

Mao Tsetung's Immortal Contributions

Part 6: Continuing the Revolution under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

Introduction

In a famous quotation by Lenin on the dictatorship of the proletariat he states emphatically that:

It is often said and written that the main point in Marx's teachings is the class struggle; but this is not true. And from this untruth very often springs the opportunist distortion of Marxism. . . . Those who recognize only the class struggle are not yet Marxists; they may be found to be still within the boundaries of bourgeois thinking and bourgeois politics. . . . Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is what constitutes the most profound difference between the Marxist and the ordinary petty (as well as big) bourgeois. (The State and Revolution, Peking, FLP, pp. 39-40.)

Today, no less than in Lenin's time, the correct stand toward the dictatorship of the proletariat constitutes the most profound difference between a Marxist and a non-Marxist understanding and guide to action in relation to society and history. In particular it marks the most profound political difference between Marxism and revisionism. And it is precisely in this all-important area that Mao Tsetung made the most important of his immortal contributions to Marxism-Leninism and the revolutionary cause of the international proletariat.

Mao deepened the Marxist-Leninist analysis of what the dictatorship of the proletariat is, deepened it in an absolutely indispensable way, by showing how there continue to be classes under socialism, how these classes continue to struggle, and how the working class must wage its struggle under these new conditions, must continue the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Just as, at the time when Lenin wrote the above, the key task of Marxists was to uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat, so today the vital task of Marxist-Leninists is to grasp and uphold the deepened understanding of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat which was the greatest contribution of Mao Tsetung.

Theory of Proletarian Dictatorship

Of course the basic concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat did not originate with either Mao or Lenin, but was part of Marxism from the first. Marx himself had made a profound statement on this in a letter, rather early in his development as a Marxist:

As to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering either the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to demonstrate: 1) that the existence of classes is merely linked to particular historical phases in the development of production, 2) that class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat, 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society. (Marx to Joseph Weydemeyer, March 5, 1852, Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 64.)

It should be noted that this was written before Marx had done his great and systematic work in political economy, and that what he is talking about here is his contribution to the discovery of the general laws of the historical development of human society, and not about his contributions in the field of political economy. And, with regard to this field of the laws of historical development, what Marx emphasizes in the statement above is a basic principle first elaborated and continually stressed by Marx and Engels, as for example at the end of the second chapter of the *Communist Manifesto*:

Political power, properly so called, is merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organize itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class. (Marx



and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Peking, FLP, p. 58.)

What Marx and Engels emphasize is that the dictatorship of the proletariat is a *means*, not an end itself, a means of transition to communism, to classless society. This does not make the rule of the proletariat one bit less necessary, but it underlines the fact that it is necessary exactly for the achievement of the real goal of the proletarian revolution—the wiping out of all class distinctions. As Marx emphatically states in a famous passage:

This Socialism is the (*declaration of the permanence of the revolution*) the class dictatorship of the proletariat as the necessary transit point to the abolition of class distinctions generally, to the abolition of all the relations of production on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, to the revolutionising of all the ideas that result from these social relations. (*The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850*, Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Moscow, Progress Publishers, Vol. 1, p. 282.)

Upholding the dictatorship of the proletariat is a cardinal question and a touchstone of Marxism. For without establishing and exercising this dictatorship it is impossible for the proletariat to achieve its historic mission of communism. "We want the abolition of class," Engels said. "What is the means of achieving it? The only means is the political domination of the proletariat." (Engels, "Apropos of Working-Class Political Action," Reporter's Record of Speech at London Conference of International Working Men's Association, September 21, 1871, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 245.)

The Paris Commune

But although the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat was an integral part of Marxism right from the beginning, this does not mean that this doctrine, any more than any other part of Marxism, could be developed all at once, and in abstraction from the actual class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. At first, in the 1850s, Marx simply recognized the necessity of the class rule (the dictatorship) of the proletariat, without trying to speculate on exactly what form it would take. Even this initial recognition was the product of summing up the class struggle. As Lenin pointed out:

Marx deduced from the whole history of Socialism and of the political struggle that the state was bound to disappear, and that the transitional form of its disappearance (the transition from state to non-state) would be the "proletariat organized as the ruling class." But Marx did not set out to discover the political forms of this future stage. He limited himself to precisely observing French history, to analyzing it, and to drawing the conclusion to which the year 1851 had led, viz., that matters were moving towards the *smashing* of the

bourgeois state machine. (*The State and Revolution*, op. cit., p. 66.)

But as the actual revolutionary practice of the working class went forward, it was possible and necessary for Marx's theoretical understanding also to progress. And the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat did go forward, making a qualitative leap in 1871 with the first seizure of power by the working class—the Paris Commune.

The Paris Commune came into being at the end of the Franco-Prussian War when the French bourgeoisie surrendered to Prussia. But the workers of Paris were still armed to fight the war, and they rose up and seized power in Paris, vowing to defend the city both against the Prussian invaders and the French bourgeoisie, who fled to Versailles, set up a reactionary government, and proceeded to collaborate with the Prussian army in attacking Paris. As the Central Committee of the workers' National Guard proclaimed, in its manifesto of March 18, 1871:

The proletarians of Paris, amidst the failures and treasons of the ruling classes, have understood that the hour has struck for them to save the situation by taking into their own hands the direction of public affairs. . . . They have understood that it is their imperious duty and their absolute right to render themselves masters of their own destinies, by seizing upon the governmental power. (Quoted by Marx in *The Civil War in France, Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 217.)

Marx believed that the Commune would not be successful in holding on to its power. In the previous year he had pointed out that conditions were not ready for an uprising by French workers, and he thought after the seizure of power that the proletariat would be defeated after a time. But when the workers did rise and "stormed heaven" (as Marx termed it), he gave them full and absolute support, mobilizing the International Working Men's Association in behalf of the Commune, declaring, "What flexibility, what historical initiative, what a capacity for sacrifice in these Parisians! . . . History has no comparable example of similar greatness!" (Letter to Ludwig Kugelmann, April 12, 1871, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 247.)

At the same time as he hailed it as the most glorious height yet attained by the working class in its revolutionary struggle, Marx also eagerly studied the Commune in order to grasp its great historic lessons, especially concerning the form which the rule of the proletariat would take. As Lenin said:

And when the mass revolutionary movement of the proletariat burst forth, Marx, in spite of the failure of that movement, in spite of its short life and its patent weakness, began to study what forms it had discovered. (*State and Revolution*, p. 66.)

These forms were many, rich and vital. The Commune itself was composed, as Marx pointed out, mainly of "working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class." Further, "the Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time." (*The Civil War in France*, p. 220.) All Commune members and officials received workers' wages.

The army and police force were done away with, and in their place the National Guard enrolled all able-bodied citizens. The state subsidy for the church was swept away. Pawn shops were closed down. Crime was met with the iron force of the armed workers themselves, and the streets became safe for the ordinary citizens. Rent was cancelled. The Vendôme Column, a monument to France's chauvinist wars of aggression, was pulled down. Schooling was made free and open to all. The factories, whose capitalist owners had fled, were seized and run cooperatively by the workers. The night shift was abolished.

