), Josip Tito stressed that in the

postwar period rapid industrialisation had been the main target. It proved hard to reach, but was the only possible way of overcoming the country's economic backwardness. The decisive influence on agriculture, Tito said, is exercised by the public sector, which now accounts for 15 per cent of arable area and half the output.

Many new and complicated problems faced the heroic people of Vietnam following their historic victory over the US aggression and internal reaction, and reunification of North and South. 'In the past 20 years in the North,' Le Duan said at the 4th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam (December 1976), 'many successes were achieved in socialist reconstruction and the building of socialism: the exploiting classes have been abolished, socialist relations of production have been introduced, the initial base of large-scale socialist production has been built, there has been a revolution in ideology and culture, and the living standard and cultural level of the people have risen. All the same, the economy as a whole, notably its material and technical basis and structure, has not yet risen above small-scale production and is only in the initial stage of the passage to large-scale socialist production. In the south, which has only recently been liberated from the trammels of neocolonialism, though there had been some capitalist development, small-scale production is still prevalent. In short, despite the fact that elements of large-scale production have appeared in some fields, small-scale production is still predominant in the country as a whole....

*'It is clear that our country is still in the process of direct passage from a society with predominantly small-scale production to socialism bypassing the stage of capitalist development. This is a most important feature, showing the essence of the process of socialist revolution in our country and determining its main content.'*

In the mid-seventies the family of socialist nations welcomed one more member to their midst. The successes of the national liberation movement in Southeast Asia led to the constitution of the Laotian People's Democratic Republic. 'The socialist revolution and the socialist reconstruction in our country are going on in difficult and complicated conditions,' wrote K. Phomvihane. 'Our economy is based on small-scale, dispersed and backward subsistence farming. Culturally, too, the country is behind. The material and technical basis for building socialism is extremely weak. Besides, heavy losses were inflicted on our economy during the many years of war....

'At present, the historical task of the Laotian revolution is to unite the people, all the ethnic groups, still more closely on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance under the leadership of the Party, to firmly enforce the dictatorship of the proletariat, to further our people's sense of being masters of the country, to get rid completely of the harmful aftermaths of the colonial and feudal past, to actively boost production, especially agriculture, to fully normalise and steadily improve the life of the people along with expanding commodity circulation, to strengthen and extend the state sector of the economy and



at the same time energetically transform the dispersed and backward agriculture, to transform the private capitalist sector, to develop education, culture and health, to build the material and technical basis of socialism, to safeguard our people's democratic republic vigilantly, and to firmly follow the socialist road.'

All these evaluations of the ruling parties give a clue to the place occupied by the respective countries according to the maturity of the new system.

The *first* thing that is usually taken into account is the percentage of the socialisation of the means of production. It is usually held that the higher this figure (though its role should not be raised to an absolute), the closer society is to completing the transitional period.

In view of the fact that the degree of socialist development is measured not by just any socialisation but only by socialisation *in fact*, one *other criterion* is tremendously important—that of the level of industrialisation, the level of scientific and technical development, and prevalence of machine over manual labour.

Even by purely economic criteria (though bearing in mind the certain incompleteness of this analysis) the countries of the socialist world system—as their programme documents show—belong conditionally to *four* basic groups.

—the group of countries that have in practice carried out blanket socialisation of the means of production and possess what is basically a material and technical basis corres-

ponding to socialism; as a rule these countries have begun building developed socialist society;

—the group of countries that have in practice completed blanket socialisation, but have not yet completed building the material and technical basis of socialism;

—the group of countries that are, by virtue of their productive capacity, able to tackle the problems of building developed socialism, but are still behind the first and second groups in extent of socialisation;

—the group of countries in the transitional period that have so far only tackled the problems of building the material and technical basis of socialism and socialising the means of production.

Along with these *basic* criteria, we must also consider the *social-political distinctions* of the individual socialist societies. Lenin attached tremendous importance to this. He said: 'To develop democracy *to the utmost*, to find the *forms* for this development, to test them *by practice*, and so forth—all this is one of the component tasks of the struggle for the social revolution. Taken separately, no kind of democracy will bring socialism. But in actual life democracy will never be "taken separately"; it will be "taken together" with other things, it will exert its influence on economic life as well, will stimulate *its* transformation; and in its turn it will be influenced by economic development, and so on. This is the dialectics of living history.'<sup>1</sup> The influence that socialist

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'The State and Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 457-58.

democracy exercises on economic development, giving it added impetus, while itself subject to active economic influence, requires us to study more closely the basic principle of the organisation of socialist society—democratic centralism—and the typical methods of implementing this principle.

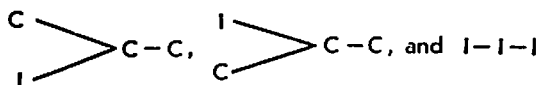
The history of the Soviet and other socialist states bears out the fact that by virtue of its tremendous influence on various social institutions, democratic centralism is a most essential criterion of the type of socialist society. The type may be relatively more centralist (CD) or relatively more democratic (DC). This according to just one rule: interference of the centre and methods of administrative intervention are the more justified the less 'automatic' is socialist development, which unquestionably depends on the level of machine production. In other words, in a socialist country where artisan methods of production are still relatively widespread and industrial discipline is relatively limited since industry itself has not yet taken shape, the degree of organisation depends chiefly on the authority of people's power. It bears a special responsibility, for its authority, not restricted by the rigid framework of democratic control, the discipline of large-scale industry<sup>1</sup> and the

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<sup>1</sup> 'Authority and autonomy, 'Engels writes, 'are relative things whose spheres vary with the various phases of the development of society.... Social organisation of the future would restrict authority solely to the limits within which the conditions of production render it inevitable.' (Frederick Engels, 'On Authority'. In: Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 378.)

demands of science, leaves a formal chance of subjectivism if incorrectly used.

Now, let us recall the literal notation of the transitional period in the Soviet Union, consisting of three formulas:



There is only one reply to the question, what organisation naturally conformed to it—a relatively more centralised or relatively more democratic organisation: due to the predominance of manual labour and the dispersal of production units, the more centralised form (CD) was preferable.

But other variants were also possible. There were decentralist experiments, conducted in spite of the needs of the relatively backward economy. As a result, many advantages of the prevalently centralist organisation, more suited to the concrete historical conditions, were forfeited. Futile expectations of success led to a considerable loss of time. The difficulties encountered by the economy and the people derived from what may be described as an inside-out subjectivism: usually associated with excessive administration, here it stemmed from not enough administration, from reliance on automatic development, sometimes accompanied with semi-anarchist pleas to combat the 'omnipresence' of the state. Like the 'anti-authoritarians' whom Engels criticised in his time, the present day anti-statists are often 'blind to all facts that make the thing necessary and they passionately

fight the word'. Despite the lessons of history, they follow in the footsteps of their ideological predecessors and also 'demand that the authoritarian political state be abolished at one stroke, even before the social conditions that gave birth to it have been destroyed'.<sup>1</sup>

In short, we must take into account the prevalent form of democratic centralism along with the types of production prevailing in the country. This will give us a fairly complete picture of the social system in the socialist state concerned.

Will it really be complete? Should not the level of culture also be considered? It should not, as we see it, because a definite level of culture is bound to exist if concrete productive forces already exist. Implements of individual use applied on a massive scale attest to the cultural level of the *mass* of labourers. In conditions where manual labour predominates, the pay-off of even universal literacy is not very high, whereas at a higher level of technology it can be an active force of all-round progress. Prevalence of machine production naturally presupposes a high scientific and technical potential of society and a high cultural and technical level of the working people. A definite minimum of culture is a premise for this, on the one hand, and its effect, on the other. But it is also a condition for successful functioning. This is why there is no need to single out culture here, which does not by itself alter the quality of the social relations unless it is materially embodied in

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, 'On Authority'. In: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, pp. 378-79.

the means of production and relies on them.

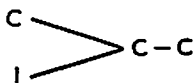
Now, with the above in mind, we can portray the social system of the socialist countries diagrammatically in the context of its most essential elements, and draw the appropriate conclusions. The example of the Soviet Union is the most typical in this respect. Less for historical reasons and more because it discovered and established the most tested and widespread type of socialism's social-economic structure. The Soviet Union is the world's second industrial power. We may infer from its powerful machine basis in all economic fields and its up-to-date scientific and technical potential built on the foundation of public property (that has existed for more than half a century) the prevalence here of the form C—C—C.

The fact that nearly two-fifths of those working in industry, and a still greater number in building and agriculture, are so far doing manual labour, shows that the form I—C—C still survives in the national economy and especially the kolkhoz-cooperative sector.

Neither must it be ignored that a still fairly considerable segment of social labour is accounted for by subsidiary personal industries of workers (especially state-farm workers) and collective farmers (the form I—I—I). This is not, of course, a mode of production in its own right, but merely a type of industry that depends on the state of socialist social production, and is compounded with it for one of two reasons: either because auxiliary sources of distribution and supply are needed by the population or to satisfy the need for amateur gardening, flower-raising, vegetable farming,

livestock breeding, fishing, and the like. Only in the former case does it have any social-economic significance, and is mentioned here precisely because it is still fulfilling an important mission.<sup>1</sup>

The fact that the process of unifying socialist socialisation, i.e., turning all means of production into property of the whole people (as distinct from kolkhoz-cooperative property), is as yet incomplete, due chiefly to the dissimilar technical levels of industry and agriculture, should also, we feel, be reflected in our formulas. Out of the three C's, let us give the third, if it stands for the cooperative form of property, as Co. Then we will get the following picture for the USSR: first, state industry will be C—C—C and I—C—C, or:



The first form naturally predominates, and is pushing out the second; the process is slower on the state farms, where the forms are the same, but the percentage of manual labour is higher. Second, kolkhoz production follows the forms C—C—Co and I—C—Co. Third, to the state-farm and kolkhoz forms we must add the form I—I—I, which stands for the subsidiary personal industries of workers and collective farmers.

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<sup>1</sup> In the 1976 incomes structure incomes from subsidiary personal industries amounted to 0.9 per cent for industrial workers and 26.3 per cent for collective farmers.

In other words,

$$1. \begin{array}{c} C \\ \diagdown \\ \diagup \\ I \end{array} > C-C,$$

$$2. \begin{array}{c} I \\ \diagdown \\ \diagup \\ C \end{array} > C-C) + (I-I-I) \text{ (for state farms),}$$

$$3. \begin{array}{c} I \\ \diagdown \\ \diagup \\ C \end{array} > C-C_0) + (I-I-I) \text{ (for collective farms).}$$

As Marx, Engels and Lenin conceived it, the C—C—C scheme is the final, *ultimate* form of mature socialism. For it to spread throughout the USSR at least three conditions are necessary at present:

a) to eliminate the mass of individual labour according to the character of implements applied (I) as a socially significant factor, that is, to complete the mechanisation of labour;

b) to bring  $C_0$  closer to C, that is, raise cooperative property to the level of the property of the whole people through fulfilment of condition 'a', i.e., factually identify it with the latter;

c) to do away with the I—I—I form (in the given social-economic sense) by seeing to it that the needs it covers are more fully covered by the socialised economy and services.

For reasons we have given earlier, the form of democratic centralism in Soviet society evolves in step with the emergence of an all-encompassing highly industrialised economy



and the above conditions, from the centralist-democratic variant to the variant accentuating use of local initiative; this evolution from CD to DC is inevitable in all socialist societies on the way to maturity, for it is typical of their normal development.

As we see, at every given moment some socialist countries are inevitably closer in one or several respects to mature socialism and communism than others. But it would be a big mistake to think that due to this discrepancy some are absolutely superior and others are absolutely behind. The place of any individual country cannot be defined once and for all at any point of the highly diverse and long transition from capitalism to communism. On the contrary, by virtue of its intrinsic and profoundly progressive nature the great dynamism of the socialist system finds expression in an irrepressible drive forward and upward. This drive is naturally better seen, and secures higher rates of growth, in countries that were less developed in the past. The practical evidence of this tendency, it is true, depends on how well it has been understood and is being taken into account by the ruling Marxist-Leninist party.

In the case of the world system as a whole, the example of the socialist community shows that all its elements, however considerable their cultural, historical and national distinctiveness and their possible but transient departures from the general direction of development, are going through a kind of 'asymptotic' evolution towards the known, scientifically grounded type of 'socialism in its developed form' or socialism of which, chi-

ming in with Marx's and Engels's predictions, Lenin spoke in his day.<sup>1</sup>

Socialism, according to Lenin, is not a ready-made system that 'suddenly' falls into the lap of mankind. This is something followers of scientific socialism understand and know, in contrast to the present-day admirers of utopian socialism. To expect that the new society will appear in consummate form out of wholly ready premises with no sign of any discrepancies with this historic task, is unforgivably naive. Only the 'man in a muffler', to use Lenin's expression, might fall for this sort of idea, who 'forgets that there will always be such a "discrepancy", that it always exists in the development of nature as well as in the development of society, that only by a series of attempts—each of which, taken by itself, will be one-sided and will suffer from certain inconsistencies—will complete socialism be created by the revolutionary co-operation of the proletarians of *all* countries.'<sup>2</sup>

Analysing the shaping of this 'consummated socialism' is no simple undertaking; in fact, it is comparable in scale and importance only with Marx's production of *Capital*. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and other fraternal parties of the socialist countries have all their attention concentrated on this task, and their collective theoretical search is

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'Speech Against Bukharin's Amendment to the Resolution on the Party Programme. March 8', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, pp. 147-148.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "'Left-Wing" Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, pp. 345-46.

steadily compounding the principles of the scientific Marxist-Leninist method with detailed study of the processes of our time and the new developments in the life of society, with a generalisation of the practical experience of the masses.