There were other new forms developed by the proletariat in its brief but glorious dictatorship in Paris, before it was crushed with the utmost savagery and revengeful cruelties by the French bourgeoisie. Not all of these forms, of course, were of equal value. Some were "false starts," others were quite correct in the immediate circumstances but were not necessarily models for a long-term socialist society, while others would indeed be features of any society which could really be called socialist. But regardless of all the details of particular features of the Commune, one fact stood out, which Marx summarized as follows:

It was essentially a working-class government, the pro-

duce of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economic emancipation of labour... The Commune was therefore to serve as a lever for uprooting the economical foundations upon which rests the existence of classes, and therefore of class-rule. With labour emancipated, every man becomes a working man, and productive labour ceases to be a class attribute. (*The Civil War in France*, p. 223.)

Once again, in other words, the main thing about the dictatorship of the proletariat is its character as a *transitional form* to communism. And in order first to consolidate its rule and advance to communism, the working class must *smash* the old bourgeois state machinery, with its governmental bureaucracy, its police and army, its judicial and prison system, etc. As Marx and Engels noted in their preface to a new German edition of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1872,

One thing especially was proved by the Commune, *viz.*, that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes." (*Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Peking, FLP, p. 2. The quote within this quotation is from *The Civil War in France*.)

Critique of the Gotha Programme

These same themes come to the fore even more explicitly in Marx's other main work on this subject, his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. This was his criticism (at first sent privately and only published after Marx's death) of the draft programme for the Socialist Workers' Party of Germany (later the German Social-Democratic Party), which was the product of the unification of two working class parties in Germany, one under the leadership of followers of Ferdinand Lasalle, the other led by followers (more or less) of Marx.

In this work Marx marked off clearly what he called the two "phases of communist society," which since that time have come to be called socialism, on the one hand, and communism, on the other. He emphasized that

Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*. (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 26.)

But, besides emphasizing again the transitional nature of socialism, and the fact that politically this transition must be marked by working class dictatorship, Marx also showed what the crucial difference is between socialism and communism in terms of economic organization. This difference can be expressed in the form of two maxims or slogans.

The maxim of socialist society is: from each according to his ability, to each according to his work. This corresponds to the general level of development of production relations that characterizes socialist society (which in turn is ultimately determined by the level of development of the productive forces). This means that, while provision is made for those actually unable to work, etc., generally each person gets back in the way of consumer goods an equivalent to what his labor has contributed. In all socialist societies that have existed, the exchange of labor for consumer goods has taken place so far through the medium of money—that is, workers receive money-wages with which they buy these consumer goods. This is itself a commodity relation and is an aspect of the situation where commodity relations have not been eliminated in society as a whole. To the degree that this is the case the law of value continues to operate (the law that the value of commodities is determined by the socially necessary labor time required to produce them) and exerts an influence on both the distribution of means of production and still more so in the distribution of means of consumption (consumer goods).

Under socialism, because of the transformation of the ownership system from capitalist to socialist, the operation of the commodity system and the law of value is restricted. And labor power itself is no longer a commodity under socialism—no longer can some people appropriate wealth from the labor of others on the basis of (legal) private ownership of the means of production, and instead each person's income is acquired solely from the labor he or she contributes—so long as socialist relations of production actually exist. But even so the persistence of commodity relations represents both a remnant of capitalist economic relations and a contradiction which can be seized on by bourgeois elements in attempting to restore capitalism.

And, even if the distribution of consumer goods under socialism were no longer literally in the commodity form, so long as it was based on exchange of equal values, as Marx explains, the "same principle prevails as that which regulates the exchange of commodities." (*Ibid.*, p. 18.) And this principle is one which indicates that society has not yet completely transcended the confines of capitalist relations, although it has made a qualitative leap beyond capitalism with the achievement of socialist ownership. "Hence," Marx says, "equal right here [under socialism] is still in principle—*bourgeois right*." (*Ibid.*)

This equality is also bourgeois in that it is still a *formal* equality. As Marx says: "This equal right is an unequal right for unequal labour... It is, therefore, a

right of inequality, in its content, like every right." (*Ibid.* Italics deleted.) Different people will differ in their skills, in natural endowments, in how many others they may have to support, and so on. So in actual fact, despite formal equality, one person will be getting more than another, one will be richer than another.

It is this bourgeois right, this equality which is still formal, bourgeois, and hence really still inequality, which will be overcome in advancing to communist society, a society in which, as Marx puts it, the principle prevails: from each according to his ability, to each according to his need.

But this transition to communism cannot be achieved immediately or all at once. As Marx points out trenchantly,

What we have to deal with here is a communist society [Marx means communism in its first stage, socialism] not as it has *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it *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. (*Ibid.*, p. 17.)

Thus Marx sketches here the basic difference between socialism and communism, and therefore what socialism must be in motion *toward*. And it follows from Marx's analysis that the general objective of the dictatorship of the proletariat could be summed up in one phrase: the elimination of bourgeois right. Marx presented this as a question both of overcoming the social distinctions and ideological influences left over from capitalism and of achieving the necessary material abundance for communism, with these two things obviously closely inter-related. As he put it:

In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs! (*Ibid.*, p. 19.)

But the fact that the "birth marks of the old society" would not only continue to exist under socialism for a long time but also give rise constantly to a new bourgeoisie, that the transition to communism would be a very long one, throughout which there would be classes and class struggle, and that the driving force in moving society forward to communism would be the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie—that, as Mao was to explain it, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie would be the principal one all throughout socialism and the class struggle between them the key link—all this was not grasped by Marx, who had only the short-lived experience of the Paris Commune as a concrete instance of working class rule from which to develop theoretical conclusions (in addition to the general lessons he drew from capitalism and previous class societies) concerning the nature of the state in general and the dictatorship of the proletariat in general. This understanding was developed only later, especially by Lenin and Mao—the former in an embryonic and partial way and the latter as a systematic line—on the basis of further experience in the actual practice of the dictatorship of the proletariat and with Marx's conclusions as a foundation.

Engels as Continuator of Marxism

Engels, of course, was Marx's close collaborator while Marx was alive, and the continuator and upholder of Marxism after his death. This is also true with regard to the crucial question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

During the time when they were both alive, for instance, Engels also strongly criticized the Gotha Programme for its deviation from some crucial Marxist principles. Shortly after Marx's death Engels not only upheld the Marxist principle of the withering away of the state, but also pointed out that

At the same time we have always held, that in order to arrive at this and the other, far more important ends of the social revolution of the future, the proletarian class will first have to possess itself of the organized political force of the state and with this aid stamp out the resistance of the capitalist class and re-organise society. (Letter to Phil Van Patten, April 18, 1883, Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 341.)

Again, in 1890, Engels found it necessary to stress sharply, in correspondence with certain people in Germany, the character of socialism as a transitional society and one in the process of motion and change. He wrote *against* those to whom "... 'socialist society' appeared not as something undergoing continuous change and progress but as a stable affair fixed once and for all..." and stated that "to my mind, the so-called 'socialist society' is not anything immutable. Like all other social formations, it should be conceived in a state of constant flux and change." (Letters to C. Schmidt and Otto von Boenigk, August 5 and 21, 1890, Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 484 and 485.)

And finally, there is the instance of Engel's sharp reassertion of this central doctrine in his "Introduction" to the third German edition of *The Civil War in France*, published in 1891 to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Paris Commune:

Of late, the Social-Democratic philistine has once more been filled with wholesome terror at the words: Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Well and good, gentlemen, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. (*Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 189.)