The socialism existing in countries of three continents rises before humanity as a dynamically developing social system embodying the communist ideals of freedom from exploitation and oppression, of people's power, socialist democracy, cultural growth, the well-being of the broad mass of the people, and equality and unity of all nations and ethnic groups. 'No impartial person can deny,' L. I. Brezhnev stressed at the 25th Congress, 'that the socialist countries' influence on world affairs is becoming ever stronger and deeper. That, comrades, is a great boon to mankind as a whole, to all those who aspire to freedom, equality, independence, peace and progress.'<sup>1</sup>

In recent years there has been an ever more distinct advance of the socialist countries towards developed socialist society, and towards communism. There has been inner political consolidation, social production grew rapidly, material and cultural standards rose visibly, socialist nations flowered, and state sovereignty grew stronger. At the same time, there is the ever more visible trend, as noted by Lenin, 'towards the creation of a single world economy, regulated by the proletariat of all nations as an integral whole and according to a common plan. This tendency has

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<sup>1</sup> *XXVth Congress of the CPSU. Documents and Resolutions*, p. 8.

already revealed itself quite clearly under capitalism and is bound to be further developed and consummated under socialism.<sup>1</sup> Alongside, and in conjunction with the further socialisation of the planned economy in each of the socialist countries, there also emerges an international mechanism. Here a special part is played by the long-term programme of socialist economic integration jointly elaborated by the socialist countries in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. Among other things, it means joint development of natural resources for the common benefit, joint construction of large-scale industrial complexes aimed at meeting the needs of all its participants, and cooperation between enterprises and whole industries planned for many years ahead.

Portentous social-historical change is under way in the vast spaces of the socialist part of the world—from the first steps in setting up a collectivist mode of life in the south of Vietnam and in the young Laotian People's Democratic Republic to the developed socialist society's completion of the first phase of the communist social system. All this diverse change has an inner essential unity conditioned by the main content of the present epoch determined by its hegemon, the working class. The socialist community is showing the world its striking achievements, namely, its development and the increasingly benign influence of its international policy, which represent the main direction of social progress today.

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and the Colonial Questions', *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 147.

As the mature forms emerge of the socialist social system, its impact and example is winning the hearts and minds of more and more millions of people in all parts of the world, who see it as the embodiment of the practical humanism that is destined to become the system of all nations.

Past experience has shown the good results of the joint efforts of socialist countries in protecting their revolutionary gains, in economic and cultural development, and in strengthening international security. Nations on all continents have been impressed by this fact, among other things, through the Peace Programme of the 24th Congress of the CPSU, which is the basis of the agreed foreign policy line of the socialist states.

As an organic continuation and projection of this already in many ways realised programme, the 25th Congress put forward a programme of further struggle for peace and international cooperation and for the freedom and independence of the peoples. The active involvement of the working class that first came to power in October 1917 in international affairs is yielding rich fruit. An unprecedented democratisation of international relations is under way thanks to its influence. It has become possible to contain the forces of reaction and war. Lenin's prediction, made in his historic report on peace, is coming true. 'The workers' movement,' he said, 'will triumph and will pave the way to peace and socialism.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldier's Deputies', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 253.

Socialism is the greatest achievement of the working class of the world, of its long struggle and constructive effort, its use in practice of the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist doctrine, and of the political art of the communist and workers' parties of the socialist states. It is ingrained in the international communist movement, the strength of which in the capitalist world alone increased by nearly one million in the early half of the seventies. The numbers of those who cast their ballots for the Communists in capitalist countries is growing steadily. More and more people doing manual and mental work, living from the sale of their labour power, see the Communists as representatives and champions of their vital interests. Most items of the anti-imperialist action programme of the 1969 world conference of Communists have been put into effect. The joint efforts of the fighters for peace, democracy and social progress have elicited a broad response and are yielding good results.

The ideological servants of monopoly would like nothing better than to see the mighty world communist movement divided, disorganised, and weakened. Unfortunately, the designs of reaction are not always firmly repulsed. Sometimes, tolerance is shown on the plea of specific national situations, the concrete historical circumstances of the country concerned. This does not go to say that the revolutionary stream should be completely the same in appearance or that it should spread only along a straight line. There can be no such thing. But the stream must not break into fragments or run dry; on the contrary, it must

swell continuously, fed by the people's anti-capitalist initiative, and must, of course, follow the definite, historically determined direction, thus justifying mankind's hopes of deliverance from the icy gales of the cold war and the nightmare of hot war, from the pressures and abuses of the proprietary exploiter system.

Conscious of the historical mission of the working class as builder of the new society, and of their own duties as its foremost organised detachment, the Communists are guided in their actions by the universal laws of the class struggle, the laws of the passage from capitalism to socialism, and the laws of socialist and communist construction discovered by revolutionary science and confirmed in revolutionary practice. It is our revolutionary duty 'not to lose our way in these zigzags, these sharp turns in history ... to retain the general perspective to be able to see the scarlet thread that joins up the entire development of capitalism and the entire road to socialism, the road we naturally imagine as straight and which we must imagine as straight, in order to see the beginning, the continuation and the end—in real life it will never be straight, it will be incredibly involved....'<sup>1</sup> Constant reliance on the general regularities of revolution and the building of socialism and communism, appreciation of the general perspective, creative application of the objective laws and regularities to the actual national conditions, and maximum con-

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Extraordinary Seventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.). March 6-8, 1918', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 130.

sideration for the cultural and historical distinctions of the country concerned—all this the 25th Congress of the CPSU defined as the necessary elements of success in the socialist countries' coordinated international efforts.

## **2. Types of International Relations**

In some cases, international relations shaped by the October Revolution are the starting point and prime, even determining, factor behind the change of course towards social as well as national emancipation—the socialist development of whole nations though, for the moment, fully developed internal objective premises may not yet exist in the countries concerned and there is only revolutionary, anti-imperialist enthusiasm which, as experience has shown, does not always express itself in active anti-capitalism.

International relations, as we know, are social relations of intercourse between nations and between states. Here they are a projection and peculiar modification of internal social relations and, like the latter, may be divided into three types: a) international relations of domination and subordination, b) international relations of comradely cooperation and mutual assistance and c) international relations of the transitional type.

All forms of international ties come under one of these three heads. The first two, which are stable, have a qualitatively definite social characteristic, the third, as the heading shows, sees the decline of one social system and the emergence of another on a world scale. There



was only the first type before the October Revolution. The second came with the emergence of the system of socialist states, and the third during the struggle of the two opposite social-economic systems—socialism and capitalism.

*International relations of domination and subordination* are a type of social relations typical of the pre-history of human society not yet wholly abolished because capitalism survives so far in a considerable part of the world.