It is obvious that Engels is here delivering a sharp blow to certain trends in the German Social-Democratic Party, trends which were to give birth, just five years afterwards, to the full-blown revisionism of Eduard Bernstein. It is significant that Engels' blow against these trends centers here on the question of the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But, as has been touched on earlier and will be gone into more fully later, while recognizing the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat and forcefully insisting on this point in fierce struggle against the revisionists of their time, Engels as well as Marx did not recognize the continuation of the class struggle, and its central role, over a long period under socialism and did not recognize that it was not merely a question of the proletariat exercising dictatorship over the overthrown exploiting classes but of continuing the class struggle particularly against a newly engendered bourgeoisie. They tended to see the task of "stamping out the resistance of the capitalist class and reorganizing society" (in Engels' words) as a task which could be accomplished more quickly (and more easily) than has proved to be the case. Thus again, while the theoretical contributions of Marx and Engels, both in general and on the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular, have served as a foundation they remained to be built upon and further developed.

Lenin

Lenin was able to lead the successful Russian revolution because he kept a firm grip on Marxism and further developed it in the face of the revisionist cancer which infected the revolutionary workers' movement in the beginning decades of this century. This had two aspects: on the one hand, it meant applying Marxism to the ever-changing concrete situation, whose principal feature was the movement of capitalism into a new stage—imperialism. On the other hand, it meant vigorously defending—even resurrecting—some fundamental principles of Marxism which the revisionists were attempting to bury and "forget."

Lenin's initial work with regard to the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat was centered on the second, which he does primarily in *State and Revolution*. There he pointed out that, due to the growth and influence of revisionism, "... now one has to engage in excavations, as it were, in order to bring undistorted Marxism to the knowledge of the masses." (*State and Revolution*, Peking, FLP, p. 65.) Lenin's "excavation" in this book consists in giving a history (much more thorough than that above) of the evolution of the views of Marx and Engels on the state.

In the course of recounting this development, there are several points which Lenin emphasized as essential to Marx and Engels' teaching on the state. First, as already seen in the passage quoted at the beginning of this article, Lenin strongly pointed out that recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat was an important difference between Marxism and various forms of bourgeois ideology, including revisionism.

Secondly, he emphasized that this recognition means nothing less than upholding the necessity for violent revolution on the part of the working class and the smashing of the bourgeois state and its apparatus. Thirdly, he also underlined the transitional nature of socialism.

And finally, Lenin also emphasized what Marx had said about the persistence of bourgeois right:

And so, in the first phase of communist society (usually called Socialism) "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. "Bourgeois right" recognizes them as the private property of individuals. Socialism converts them into *common property*. To that extent—and to that extent alone—"bourgeois right" disappears.

However, it continues to exist as far as its other part is concerned; it continues to exist in the capacity of regulator (determining factor) in the distribution of products and the allotment of labour among the members of society. (*Ibid.*, p. 112.)

And a little later Lenin points to very important aspects of the economic basis for the complete withering away of the state, which requires

such a high level of development of Communism that the antithesis between mental and physical labour disappears, when there, consequently, disappears one of the principal sources of modern *social* inequality—a source, moreover, which cannot on any account be removed immediately by the mere conversion of the means of production into public property, by the mere expropriation of the capitalists. (*Ibid.*, p. 114.)

This is a profound analysis of some of the basic factors involved in the transition from socialism to communism, and one of its implications would seem to be that this transition period, socialism, will cover a

relatively long historical period—for, as Lenin notes here, the economic basis for communism is by no means achieved by the expropriation of the capitalists, but only by the resolution of the contradiction between manual and mental labor. (In saying this Lenin was following Marx and Engels, who had pointed out that the division of labor into mental and manual is the basis for classes.) And it is clear that the overcoming of this contradiction (between mental and manual labor) will take a fairly long historical period.

However, in other parts of *State and Revolution*, it seems that Lenin thought that the period of proletarian dictatorship would be relatively brief. This view that the transition to communism would be relatively quick is also to be found very clearly in Marx and Engels, as for instance in the following sentences from *Anti-Duhring*, which Lenin also quotes:

The proletariat seizes the state power and transforms the means of production in the first instance into state property. But in doing this, it puts an end to itself as proletariat, it puts an end to all class differences and class antagonisms; it puts an end also to the state as state. (Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 18.)

This comes through also in a famous statement by Marx, where he says that

From forms of development of the productive forces these relations [of production] turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. (Marx, "Preface to *The Critique of Political Economy*," Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 504.)

This is correct as a general description of the transition from one system of exploitation to another. But with regard to the transition from capitalism to communism, this statement errs in two ways. First it does not sufficiently recognize the difficulty, complexity and protracted nature of the struggle to transform the superstructure, tending to view this process as more or less passively tailing in the wake of the changes in the economic base. And secondly, it underestimates the protracted process of transforming the economic base itself, which involves not merely the change in the ownership system but the elimination of the division of labor characteristic of class society and the vestiges of capitalism in the system of distribution. Thus, while Marx and Engels spoke to the necessity to overcome "the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor" and to pass completely beyond the horizon of bourgeois right, and while more generally they stressed that the communist revolution was qualitatively different from all previous revolutions and must involve a radical rupture with both all traditional property relations and all traditional ideas, nevertheless they underestimated the time—and the struggle—that would be required to bring about these radical ruptures.

As noted before, the reason for this is that Marx and Engels, and Lenin too at the time he wrote *State and Revolution* (in August and September 1917, just before the October revolution), were analyzing the question in advance of any actual extended experience of proletarian rule. As a result, they could correctly grasp the essential features and direction of socialist society, but they could not foresee certain of its most important features and contradictions.

As Lenin says, speaking of Marx's analysis of the state in 1852:

True to his philosophy of dialectical materialism, Marx takes as his basis the historical experience of the great years of revolution, 1848 to 1851. Here, as everywhere, his teaching is the *summing up of experience*, illuminated by a profound philosophical conception of the world and a rich knowledge of history. (*State and Revolution*, *Ibid.*, p. 33.)

In other words, it is a principle of dialectical materialism that in general and overall, theory sums up practice. This is an aspect of the fact that practice is primary over theory, a fundamental principle of materialism. For human beings can grasp material reality in thought, and sum it up theoretically. But human thought, though it can grasp the laws of motion—dialectics—and on this basis project into future, cannot thoroughly comprehend things which will only emerge in the future. In other words, armed with a correct science (which is itself the product of theoretical summation of practice), man can grasp the essence of a thing and hence its general course of development, but this does not mean that all the particularities of future development can be predicted by any means. This is a point which is stressed repeatedly by Lenin in *State and Revolution* (see pages 36, 43, 66), who often expresses it by saying that Marxists are not utopians, trying to invent a new society, but are instead theoretically summing up the development of the new society from the old (see p. 57). This basic point was also emphasized by Mao, who said bluntly that Marxists are not fortune-tellers.

And Lenin, of course, was to have experience of several years of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the famous postscript to *State and Revolution* he notes that the book was also to have included a chapter on "the experience of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and [February] 1917," but before it could be written he was "interrupted" by the October Revolution of 1917.

On the basis of the revolutionary practice of the Russian proletariat, led by Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, in exercising its dictatorship in the remaining



Big character posters at Peking University during the Cultural Revolution.

seven years of Lenin's life, he began to make certain further developments in the Marxist theoretical understanding of the state, the practice of building socialism and the implementation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

During these years the Soviet working class fought both internal and external enemies, carrying on a fierce struggle against the bourgeoisie and other exploiters within the Soviet Republic and also against the imperialists and other foreign reactionaries who banded together to try to crush the new proletarian state. From this experience, Lenin drew very important conclusions about the persistent character of the struggle to advance to communist society, about the persistence of the bourgeoisie, bourgeois influences and bourgeois relations, and the regeneration of bourgeois elements under socialism—both from sources within socialist society itself and also from international sources.