When referring to the internal pattern of pre-socialist society we usually speak of cooperation and mutual assistance in primitive communities and show the higher quality of cooperation and mutual assistance under socialism. But when analysing international relations—and this is what distinguishes them from internal relations—this need does not arise. Because prior to the emergence of the socialist world system and the 'extension' by separate socialist societies of the new social relations to the field of mutual cooperation, international relations of cooperation and mutual assistance simply could not exist. Even the primitive communities, which had no internal antagonisms, were often engaged in antagonistic, mutually destructive struggles. When class antagonisms appeared, the antagonism between nations became more diverse in form. And when the capitalist system became all-embracing, it took the form of imperialist dependence of the vast majority of socially and economically backward peoples on a handful of 'advanced' nations. The 'world city' confronted the

'world village'. This contraposition survives to this day.

What are the causes of this?

There are two. *First*, it is typical of every exploiting state to extend the exploitation of the working classes inside the country to other peoples. The history of the slave-owning and feudal systems abounds in this type of thing and in temporary successes of the mightiest powers of their time. Why, then, were these attempts at exploiting other peoples only temporary? Because, as a rule, they lacked the foundation of stable, fully-developed economic and above all foreign commercial, ties. And since there was no fully-developed world-wide division of labour and the many local markets arising in different parts of the world were invariably unstable, no pre-capitalist social system was able to grow into a world system. As a result, the world empires of those days began falling apart almost the moment they were founded.

This brings us to the *second* cause. Capitalism is the first social-economic system whose main laws and regularities spread to all social—international as well as internal—relations (since mankind had gone over from organising life in the framework of local societies and markets to organising it on a worldascale, in the shape of world systems). *The specific ties between dominant and oppressed classes within societies were extended by capitalism in its highest and last stage to contacts between nations.* Hundreds of millions of people in colonial countries, peoples of whole states, were at first likened to the proletarians of the metropolitan countries, and later found them-

selves in still worse circumstances. The anti-imperialist striving for national freedom proved socially kindred to the anti-capitalist struggle of the working class. A united front of the communist, working-class and national liberation movements emerged in the general stream of socialist world revolution.

There have been cases of an equilibrium of forces in capitalist international relations when, for example, large imperialist powers did not oppress one another or when some large imperialist predator was unable, due to some unfavourable factors, to exploit a smaller neighbouring country or was even temporarily interested in having equal, officially friendly relations with it. But by virtue of their essence the exploiting states gravitated all the same to relations of domination and subordination in international politics. Knowing that this essence had to be analysed to determine the strategic thrust of the revolutionary struggle, Lenin considered it tactically important to examine those political relations between capitalist states that depended on the concrete relation of strength and were shaped by rivalry and conflicts on the world scene.

The first of these systems is, so to say, directly expressive of the 'pure' type of international relations of domination and subordination: 'the relation of the oppressed nation to the oppressing'.<sup>1</sup> This type of relationship is the ultimate (whether practicable or impracticable) aim of the foreign policy of the

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'To Inessa Armand', *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 264.

exploiting classes of any country. The fact that not every exploiter state is able to reach this aim is not a sign of its 'peaceable nature' but of its weakness, of the existence of more powerful and dangerous rivals, of strong resistance by the peoples, and so on. The now practically extinct colonial system is a classical example. Elimination of the remnants of colonialism and struggle against neocolonialism is, from this point of view, a gradual elimination of relations of direct domination and subordination from international affairs and is undermining capitalist social relations on a world scale.

The *second* system of political relations between capitalist states is 'the relationship between two oppressing nations on account of the loot, its division, etc.'<sup>1</sup> As a tendency this, too, is a relationship of domination and subordination which has not been put into effect for some reason and which the dominant classes of the hostile powers had, as a rule, hoped to secure by war. For the imperialist powers the first and second world wars were a materialisation of precisely these systems of relations, for the wars began as attempts by groups of states representing the interests of rival monopolies to redivide the world.

The *third* type is 'the relation of a national state which does not oppress others to one which oppresses, to a particularly reactionary state'<sup>2</sup> Here there is considerable flux: 'A system of nations with equal rights. This

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

question is *much more complex!!!!*.<sup>1</sup> To determine one's position in this third case one has to know the whole complex of interrelations and ties between different countries. Yet, these cannot be immutable, because the balance of power in the world is changing continuously.

Each shifting of the centres of the world revolutionary movement and the centres of world reaction gives this 'system of nations with equal rights' a new appearance. Stereotyped and dogmatic assessments are intolerable here, as is oblivion of the Marxist principle of the concreteness of the truth. This the socialist countries always take into account in their policy towards independent states (non-imperialist as well as imperialist) of the nonsocialist world. In each case they seek to use a special, scientifically elaborated, individually differentiated approach. The history of the Soviet state offers evidence of positive results in foreign policy thanks to the correct conception of this system of relations in the modern world—from the famous Rapallo Treaty of 1922 to the outstanding actions of our time, notably the visits of the General Secretary of the CC CPSU and Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, L. I. Brezhnev, to leading capitalist countries.

For socialism organised as a state that is compelled to exist side by side with capitalism for a long time, it is essential to have a system of dynamic and equal international relations that could, at least partly, paralyse

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'To Inessa Armand', *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 273.

imperialism's aggressive and exploiting ambitions, and help create favourable conditions for the coexistence of the two systems. As L. I. Brezhnev said, 'the desire to impose their own rules on anyone is alien to the socialist countries. Revolutions are not exported. But we always fight resolutely against the export of counter-revolution, against imperialist interference in the internal affairs of the peoples. Every nation must exercise its inalienable right to choose its own social system, to decide its own destiny.

'In the name of this principle the socialist countries have over many years been waging a consistent struggle for a firm and enduring peace whose benefits could be enjoyed both by the present generation and by generations to come.'<sup>1</sup>

The other class of *international relations* are *relations of comradely cooperation and mutual assistance* between free peoples and peoples winning freedom. They arose for the first time after the first non-exploiter state, Soviet Russia, was formed, which extended the principles of proletarian internationalism to the sphere of foreign policy in relation to fraternal countries and to the mass of the working people in all countries. Their most important premise: recognition and exercise of the right of nations to self-determination not short of secession and constitution of their own statehood.

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<sup>1</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, 'Speech at a Luncheon in the Grand Palace of the Kremlin in Honour of the Delegation of the Vietnam Workers' Party and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam' July 10, 1973, *Following Lenin's Course*, p. 193.

'We are told that Russia will disintegrate and split up into separate republics,' Lenin wrote in the early years of Soviet power. 'But we have no reason to fear this. We have nothing to fear, whatever the number of independent republics. The important thing for us is ... whether or not the working people of all nations remain allied in their struggle against the bourgeoisie, irrespective of nationality',<sup>1</sup> which is above all 'based not on treaties, but on solidarity of the exploited against the exploiters.'<sup>2</sup> Later Lenin wrote: 'We are defending not the status of a great power, and not national interests, for we assert that the interests of socialism, of world socialism are higher than national interests, higher than the interests of the state.'<sup>3</sup>

International relations of cooperation and mutual assistance are social relations between states that came into being as instruments of anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle in the course of the socialist world revolution. They encompass a broad range of international ties of a new type, differing according to the nature of the countries concerned and their closeness to socialist social relations.

The *first* form of these relations, distinctly socialist in character, took shape after the October Revolution between the independent Soviet republics that five years later joined

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Speech at the First All-Russia Congress of the Navy. November 22 (December 5), 1917', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 344.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Report on Foreign Policy Delivered at a Joint Meeting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Moscow Soviet. May 14, 1918', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 378.

in a socialist federation—the Soviet Union. The voluntary democratic consolidation of the at first four Soviet socialist republics—the Russian Federation, Byelorussia, the Transcaucasian Federation, and the Ukraine—which now includes 15 socialist states, provides for centralised administration of the key economic and cultural fields, of military and diplomatic activity, and foreign trade. It is based on the inter-republican division of labour, a single complex of productive forces developed under Soviet power, a system of organic plan-governed economic ties without which the economy of any of the republics could not conceivably function. The inter-republican relations are, in effect, devoid of the features of inter-state relations, and increasingly resemble inter-regional relations within one state. They are the prototype of the relations that will ultimately evolve between the socialist states as a result of the integration of their national economies in one world-wide socialist (communist) cooperative.

The *second* and chief form of international relations of cooperation and mutual assistance obtains between states belonging to the socialist world community. These relations are relatively more independent than those of the first form and cannot be wholly identified with the internal relations reigning in each socialist country.

First, the main economic and other laws of socialism operate differently on the plane of economic relations between socialist states than they do in each separate country. Due to the obvious dissimilarity of their economic and social-cultural potentials it is still too



early to say that the socialist world economic system is functioning as a whole to ensure the harmonious all-round development of every individual. What is law for the separate national economies is seen only *mediately* in the relations between sovereign states.

Second, the relative independence of international relations within the system is due to the fact that every socialist state is compelled to concern itself with the commercial advantages of its international economic ties, because its planned economy is based on the principles of economic accountability. On the other hand, its partners include not only socialist, but also capitalist countries.

Third, while the internal socialist social relations of the separate countries are controlled and regulated through the concentration of ownership of the main means of production in the hands of the state and through planned guidance of all life in society, there is no specially set up international body to control and regulate international relations. Besides, they have no economic foundation resembling state property (of the whole people) inside each country. So far, there is no multinational socialist property as a dominant economic relationship. Neither is there any single planning and single guidance of all (or at least several) national economies from one centre. The socialist countries can govern all their relations only by concord, on the basis of voluntary and equal cooperation, by coordinating positions and removing contradictions, by determining the diverse national interests and compounding them in one international whole—the socialist interests of the

peoples that have thrown off the yoke of capital. This is clearly expressed in the Comprehensive Programme adopted by the 25th Session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance in July 1971.

Hence the special significance of sovereign relations between countries and acceptance of the fact that *the socialist process of transforming the life of society, though international in content, so far inevitably assumes a nationally distinct form*. Hence the compulsive need for comparing and sensibly uniting the experience of many socialist nations in the search of the best forms of organising the life of society along new lines, which will continue until the passage to fully-developed communism.

The most salient feature of the international ties of socialist states is their profound democratism. Whereas inter-governmental relations of antagonistic class societies are essentially relations between the exploiting classes of different nations, in fact minority classes whose interests invariably diverge from those of their peoples, the relations between socialist countries are, on the contrary, relations between the working people represented by their people's governments or, more precisely, relations between peoples in the literal sense of the word. The socialist countries' progress to classless society, the growing social homogeneity of their peoples, and growth of proletarian dictatorships into socialist states of the whole people add to the *popular nature* of the international relations of the new type and facilitate the ever more sweeping convergence of socialist nations. The dampening of class distinctions, removal of all social partitions

and of the old division of labour, is bound to have a positive effect on the mutual ties of the socialist countries.

The popular nature of the international relations of socialist countries shows how foreign to cooperation and mutual assistance are relations of oppressed and oppressor nations, relations between two oppressor nations, and relations between non-oppressor and oppressor nations, which come under the head of relations of domination and subordination. Socialist nations, which have put an end to capitalist exploitation and are building their society on public ownership of the means of production, apply to their mutual relations only that which is typical of internal relations in their countries.

The rejection of internationalist principles in relation to other countries of the socialist world system which, for example, is a feature of the foreign policy of China's Maoist leadership, is indirect evidence of immature internal social relations.

Anti-communists ignore these factors. They maliciously attribute the antagonistic rivalry typical of relations between capitalist countries to the mutual contacts of socialist peoples. By so doing they completely divorce international from internal relations, and arbitrarily postulate, contrary to science, that international relations can in substance be antithetical to internal relations. This view is wholly at variance with the actual state of affairs.

The *third* group of relations of cooperation and mutual assistance embraces relations between socialist states and states on the non-capitalist road (revolutionary-democratic dic-

tatorships of the proletariat and peasantry, people's democracies, national democracies). These relations embody the alliance between peoples of the socialist countries and the public forces representing socialist currents in the developing countries. Due to the weakness in the latter of the industrial proletariat, the only class capable of heading the struggle for socialism, and due to the fact that proletarian dictatorship is not possible there for the time being, their close international relations with the socialist states offer the only guarantee of passage to socialism. Violation of these relations leads back to the orbit of imperialist dependence and neocolonialism. Reversely, their consolidation provides safety against imperialist intrigues and secures hegemony of the working class through its main achievement—the socialist world system. This is especially necessary where classes and social groups that have already come to grips with capitalism are not as yet mature enough to build socialism on the basis of just the internal resources and experience.

International relations of this type may prove decisive for the social option of many of the developing countries. True, these international relations trail behind relations between socialist countries in quality and socialist content. But this is temporary. The emergence of a new society in the developing countries is ultimately bound to inject all the qualities of socialist relations into their international relations.

The *fourth* class of the international relations of cooperation and mutual assistance are the relations between countries on the non-

capitalist road. They differ from the third group in that socialist states are not directly involved. They are relations between anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist forces that have not as yet become consistently socialist. They can maintain their specific quality only if the foreign policy of the young national states is consistently oriented on the socialist world system. Otherwise, their relations may turn into relations between peoples that do not oppress one another or even into hostile relations, that is, into a type of the international relations of domination and subordination.