Lenin made these points in a number of writings in the early years of the Soviet Republic. Just two years after the October Revolution he began to sum up the experience of the rule of the working class in an important article in *Pravda*, "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." Here he points out that classes still exist:

And classes still remain and will remain in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship will become unnecessary when classes disappear. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat they will not disappear. (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 115.)

The classes which Lenin has in mind here are the following. First, is the petty bourgeoisie and most especially the peasantry, to which Lenin devotes a lot of attention in this article and others, discussing how the dictatorship of the proletariat must move toward doing away with the class distinction between peasants and workers by eventually transforming the peasants into workers. Secondly, Lenin has in mind the former ruling class of Russia, about which he says:

The class of exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, have not disappeared and cannot disappear all at once under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The exploiters have been smashed, but not destroyed. They still have an international base in the form of international capital, of which they are a branch. They still retain certain means of production in part, they still have money, they still have vast social connections. Because they have been defeated, the energy of their resistance has increased a hundred- and a thousandfold. The "art" of state, military and economic administration gives them a superiority, and a very great superiority, so that their importance is incomparably greater than their numerical proportion of the population. (*Ibid.*)

Some six months later, Lenin returns to these themes, in his famous book on "*Left-Wing*" Communism, where one of his purposes is to sum up the first two and a half years in which the dictatorship of the proletariat has been exercised and socialism begun to be built in the Soviet Republic. Here he particularly stresses the influence of petty-bourgeois production and of the immense force of habit and tradition. He points out:

Classes have remained, and will remain everywhere for years after the conquest of power by the proletariat... The abolition of classes means not only driving out the landlords and capitalists—that we accomplished with comparative ease—it also means abolishing the small commodity producers, and they cannot be driven out, or crushed; we must live in harmony with them; they can (and must) be remoulded

and re-educated only by very prolonged, slow, cautious organizational work. ("*Left-Wing*" Communism, *An Infantile Disorder*, Peking, FLP, p. 32.)

Here he is particularly referring to the peasantry in the countryside, but also to small traders and other elements of the petty bourgeoisie in the cities. Lenin considered this to be a prime source of a possible capitalist restoration, and in another famous passage he says,

...small production engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale. (*Ibid.*, p. 6.)

Thus Lenin saw the main dangers of a capitalist restoration as coming from the deposed ruling classes and the persistence of petty-bourgeois (small-scale) production. Hence it followed that the main tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in moving socialist society forward to communism and preventing its moving backwards to capitalism, were to crush the resistance of the old landlords and capitalists and to gradually eliminate small-scale production. The class contradictions which the proletariat would have to eliminate before the classless society of communism could come into existence were those with the remnants of the old exploiting classes, on the one hand, and with the peasantry and other petty-bourgeois elements, on the other. And he recognized that two different means would have to be used to resolve these two different types of contradictions—the first antagonistic and the second non-antagonistic.

This is the main thrust of Lenin's view, but it is not the whole of his analysis of socialist society. Lenin also began to deal more extensively with how a new bourgeoisie could begin to develop within socialist society. Thus already in 1918 he says,

Yes, by overthrowing the land owners and bourgeoisie we cleared the way but we did not build the edifice of socialism. On the ground cleared of one bourgeois generation, new generations continually appear in history, as long as the ground gives rise to them, and it does give rise to any number of bourgeois. As for those who look at the victory over the capitalists in the way that the petty proprietors look at it—"they grabbed, let me have a go too"—indeed, every one of them is the source of a new generation of bourgeois. ("Report on the Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," April 29, 1918, session of the All-Russia C.E.C., *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 300.)

However, as can be seen, Lenin identifies this danger here almost exclusively with the influence of petty-bourgeois production. And indeed, in the same speech, he makes the flat statement that "...in the transition from capitalism to socialism our chief enemy is the petty bourgeoisie, its habits and customs, its economic position." (*Ibid.*, p. 294.) It should be noted that Lenin, as he explicitly says here, is speaking of the transition from capitalism to socialism—that is, from capitalist to socialist ownership—which the Soviet Republic was then undertaking. In other words, he is not here addressing the question of the transition to communism. (And it should also be noted that when Lenin says that the "chief enemy" is the petty bourgeoisie, he does not literally mean that the petty bourgeoisie should be dealt with antagonistically, but that petty production and trading and the petty producer mentality—which is essentially bourgeois—will be the most difficult obstacles to overcome.)

A year later, Lenin referred specifically to "the new bourgeoisie which have arisen in our country." As part of the source for this, Lenin speaks of the fact that "the bourgeoisie are emerging from among our Soviet government employees"—many of whom were actually bourgeois intellectuals trained in the old socie-

ty. But he goes on to say that "only a very few can emerge from their ranks" and that the new bourgeoisie is mainly emerging "from the ranks of the peasants and handicraftsmen..." (Lenin, "Speech Closing the Debate on the Party Programme," Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B), *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 189.)

At the same time Lenin also began to put forward in some writings that the struggle to reach communism and the abolition of classes would be long and arduous. For instance, in his important article, "A Great Beginning," he stresses:

Clearly, in order to abolish classes completely, it is not enough to overthrow the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, not enough to abolish their rights of ownership; it is necessary also to abolish all private ownership of the means of production, it is necessary to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual workers and brain workers. This requires a very long period of time. (*Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 421.)

Here, clearly, Lenin is saying that the period of socialism is transitional, that it must constantly be moving forward to communism, and that the dictatorship of the proletariat must not only stamp out the resistance of former exploiters and eliminate the difference between worker and peasant, but must resolve the contradictions which give rise to classes—with the consequence that the dictatorship of the proletariat will occupy a fairly long historical period.

In this same article Lenin is also concerned with another aspect of the transitional nature of socialism, and the fact that it is a battleground between the communism which is struggling to develop and the capitalism which resists elimination. In particular, Lenin calls attention to certain "shoots" of the future communist society which were already developing in the first early stages of socialism in the Soviet Republic. In particular these were the "communist subbotniks" (communist Saturdays), in which workers contributed voluntary labor to advance socialist construction in the society overall—not on the basis of being lured with bonuses or forced with guns, nor because they wanted to see their particular unit prosper or profit, but because in fact the workers were in power and were remaking society in their own interests and these "subbotnik" workers in particular were guided and inspired by the communist outlook and the vision of the historic mission of achieving communism.

On the basis of their conscious determination to maintain the rule of the working class and transform all of society, the most class conscious workers, in putting in such unpaid days of labor, began to work, as Lenin said, not for "their 'close' kith and kin, but... [for] their 'distant' kith and kin—i.e.,... [for] society as a whole..." (*Ibid.*, p. 427). And Lenin correctly summed up that this was a fragile but very important shoot of the future communist society, a sprout of the future production relations that would be established throughout society.

In this essay Lenin, on the basis of the limited practice of proletarian dictatorship up to that time, began to point to several important aspects of this dictatorship which were later developed much more fully by Mao Tsetung, on the basis of a much more extended and deepened historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In particular, Lenin points to the fact that the task of this dictatorship, of abolishing classes and arriving at communism, will require a long and complex struggle, involving the use of many different means and taking many forms, in order to do away with the underlying contradictions that give rise to classes (notably the contradiction between mental and manual labor).