*Transitional international relations.* The new element in international affairs since the October Socialist Revolution is that completely new international relations are taking shape, enabling oppressed nations to shake off imperialist oppression. This applies to peoples that seek to break the trammels of capitalist slavery, and also to those that want to end their imperialist dependence while not yet able to set the goal of ending the bourgeois system. 'Our policy,' Lenin wrote, 'is grouping around the Soviet Republic those capitalist countries which are being strangled by imperialism.'<sup>1</sup>

The socialist states establish with countries of the capitalist world system only such relations that rule out domination and subordination by either side, and abide strictly by the principles of equal rights and the equality of large and small states. Certainly, as long

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'The Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets. December 22-29, 1920', *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 477-78.

as capitalism exists they are not able unilaterally to transform all international relations into a field of cooperation and mutual assistance. But what they do to limit exploitation of countries by other countries is significant by itself. It shows that in world affairs, too, socialist social relations have begun their offensive on capitalist social relations, which are gradually losing ground.

Those international relations which, since peoples of socialist countries have entered into them, are no longer relations of domination and subordination, on the one hand, and, which, since the exploiting classes are still involved in them, have not yet become relations of cooperation and mutual assistance, on the other, are by nature *transitional* international relations. They, too, consist of several types.

*First*, there are the relations between socialist and capitalist anti-imperialist states. Socialist internationalism and the progressive nationalism of newly-independent countries appear to meet halfway. Despite all the differences between them in essence, both find common points and join hands so long as the stage of struggle against the aftermaths of colonialism continues. It was this that Lenin had in mind when he called on Communists to take their bearings from the bourgeois nationalism of the peoples of the East, one that could not but arise, and that is historically justified.<sup>1</sup> The historical justification of the

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, 'Address to the Second All-Russia Congress of Communist Organisations of the Peoples of the East, November 22, 1919', *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 161-62.

nationalism of the young states that had been colonies only yesterday is, in a way, the margin of tolerance of the elements of cooperation and mutual assistance in the relations between them and the socialist countries.

*Second*, international relations of countries on the non-capitalist road and young anti-imperialist countries developing on a capitalist basis are also transitional. The latter often have more in common with the former than either have with the socialist states. The similarity of their fate and the similarity of the tasks of their anti-colonial struggle, their similar economic and social structures, the nationalist complexion of their ideologies, and the like, play a prominent role.

These relations, however, are unstable, because the inner evolution of these two types of states follows opposite directions. As the countries that opted for the non-capitalist variant of social progress advance to socialism their ties with capitalist anti-imperialist states become increasingly similar in content to the same relations of the socialist countries. It is natural that socialist internationalism is more and more directly felt in the international relations of countries that consistently follow the non-capitalist way. Nationalism takes a back seat there, while it flourishes in the bourgeois states.

It stands to reason that there are many different shades and intermediate phases in all these transformations and transitions. The new content of international relations often manifests itself peculiarly in the old form and, conversely, there are cases when the old

content is clothed in new garb. But this does not alter matters.

The socialist states are internationalist in their international policy. The as yet not socialist (but already not capitalist) states strive for the same thing. A contradiction arises here with the nationalism typical of the policy of capitalist (non-imperialist) states. The cooperation and mutual assistance of internationalist and nationalist forces on the world scene continues so long as both forces are locked in struggle with their common class opponent—monopoly capital.

*Third*, relations between socialist and imperialist countries can also be classed as transitional. This is a sector of international relations in which there is already no domination of one group of powers and subordination of other countries, though there can be no friendly cooperation and mutual assistance either.

From the first day of its existence every socialist country establishes relations with the capitalist world on a fundamentally new, unprecedented social basis. The former antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, deriving from domination and subordination, gives way for the first time to *class antagonism without domination and subordination*, inasmuch as the proletariat organised as the dominant class faces the bourgeoisie from *positions of equal power*. Whether it likes or not, the bourgeoisie can no longer treat the victorious working class of a socialist state as it treats its own proletariat, that is, cannot exploit it. The dominant proletariat, in turn, while working to eliminate elements



of exploitation in its own country, no longer treats the foreign bourgeoisie as a bourgeoisie, i.e., does not sell it its labour power. This is a tremendous achievement of socialism in international relations, though it is still a long way to direct relations of comradely cooperation and mutual assistance with peoples of capitalist countries. This will not be possible until the nature of political power in the latter is finally altered.

As the socialist world system develops, the proletariat organised as a state, though it cannot destroy relations of domination and subordination inside the capitalist countries, is vigorously removing exploitation from the sphere of international relations. Having won economic and political independence, it works for equal and mutually beneficial cooperation with capitalist states. As a result, the situation shaping in the relations between capitalism and socialism is in harmony with Lenin's concept of peaceful coexistence as a specific state of the class struggle in the field of international contacts.

It took dozens of years of strenuous and selfless labour, the mass heroism of the Soviet people in the war against fascism, and a long and persevering political and diplomatic struggle for this vital need to be recognised by the realistically-minded statesmen of the major imperialist powers.

The Leninist foreign policy of peace owes its splendid results to the changed relation of world forces in favour of socialism, to socialism's more solid international positions and the forward-looking international activity of the Soviet Communist Party and the Marxist-

Leninist parties of the other socialist countries. As L. I. Brezhnev put it, 'we are witnesses to—and not only witnesses to but active participants in—the most momentous event in the whole of postwar history. This is the transition from the period of hostile confrontation in international life, when the dangerous tension could break and plunge the world into the holocaust of war, to a period of a more stable peaceful coexistence, of reasonable, peaceful cooperation between socialist and capitalist states on a basis of mutual benefit and equal security.'<sup>1</sup> The many negotiations with representatives of the biggest capitalist countries in the seventies were devoted by the Soviet side to a search of a solution of the paramount problem, that of consolidating the positive changes in world affairs and asserting in international relations the principles for which the Soviet state has worked throughout its 60-odd years.

True, these benign processes are not always uniform. Extreme rightist imperialist groups, advocates of an aggressive course and of the arms race, opponents of checking it and of disarmament, are trying to hold them back. But there is fresh evidence every day that the changes begun in world affairs will bear fruit. It says in the Soviet-FRG declaration signed in Bonn on 6 May 1978: 'Out of the developments of the past 10 years both sides have drawn the conclusion that detente is necessary,

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<sup>1</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, 'Speech in the Grand Palace of the Kremlin on Receiving the Lenin International Peace Prize', *Following Lenin's Course. Speeches and Articles (1972-1975)*, p. 204.

possible, and useful. They see no sensible alternative to the peaceful coexistence of states despite differences in some basic standpoints and the dissimilarity of political, economic and social systems. They express their determination to extend and deepen the detente process, to make it progressive and stable. Respecting the indivisibility of peace and security in all regions of the world, they will use their political and economic resources independently, jointly, and on a multilateral basis to reach this aim.<sup>1</sup>

*Fourth*, the relations between countries advancing to socialism bypassing capitalism and imperialist countries are similar in content to the relations between socialist and imperialist states. Here, too, imperialism is no longer able to impose its domination. But neither can the countries building the new society on a non-capitalist basis wholly determine the climate of these relations. Even though supported by the socialist world system, they lack resources to repattern international relations along lines obtaining inside each such country until capitalism falls in the bigger part of the world.