But at the same time, in Lenin there is only a hint of the view, which was later to be developed by Mao, that throughout this transitional period of socialism there remain antagonistic classes and the antagonistic struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

Stalin

This was an understanding which Mao forged on the basis of summing up the historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, in China, and in other socialist countries. But before turning directly to Mao's development of the theory and practice of revolution in this most crucial sphere, it is important to make an assessment of the role of Stalin, particularly on this question of upholding and carrying out the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It was Stalin who led the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and through it the masses of working people in the Soviet Union in maintaining the rule of the working class and building socialism for 30 years. And, while providing leadership to such a momentous task under extremely difficult conditions and without any prior historical experience is a truly great contribution of Stalin, it is also true that in this process Stalin made mistakes, some of them quite serious. Therefore a correct summation of not only Stalin's contributions but also his errors, specifically around the touchstone question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is very important.

In *The Foundations of Leninism*, written just after Lenin's death in 1924, Stalin summed up the basic principles of Lenin's contributions to Marxism, including as one of the main points the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Stalin correctly presented the question of the transition to communist society as one of struggle, a protracted battle both against the

remnants of the ruling classes of the old society and against the influences of the petty producers and their outlook—and one which required the transformation of the thinking, not only of the peasantry, not only of all the petty-bourgeois elements, but also of the masses of workers, including the factory workers. This struggle, Stalin showed, was part of the basic task of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

And Stalin continued to uphold these principles in leading the working class in carrying out very acute and complicated struggle against class enemies both within and outside the Party. In particular, he led the struggles which defeated Trotsky, Bukharin, and other, especially leading, people in the Party whose lines would in one way or another have wrecked socialism and brought back capitalism to the Soviet Union. (These struggles have been outlined in the third article in this series, "Political Economy, Economic Policy and Socialist Construction," *Revolution*, July 1978.)

This was a most important part of Stalin's leadership in carrying out the actual transformation of the ownership system in the complex conditions of the Soviet Union. This included not only the replacement of capitalist relations by socialist ones but also the advance, through various stages of collectivization, from feudal survivals on a large scale in the countryside to socialist forms of ownership. But after the socialist transformation of ownership had been basically completed, in the mid and late '30s in particular, Stalin drew conclusions which were seriously wrong concerning the nature of Soviet society and the contradictions that characterized it (for background on this see parts III and IV in this series, on political economy and philosophy, in *Revolution*, July and August 1978 respectively).

These errors are exemplified, for example, in the following quotations from Stalin's report, "On the Draft Constitution of the U.S.S.R.," delivered in 1936:

Thus the complete victory of the socialist system in all spheres of the national economy is now a fact.

And what does this mean?

It means that the exploitation of man by man has been abolished, eliminated... Thus all the exploiting classes have now been eliminated. (*Problems of Leninism*, Peking, FLP, pp. 799-800.)

Stalin goes on to say that there still remain the working class, the peasant class and the intelligentsia, but that "... the dividing lines between the working class and the peasantry, and between these classes and the intelligentsia, are being obliterated..." that "... the economic contradictions between these social groups is declining, are becoming obliterated," and that "... the political contradictions between them are also declining and becoming obliterated." (*Ibid.*, p. 803.) This analysis leads Stalin to say, in his report to the 18th Party Congress in 1939, that

The feature that distinguishes Soviet society today from any capitalist society is that it no longer contains antagonistic, hostile classes; that the exploiting classes have been eliminated, while the workers, peasants and intellectuals, who make up Soviet society, live and work in friendly collaboration. (*Ibid.*, p. 912.)

It should be clear, after the historical experience of the Chinese revolution and the theoretical summations of Mao Tsetung, that this is incorrect. Antagonistic classes continue to exist under socialism; what distinguishes socialism from capitalism is not the disappearance of hostile classes, but the fact that the working class is the ruling, rather than the oppressed, class.

But based on his erroneous analysis in the mid and late '30s Stalin took the position that the only reason for the continuation of the dictatorship of the proletariat was the Soviet Union's encirclement by imperialist enemies. There were others in the Soviet Party who argued that, since (supposedly) there were no longer antagonistic classes in the Soviet Union, then the state should be done away with. But in answering them Stalin, sharing their incorrect view on the non-existence of antagonistic classes in the U.S.S.R., says only that their view demonstrated "... an underestimation of the strength and significance of the mechanism of the bourgeois states surrounding us and of their espionage organs..." (*Ibid.*, p. 928.) Stalin even drew the conclusion that the Soviet Union could, rather soon, achieve communism itself, but even then the Soviet state would still remain "... if the capitalist encirclement is not liquidated..." (*Ibid.*, p. 935.)

Of course it was absolutely correct for Stalin to uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat against those who wanted to liquidate it, and it was also correct to point out that the Soviet state was necessary to protect the gains of socialism against foreign imperialists. But it was one-sided and in this sense incorrect to only point to these factors, and consequently to see the internal struggles and contradictions within Soviet society as arising out of the activities of foreign agents and not out of the internal dynamics of socialist society itself.

Thus it can be seen that on the one hand Stalin firmly upheld the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but on the other hand, during this period especially the basis on which he did so was not entirely correct by any means and in fact reflected serious errors in thinking. In a sense, it can be said that Stalin's errors did not lie in seriously deviating from Lenin's specific conclusions on the dictatorship of the proletariat so much as they did in not correctly applying the method of Marxism-Leninism to analyze the new conditions that arose in the Soviet Union with the (basic) socialization of ownership, conditions which

Lenin himself (as well as previous Marxists) had no basis to concretely analyze—since they did not exist in their time. When Stalin did deal with these historically new conditions, he drew incorrect conclusions, partly because of the fact that they were in fact new but also because of a certain amount of metaphysics and mechanical materialism in Stalin's approach. In essence Stalin one-sidedly emphasized the ownership system and failed to deal sufficiently and correctly with the other aspects of the relations of production and the superstructure and their reaction upon the ownership system, which led to his erroneous conclusion (most clearly expressed at the 18th Party Congress in 1939) that once ownership was socialized antagonistic classes and the internal basis for capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union had been eliminated.

Interconnected with these errors is the fact that Stalin did not rely sufficiently on the masses of people and his closely related tendency to rely too much on bureaucratic methods. All of this had the consequence that Stalin made mistakes also with regard to the suppression of counter-revolutionaries. Because of his analysis of socialist society, he thought that all counter-revolutionaries must spring essentially from foreign capitalist sources rather than from the contradictions internal to socialism. Partly for this reason, he failed to rely sufficiently upon the people to ferret out and drag counter-revolutionaries into the light of day, but instead placed almost exclusive reliance upon the Soviet intelligence service. And because he did not correctly understand the source of counter-revolutionary activity (seeing it as coming purely from external sources), he made a number of errors in dealing with it, and often wrongly widened the target and confused contradictions among the people with contradictions between the people and the enemy.

During the last part of his life, Stalin did begin to attempt to analyze some of the particular contradictions that did still exist under socialism, and in the Soviet Union in particular. This is especially so in one of his last works, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.* The strengths and weaknesses of this work have been outlined in the previous article in this series on political economy (*Revolution*, July 1978). For present purposes what is important to note is that Stalin does here lay stress on the fact that in particular the contradiction between the forces and relations of production continues to exist in socialism and that if not correctly handled this contradiction could become antagonistic and even provide a basis for capitalist elements to arise and drag society backward. But Stalin did not deal with the continuing contradiction between the base and superstructure and still more he did not sum up that the contradictions between the forces and relations of production and the base and superstructure not only constitute the basic contradictions in socialist society but also find expression throughout socialism principally in the existence of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and the struggle between them, an antagonistic class contradiction.

Chinese Analysis of Stalin

The Chinese Communist Party, under Mao's leadership, seriously and all-sidedly addressed the question of Stalin's role in the international communist movement, making an assessment of both his achievements and his mistakes. Thus after the infamous secret speech by Khrushchev at the 20th Party Congress and the subsequent anti-Stalin campaign launched by the new revisionist usurpers of the CPSU, the analysis of the Communist Party of China summed up crucial lessons at that decisive hour concerning the practice of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union and Stalin's leadership of it.

This summation was in the form of two articles in the *People's Daily* (April 5 and December 29, 1956). Although the revisionists in China did succeed in getting some of their line into these articles (especially the first) and they do contain some positions that are questionable or downright wrong (for example on Yugoslavia), overall these articles defend Stalin and clearly uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat. The first article, "On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," emphasizes that contradictions continue to exist under socialism and the mass line as the key to correct communist methods of leadership. The second article, "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," is longer and discusses many topics, but its main thrust is to stress that although Stalin made errors, he was a great revolutionary, whose achievements rather than his mistakes were the primary aspect in summing him up, and to attack those who were using the criticism of Stalin to try to liquidate the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is clear that this attack is aimed not only at Khrushchev but also his revisionist counterparts in China who were bent on doing exactly that.

This is also clear from another of Mao's writings from the same year, "On the Ten Major Relationships," where he says:

In the Soviet Union, those who once extolled Stalin to the skies have now in one swoop consigned him to purgatory. Here in China some people are following their example. It is the opinion of the Central Committee that Stalin's mistakes amounted to only 30 per cent of the whole and his achievements to 70 per cent, and that all things considered Stalin was nonetheless a great Marxist. We wrote "On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" on the basis of this evaluation. (*Selected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 304.)

Later that same year, in November 1956, Mao put things even more sharply:

I would like to say a few words about the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. I think there are two "swords": one is Lenin and the other Stalin. The sword of Stalin has now been discarded by the Russians. Gomulka and some people in Hungary have picked it up to stab at the Soviet Union and oppose so-called Stalinism. The Communist Parties of many European countries are also criticizing the Soviet Union, and their leader is Togliatti. The imperialists also use this sword to slay people with. Dulles, for instance, has brandished it for some time. This sword has not been lent out, it has been thrown out. We Chinese have not thrown it away. First, we protect Stalin, and, second, we at the same time criticize his mistakes, and we have written the article "On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." Unlike some people who have tried to defame and destroy Stalin, we are acting in accordance with objective reality.

As for the sword of Lenin, hasn't it too been discarded to a certain extent by some Soviet leaders? In my view, it has been discarded to a considerable extent. Is the October Revolution still valid? Can it still serve as the example for all countries? Khrushchov's report at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union says it is possible to seize State power by the parliamentary road, that is to say, it is no longer necessary for all countries to learn from the October Revolution. Once this gate is opened, by and large Leninism is thrown away. (Mao, *Selected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 341.)

Mao obviously paid a good deal of attention to gaining a detailed and objective assessment of Stalin, and as noted, it was especially upon the summation which he reached of both Stalin's achievements and errors that Mao made his own great contributions to the theory and practice of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Mao of course led the masses of Chinese people in liberating their country from the grip of imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat-capitalism, an historic victory which was basically accomplished in 1949. And the particular form of state that was established in China on this basis was what was called The People's Democratic Dictatorship. This was in fact (if not in name) the specific form which the dictatorship of the proletariat took in China, given that the Chinese revolution was initially a *new-democratic* revolution. (For an account of the theory of the new-democratic revolution, see the first article in this series, "Revolution in Colonial Countries," *Revolution*, April-May, 1978.)

And because of this particular character of the Chinese revolution, the alliance of the working class with the peasantry, which had been a very important question for the proletariat in maintaining its rule and building socialism in the Soviet Union, assumed even greater importance in China, where the overwhelming majority of people were peasants chained in semi-feudal relations in the old society, and where the countryside had for a long time been the pivotal point of the revolution.

But beyond this, part of the character of the new-democratic revolution was that certain sections of the Chinese capitalists—the national bourgeoisie—who were also held back by the combination of feudalism and foreign capital, could be, and had to be, united with during the first stage of the Chinese revolution, and even in the early years of the socialist revolution. Under this particular form of the rule of the working class (the people's democratic dictatorship), it was necessary to restrict the development of, but at the same time to utilize, the national bourgeoisie. Mao even insisted as late as 1957 that to the degree possible it was necessary to handle the contradiction with the national bourgeoisie non-antagonistically—that is, to phase it out as a class of private owners and at the same time attempt to win over as much of this class as possible.

And because overall this and other contradictions were correctly handled at this time in China, the reactionaries in China, while they seized on certain grievances of the masses and attempted to turn these into an anti-socialist revolt, were not able to succeed in the same way and on the same scale as they were in some other socialist countries at that time—most notably Hungary in 1956, where a reactionary rebellion was able to draw in a significant section of the masses. In fact, when die-hard rightist elements jumped out in China in 1957 and went head-on against the advances of the socialist system, the great majority of the masses were politically aroused in defense of socialism and these counter-revolutionaries were relatively quickly isolated and beaten back.

By this time, in 1957-58, two very important developments had taken place in the international communist movement and within the socialist countries. One was that in China itself by 1956 the socialist transformation of the ownership system had in the main been established. This meant that in industry, state ownership had basically been achieved, while in agriculture a lower form of socialist ownership dominated the countryside, namely a collective ownership of the land and the major implements of production by groups of peasants. And this of course was a great advance and a great victory for the Chinese revolution and for the proletariat throughout the world.

But at the same time a great reversal was being brought about in the world's first socialist country.

This, of course, was the rise to power of the revisionists headed by Khrushchev and the beginning of the process of reversing the entire revolution in the USSR and reverting to capitalism. As a necessary and very essential part of carrying out the process of capitalist restoration, Khrushchev launched an attack on the dictatorship of the proletariat. As we have seen already, a central part of this attack took the form of a virulent and vulgar attack on Stalin, who had led the Soviet working class in consolidating and carrying out its dictatorship. But at the same time Khrushchev also launched a more general, theoretical attack on the dictatorship of the proletariat, arguing that earlier (under Lenin and in the early part of Stalin's leadership, perhaps) this had been necessary, but that now there was no longer a need for it—and therefore the Soviet state could become what he called a state of the whole people! The state was no longer to be an instrument of a class, but of everyone, of all classes, in Soviet society. This, which Khrushchev called a "creative development of Marxism," was actually and obviously only the most straight-out form of the ideology of the bourgeoisie, which always tries to make the pretense that the state is above classes precisely in order to exercise dictatorship over the proletariat and disarm it politically.

As noted before, the Chinese Communist Party under Mao's leadership launched a counter-offensive against these attacks on Marxism-Leninism, both by defending the achievements and overall role of Stalin and by defending the basic theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But at the same time, as a reflection of the struggle that was going on within the international communist movement as well as the class struggle in China as a whole, there was a sharp two-line struggle raging within the Chinese Communist Party itself. Those within the Party, especially at its top levels, who were bent on taking the capitalist road naturally found support for their position in the revisionism of Khrushchev & Co. and bitterly resisted the efforts of Mao and other revolutionary leaders in the Chinese Communist Party to expose and fight against this revisionism. So at this time Mao was waging fierce struggle against revisionist leaders like Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping, who were arguing that classes and class struggle were dying out in China, and essentially that there was no need for the dictatorship of the proletariat any longer in China either.