Such is the sum-total of modern international relations, an overall picture of which is essential for an understanding of the scientific concept of socialism, an essential condition for successful external relations and a premise for a scientifically justified foreign policy.

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<sup>1</sup> *Pravda*, 7 May 1978.

### 3. International Relations and the Socialist Orientation

We must go back to international relations because even a sketchy picture of the state of emerging socialism will be incomplete if we overlook the peculiar 'pre-socialist' societies that have opted for the non-capitalist way of development from a pre-capitalist society and even, in some cases, from communities preceding the antagonistic social-economic systems.

Many Asian and African countries that shook off colonial dependence after the Second World War found themselves in a conflicting situation. Their internal social conditions were centuries behind the possibilities and needs of world-wide intercourse, on the one hand, and the penetration of diverse influences thanks to modern communications found highly receptive soil there, on the other. This is why the finest minds of the only recently awakened peoples understandably opt in favour of socialism.

It is not simple to make this option. For in many of these countries there is no or practically no elementary objective premise for the socialist system—no large-scale machine production, and only an incipient proletariat, the main subject of socialist revolution. But thanks to ramified and intensive international relations in the present-day world it is possible, over a definite period, to *compensate* the lack of some, perhaps even the most important, conditions for rapid progress with a consistent *orientation* on the countries of the socialist world system in foreign policy, foreign economic relations, in science, technology,

the ideological field, culture, and so on.

Small-commodity production, reaching into farming and embracing the crafts (the I—I—I form) is basic in the economic structures of the newly-independent countries. The collectivist patriarchal pattern (the commune) still prevails in, say, the African countryside (the I—C—C form). Private capitalist production, what there is of it, is mainly in its home-craft, manufacturing stage (the I—C—I form).

A relatively small public sector (the C—C—C form) has taken shape through extensive nationalisation of the means of production owned by foreign and local capitalists, along with attempts to form peasant cooperatives. This applies chiefly to Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burma, Congo, Guinea, Guyana, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Syria. The working class in most of these countries is still insignificant. All this is not enough, so far, to ensure stable socialist development. This is why the countries on the non-capitalist road are not guaranteed against the revival of private capitalist tendencies and against counter-revolutionary overturns.

This in the first place. Second, the weakness of the public sector (C—C—C) can, for the time being, be supplemented by international ties (IT) with the socialist world community to buttress the socialist orientation.<sup>1</sup> In this

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<sup>1</sup> Passage of colonial and semi-colonial countries to proletarian dictatorship is, as a rule, possible by a series of preliminary stages, only as a result of growth of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into socialist revolution, and successful building of socialism, in most cases, only if there is direct support from proletarian dictatorships in other countries, said

function international relations act as an intensive 'beam of freedom' sent abroad by the socialist world. This is why any breach or break may, as a rule, disrupt the socialist programme of a country's regime. By means of the international relations of the new type, coupled with developing progressive internal structures, there arises a peculiar new type of society that cannot yet be defined as socialist but is no longer capitalist. It gravitates towards the socialist world system, may hopefully join it in the future, but does not yet belong to it in the present.

The existence of different modes of production in such socialist-oriented countries (formulas:

$$\left( \begin{array}{l} I \\ \diagdown \\ C \end{array} \right) > C - C + IR, I - C - C_0, I - C - I, I - I - I, I - C - \dots$$

is a sign not only of the weakness of the productive forces (predominance of manual labour), but also of the eclectic social-economic system and of the need for tremendous efforts to achieve the socialist aim.<sup>1</sup>

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the Programme of the Communist International. In the case of still more backward countries (e.g. in some parts of Africa), national uprisings and their victory may pave the way for socialism bypassing the capitalist stage, provided powerful aid is rendered by countries of proletarian dictatorship (*Kommunistichesky International v dokumentakh 1919-1932*, p. 30).

<sup>1</sup> More than anywhere else 'an enormous step forward must be taken in developing the productive forces; it is necessary to overcome the resistance (frequently passive, which is particularly stubborn and particularly difficult to overcome) of the numerous

It also predicates the need for centralised power and control, and accentuates the role of politics so long as a socialist economy proper has not yet taken shape. This is one side of the dialectical unity, while the other consists in the need for greater conscious participation of the mass of the people in progressive programmes.

The experience of anti-imperialist revolutions that gradually turn anti-capitalist in content, shows that the most honest intentions of convinced, often heroic, fighters for socialism may end in defeat and needless sacrifice if the accent is on cloistered politics and Blanquist conspiratorial methods and if there is no persevering and systematic work to inspire the broad mass of the people with the ideas and aspirations of an as a rule small vanguard of revolutionaries. Wherever the revolutionary democrats sincerely aspiring to a socialist future for their peoples fail to do what they must in order to be understood by the masses, imperialism frequently takes its revenge. For them and, to be sure, for all other social forces that opt for socialist aims in earnest, Lenin's rule must always stand uppermost: 'Capitalism cannot be vanquished without *taking over the banks*, without repealing *private ownership* of the means of production. These revolutionary measures, however, cannot be implemented without organising the

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survivals of small-scale production; it is necessary to overcome the enormous force of habit and conservatism which are connected with these survivals' (V. I. Lenin, 'A Great Beginning', *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 421).

entire people for democratic administration of the means of production captured from the bourgeoisie, without enlisting the entire mass of the working people, the proletarians, semi-proletarians and small peasants, for the democratic organisation of their ranks, their forces, their participation in state affairs.<sup>1</sup>

In summing up, let us note that there are at present several structural types of societies broadly described as socialist. So far, *only one of them is ideal*, namely, the Marxian theoretical description of socialism connoting the qualitative limit of development following which socialist countries will enter the second phase of communism. Its scientific picture drawn from the works of the founders of the revolutionary teaching, is an accurate guideline which Marxist-Leninist parties take good care to follow. Some other types conform with the actually existing societies in the framework of the socialist world system. There is also the type represented by societies of a transitional nature, for which the socialist perspective is not as yet strictly fixed.

Recently, ways of transition to the new system and forms and models of socialism became a topic of much discussion. Unfortunately, those involved in it often neglected a crucial condition of debate, failing to agree on its initial concepts and principles. The socialist form, for example, was conceived by some as its national or, more precisely, concrete historical variant. Others saw socia-

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Reply to P. Kievsky (Y. Pyatakov)', *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 25.



list form as the primary stage of socialist society.

Crucial significance in studying these problems attaches to the correct use of the notions of the *singular*, *particular* and *general* in the revolutionary activity of the peoples. For instance, if the specifically individual experience of a nation is elevated to the status of a general rule, this may lead to a distorted idea of socialism and to imposition of hegemonic nationalist methods of socialist transformation on all countries regardless of whether or not they fit the prevailing conditions. Study of concrete experience, of all its details and peculiarities is, above all, the business of historians. But it would be a rank violation of the methods of scientific socialism to regard the conclusions drawn from such study as universal principles.