As part of this struggle, Mao made two very important statements about the class struggle in China itself at that time, which were also statements having more far-reaching implications about the whole period of socialism in general. In March 1957, in his "Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work," Mao made the important analysis that:

To achieve its [socialism's] ultimate consolidation, it is necessary not only to bring about the socialist industrialization of the country and persevere in the socialist revolution on the economic front, but also to carry on constant and arduous socialist revolutionary struggles and socialist education on the political and ideological fronts. . . . In China the struggle to consolidate the socialist system, the struggle to decide whether socialism or capitalism will prevail, will take a long historical period. (*Selected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 423.)

And a month earlier, in "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People," Mao had stated clearly that:

In China, although socialist transformation has in the main been completed as regards the system of ownership, and although the large-scale, turbulent class struggles of the masses characteristic of times of revolution have in the main come to an end, there are still remnants of the overthrown landlord and comprador classes, there is still a bourgeoisie, and the remoulding of the petty bourgeoisie has only just started. Class struggle is by no means over. The class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the class struggle between the various political forces, and the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the ideological field will still be protracted and tortuous and at times even very sharp. The proletariat seeks to transform the world according to its own world outlook, and so does the bourgeoisie. In this respect, the question of which will win out, socialism or capitalism, is not really settled yet. (*SW*, Vol. 5, p. 409.)

These two passages are of tremendous importance, because in them, for the first time in the history of the international communist movement, it was pointed out explicitly that classes and class struggle continue to exist under socialism, that in particular the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie continues even after the socialist transformation of the system of ownership is (in the main) completed and that this would be true for a long time, with the struggle at times becoming very sharp.

But at the same time it is obvious that since proletarian revolutionary practice was still in certain ways only in its beginning stages on this front, and since Mao was only beginning to sum it up theoretically, his understanding of this was also at the beginning stages of development. Particularly this is true of his understanding of the nature of classes, and especially of the bourgeoisie, under socialism. But as the class struggle in China sharpened, so did Mao's understanding of that struggle.

And the class struggle did sharpen up in China at

this time, particularly around the Great Leap Forward. This was the general movement, of course, out of which the People's Communes were born, and the movement in which masses of people, especially the peasants, rose up and did all kinds of things that were unheard of and were condemned by reactionary and conservative forces both inside and outside the Party.

The Great Leap Forward has been discussed in previous articles in this series, and what was said there will not be recapitulated here. But one aspect of this period should be mentioned and highlighted here, and that is the subject of pay differentials. While Mao recognized that wage scales, with people with differing skills and differing productivity being paid different rates, were an aspect of bourgeois right, and hence inevitable during the socialist period, he also recognized that the task of the dictatorship of the proletariat was to *restrict* bourgeois right and, as part of this, to continually restrict these differences in what people received. But in the period of the 1950s, much to Mao's displeasure, such pay-rate differentials had actually been expanded, particularly among Party leaders and full-time Party officials, with large income gaps being created between various levels of officials, and between officials and the masses.

As part of a fight against this—and the revisionist line and policies in general—during this period Mao supported and struggled to get published an article by Chang Chun-Chiao, one of those now vilified in China as a member of the "gang of four," which attacked the ideology of bourgeois right. The article pointed out that many so-called communists were acting like misers totaling up their cash registers. They were treating themselves like commodities, and if they put in an extra hour working for the revolution they wanted overtime pay for it. And Mao succeeded, during the Great Leap Forward, in leading a fight which cut back on some of this.

Through the experience of the mass revolutionary upsurge of the Great Leap Forward Mao began to see more clearly the nature of the class struggle and the contradictions in socialist society itself and to develop his basic line and theory of continuing the revolution under the conditions in which socialism had been basically established—that is, the socialist political system, the dictatorship of the proletariat, had been established and the socialist transformation of ownership had in the main been carried out.

This understanding of Mao's had made a qualitative leap by 1962. It was in August and September of that year at the Tenth Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party that Mao put forward what came to be known as the basic line of the CCP for the historical period of socialism:

Socialist society covers a considerably long historical period. In the historical period of socialism, there are still classes, class contradictions and class struggle, there is the struggle between the socialist road and the capitalist road, and there is the danger of capitalist restoration. We must recognize the protracted and complex nature of this struggle. We must heighten our vigilance. We must conduct socialist education. We must correctly understand and handle class contradictions and class struggle, distinguish the contradictions between ourselves and the enemy from those among the people and handle them correctly. Otherwise a socialist country like ours will turn into its opposite and degenerate, and a capitalist restoration will take place. From now on we must remind ourselves of this every year, every month and every day so that we can retain a rather sober understanding of this problem and have a Marxist-Leninist line. (Quoted in *The Ninth National Congress of the Communist Party of China [Documents]*, Peking, FLP, pp. 22-23.)

The analysis which is expressed here is a new development in Marxist-Leninist theory, an analysis which represents a qualitative advance over anything previously achieved in the international communist movement.

Mao in this quotation mentions that "we must conduct socialist education," and in 1963, following this up, the Party at Mao's initiation began the Socialist Education Movement, which was meant to combat revisionism and bourgeois practices and thinking. In many ways this movement was the predecessor of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. On the one hand, it actually prepared the ground for the Cultural Revolution, and on the other hand it was a first attempt by Mao to develop new forms and methods for continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was during these years of the early '60s that the proletariat, particularly under the leadership of Chiang Ching, launched a sharp counter-offensive against the revisionists in the crucial sphere of art and culture (see the previous article in this series, *Revolution*, Nov. 1978). And it was during this period that the most deep-rooted and hidden of the new bourgeois forces in China's socialist society began to feel their position seriously endangered, and hence began to jump out in earnest in their struggle with the proletariat for the rule of society.

It should also be borne in mind that at the same time the Chinese Communist Party was conducting a fierce struggle internationally with Soviet revisionism. It was at this time that open polemics began between the CPC and the CPSU, with the Communist Party of China publishing, among other things, the important documents "A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement" (June 1963) and the nine-part "Comment on the Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU" (Sept.

1963-July 1964). In particular, the last of the nine-part "Comment," which is entitled "On Khrushchov's Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World," is of special importance because in it can be found in concentrated form the basic understanding which Mao had by this time arrived at concerning the class struggle under socialism. Against the thoroughly revisionist line coming out of the Soviet Union at that time, "On Khrushchov's Phoney Communism" stresses that antagonistic classes and class struggle continue to exist under socialism generally, and that therefore the reversion from working class rule to a bourgeois dictatorship and the restoration of capitalism in a socialist country is possible—not only through the armed intervention of the foreign bourgeoisie (as had happened in the Paris Commune and the Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919 and was attempted in the Russian Soviet Republic right after it was founded), but also when "the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat takes the road of revisionism or the road of 'peaceful evolution' [into capitalism] as a result of the degeneration of the leadership of the Party and the state." (*On Khrushchov's Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World*, Peking, FLP, p. 61.) This article ends with a series of measures which a socialist country can and should take to prevent the restoration of capitalism.