The experience of building socialism by any nation merits close attention and respect. But it can claim to be an international guide to action only after it has been found faithful to the essence of socialism as outlined by Marx, Engels and Lenin, i.e., to the general; only after it has been verified and compared with the experience of other socialist countries and that of the world communist and working-class movement. *This is the level not of the singular, but of the particular*, at which, in effect, the above classification was made. Laying no claim to singularity since the diversity of socialist societies also presumes variety of types, this classification is, however, an objectively grounded alternative to revisionist subjectivism, which has made a kind of idol out of 'pluralism' in order to

submerge the only correct, scientific concept of socialism in a murky stream of arbitrary philistine inventions.

This calls to mind the concept 'model of socialism' which revisionist elements have used to malign the building of socialism in the fraternal socialist countries. The attempts to prove, on the pretext of 'modelling', a plurality of 'socialisms' tended to undermine the positions of *scientific* socialism and were naturally denounced by Communists.

There was this antithesis: *either* there is one and only one scientific model of socialism as presented in the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin, and in the documents of the world communist movement, *or* there is a plurality of 'models', as suggested by opportunists. In the present state of the discussion this antithesis has a fairly firm groundwork. But this does not put the question to rest. While denouncing revisionist incursions into the theory of socialist society, we must not narrow the limits of studying it.

The true scientific model of socialism, if we conceive it as a completed, integral social system that uses its potentialities to the full and has already reached the threshold of communism, is only one. As we have noted, this is the extreme condition in the movement of developed socialist society.

But there is also a number of societies that represent stages in the advance to this model. Since these stages are *different*, the societies in question may be described as different structural types (or, if you like, 'models'). But types not of socialism as such, of fully-developed socialism, but of an emerging

socialism developing from the lower forms of social organisation to the higher, a socialism in construction following the dictates of objective laws to a greater or less extent.<sup>1</sup>

An emasculated concept of socialism is used by the foes of socialism to confuse the people in the socialist countries. This has to be combatted firmly, uncompromisingly and systematically. But it does not follow that one has to give up study of the degrees of development of the new society. The lack of such study has already visibly affected *scientific prognosis of the development of socialist society*, and hinders us from finding competent solutions on the national and also international plane. As always, we should seek Lenin's advise: 'Do not hinder our political work, especially in a difficult situation, but go on with your own scientific research.'<sup>2</sup>

The expansion of such research and its influence on the guidance and practice of socialist and communist construction is not simply desirable but, indeed, vitally necessary. It is sure to play a truly historic role in substantiating the choice of the best forms and methods of transition from the pre-history of human society to its true, consciously created history.

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<sup>1</sup> Certainly, not all uses of the term 'model of socialism' lead to any distortion of Marxist-Leninist theory. Frequently, it implies different forms of building socialism or certain distinctions in individual countries. In such cases one can only question the wisdom of using a term which, by virtue of revisionist efforts, has acquired an anti-Marxist complexion and may create confusion.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism', *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 256,

The foregoing has given us little more than the material for a theoretical understanding of the emergence of the new, communist formation, of its orientation and tendencies, its motive forces, and factors that may hold it back. We do not feel justified to speak here of the laws, regularities, and categories of scientific socialism and communism, because these scientific concepts require very careful and cautious handling. And since formulating law-governed connections has never been simple, all we venture in conclusion is to single out some objective *correspondences* that are either directly named in the book or that may be inferred.

*What* are these correspondences?

For example, the correspondence between the development of the technical basis of modern production and its socialisation in fact, between the completion of socialisation in fact and the successes in abolishing the old division of labour, the correspondence between all these processes and the gradual elimination of

class distinctions and thereby the emergence of the social homogeneity of society.

Or take the correspondence between the absolute aim of production under socialism (production of use values) coinciding with its direct aim, and the shifting of the interest of society to concrete labour, deposing the law of value as a universal regulator of the economy. This correspondence is hewing its way forward and requires further study. From the point of view of the individual this means that all his labour is becoming labour for himself, that labour is *historically* becoming a field for the self-assertion of creative personalities, that labour power and human aptitudes are no longer subject to the influence of the market and that man has begun to conquer not only nature, but also his own social relations. The material of the present era helps trace the way from the destruction of exploitation to the elimination of all remnants of alienation and all forms of the alienated vision of the world, from the first reactions of the mentality of the oppressed to the growth of labour into the most joyous of human experiences, and from merely theoretical criticism of philistine consumerism to the elimination of the very basis for opposing creativity to consumption, and labour to enjoyment.

What does this show?

To begin with it shows the extraordinary consistency and *totality* of Marxism-Leninism, the harmony and *concurrence* of its seemingly disparate tenets belonging to fields far removed from one another. Marxism-Leninism is incompatible with eclecticism. Any assumption with a claim to novelty and validity can

undergo direct or indirect *verification* by comparing it with what has already been established by means of the classical Marxist method. No single proposition may be dropped from Marxism-Leninism, and all alien additions instantly betray their incompatibility with it. It may be proper to recall that bourgeois liberalism has long since espied this feature of the revolutionary teaching from its own class angle. 'The revisionists believed and still believe,' the 'democratic' *Frankfurter Zeitung* rebuked its allies of the social-democratic camp in 1908, 'that it is possible somehow to keep to Marx and yet become a different party. Vain hopes. Marx has either to be swallowed whole or completely rejected. A half-hearted course is of no use here.' And Lenin responded: 'Quite right, gentlemen of the liberal fold! You do sometimes come out with the truth by accident.... You have admirably expressed the essence of bourgeois science, of bourgeois liberalism, and its entire policy. You have grasped the fact that Marx cannot be swallowed piecemeal.'<sup>1</sup>

The above-mentioned correspondences show that the scientific view of the new society has got to be an *over-all* view. It is wrong, for example, to single out just the social-political processes and to try and erect a doctrine on them about the emerging social system. This kind of reduction is not viable. To raise superstructural phenomena to an absolute, to abstract oneself from the bedrock trends in the technical and economic basis of society

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'An Estimate of Marx by International Liberalism', *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 49

would not only upset the totality of the Marxist historico-materialist approach, but would also be liable to breed various subjectivist illusions—from categorical 'left' extremism to treacherous rightism that shies from clear-cut views and conceals its omnivorousness with florid professions of 'pluralism'.

The all-embracing totality of Marxism-Leninism and especially of its part known as scientific communism means, among other things, that the scale and range of analysis must be determined by nothing other than the 'measure' of its object. Only a study that strives to encompass all its in any way substantial aspects may be expected to yield a correct understanding of the basic specific features of the development of socialist society, a thorough knowledge of the ideals, long-term aims, and tasks of the communist and working-class movement, the entire revolutionary movement of liberation, and of the social and economic forms and the way of life shaped by the present era. It is our hope that the reader will feel this more distinctly after reading this book.

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