"On Khrushchov's Phoney Communism" served as a weapon not only in the international struggle between Marxism and revisionism which was raging at the time but also in the same kind of struggle that was raging sharply within the Chinese Party itself as a concentrated reflection of the class struggle in society as a whole. It is also important because on the one hand it shows the unprecedented level to which the Marxist-Leninist understanding of the dynamics of socialism and the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat was being carried by Mao, while on the other hand it shows that Mao's analysis was still developing and had not reached the new levels which it was to attain in conjunction with the Cultural Revolution.

The pamphlet states that:

In the Soviet Union today, not only have the new bourgeois elements increased in number as never before, but their social status has fundamentally changed. Before Khrushchov came to power, they did not occupy the ruling positions in Soviet society. Their activities were restricted in many ways and they were subject to attack. But since Khrushchov took over, usurping the leadership of the Party and the state step by step, the bourgeois elements have gradually risen to the ruling position in the Party and government and in the economic, cultural and other departments, and formed a privileged stratum in Soviet society. (*Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.)

Despite its many important insights, still, in its analysis of classes, and in particular the bourgeoisie, under socialism, this work is not entirely clear especially regarding the role and nature of bourgeois elements inside the Party. Nor, along with this, is it entirely clear regarding the source and material basis of the bourgeoisie under socialism—specifically after socialist ownership has (in the main) been established.

In documenting the existence of bourgeois elements in the Soviet Union, it lays stress on illegal activities, such as profiteering, black marketing, illegal appropriation of collective property, etc. And in enumerating the sources of new bourgeois elements who carry on these and other anti-socialist activities, it mentions (in addition to the overthrown exploiters and international capitalism) "political degenerates" that emerge among the working class and government functionaries and "new bourgeois intellectuals in the cultural and educational institutions and intellectual circles" as well as "new elements of capitalism" that are "constantly and spontaneously generated in the petty-bourgeois atmosphere" (referring to the persistence of small-scale production and trade). But it does not identify the revisionists (capitalist-roaders) in top leadership of the Party and state—including economic ministries and institutions—as a social stratum constituting a bourgeois class within socialist society itself and with its core right in the Communist Party. Nor does it sufficiently place emphasis on the central question that these revisionists can, in the areas and departments they control, even under socialism, seize on and expand the capitalist aspects within socialist production relations themselves—the remaining inequalities, the existence of bourgeois right, etc. within and between economic units—to transform socialist ownership into a mere outer shell and in this way convert collective property into private property (capital) and build up their strength in preparation for an all-out attempt to usurp power and then restore capitalism in society as a whole.

For this and other reasons "On Khrushchov's Phoney Communism" did not represent the full development of Mao's analysis of the bourgeoisie and the danger of capitalist restoration in a socialist country, nor of the means for fighting against it. But during this same period, Mao did make a number of very sharp and pointed comments, particularly concerning those in positions of authority in China's socialist society which show the further direction in which his thought was moving. For instance, it was at this time that he made the remark that "leading cadre who are taking the capitalist road have turned, or are turning, into bourgeois elements sucking the blood of the workers." Making his point even sharper, he also said in 1964 that:

The bureaucrat class on the one hand and the working class together with the poor and lower-middle peasants on the other are two classes sharply antagonistic to each other.

Now what Mao was saying was not that every person that worked in an office, or every official or cadre, was a bureaucrat sucking the blood of the workers and a new bourgeois element. In fact in the main and in most cases their relations with the workers and peasants were comradesly relations of cooperation. But on the other hand there existed certain actual inequalities between them. They occupied objectively different positions in the socialist system. The cadres, especially full-time leading officials, did a different type of work than the masses of working people, they occupied a relatively more privileged position, they received a higher rate of pay, they tended to have a different sort of outlook—akin to that of the petty bourgeoisie—and the material conditions of their lives would reinforce this different outlook. And it was necessary to wage struggle to keep such people from going over to the capitalist way of doing things and following revisionist leaders at the top in carrying out capitalist methods and taking the capitalist road.

Also at this time, in the summer of 1964, Mao had a series of discussions with his nephew, Mao Yuan-hsin, who was a close follower of Mao Tsetung and, as they now call him, a "sworn follower" and "sworn accomplice" of the so-called "gang of four" (he was arrested and/or apparently killed when the counter-revolutionary coup took place after Mao's death). In this series of discussions Mao raises a very important question:

Are you going to study Marxism-Leninism, or revisionism?

Yuan-hsin: Naturally, I'm studying Marxism-Leninism. The Chairman: Don't be too sure, who knows what you're studying? Do you know what Marxism-Leninism is?

Yuan-hsin: Marxism-Leninism means that you must carry on the class struggle, that you must carry out revolution.

The Chairman: The basic idea of Marxism-Leninism is that you must carry out revolution. But what is revolution? Revolution is the proletariat overthrowing the capitalists, the peasants overthrowing the landlords, and then afterwards setting up a workers' and peasants' political power, and moreover continuing to consolidate it. At present, the task of the revolution has not yet been completed; it has not yet been fully determined who will overthrow whom. In the Soviet Union, is not Khrushchev in power, is not the bourgeoisie in power? We too have cases in which political power is in the grip of the bourgeoisie; there are production brigades, factories, and *hsien* committees, as well as district and provincial committees, in which they have their people, there are deputy heads of public security departments who are their men. (*Chairman Mao Talks to the People*, ed. Stuart Schram, p. 243.)

Now what Mao is saying here, of course, is that even though we have the socialist form, and everyone claims to be a Marxist-Leninist, the decisive question is the content, the substance—whether the Marxists and the masses of people are in command and leading society in the direction of communism, or whether the revisionists and a handful of bourgeois elements are in command and leading things in quite another direction, back to capitalism. Of course to take socialism back to capitalism requires a qualitative change. It requires having control not just over this or that area of the economy, this or that part of the superstructure, this or that institution or security agency, but rather it means seizing control of society as a whole and completely transforming it. But Mao is pointing out that even within the socialist system there are pockets—and not insignificant pockets—which fall repeatedly under the sway of those who take up the bourgeois outlook, take to the bourgeois style of life and the bourgeois way of doing things, and who therefore implement bourgeois policies and practices, and basically begin to institute capitalist relations under the signboard of Marxism-Leninism.

So this raises the fundamental question, which Mao insisted (with good reason) had not yet been solved: Who is going to overthrow whom? Even under socialism, Mao was saying, it is necessary for the proletariat to *continue* to overthrow the bourgeoisie. Not in the sense, of course, that the bourgeoisie has supreme power and runs society as a whole, but in the sense that continually and repeatedly the working class has to rise up, mobilize its forces, and strike down the revisionists in positions of power and thus regain control of those parts of society which have been usurped from proletarian control. And of course there may be certain parts of society in which the working class has not yet, at a certain time, been able to gain real control, so in these areas it may be a question of the proletariat's asserting its power for the first time. This was the situation in China in the case of art before the Cultural Revolution (as seen in the previous article in this series, *Revolution*, November 1978).

This fundamental question was directly addressed in a central part of the Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party at its 9th and 10th Congresses (in 1969 and 1973):

The basic programme of the Communist Party of China is the *complete overthrow* of the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in place of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the triumph of

socialism over capitalism. The ultimate aim of the Party is the realization of communism. (emphasis added)

And, indicating the great significance of this point, when the revisionists did seize supreme power after Mao's death, they of course rewrote the Party Constitution, and on this fundamental point—the basic programme of the Party—they took anything about overthrowing out of the Constitution, so that now it merely says that they will "eliminate the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes step by step." (*The Eleventh National Congress of the Communist Party of China [Documents]*, Peking, FLP, p. 121.)

Now it might seem at first glance that this change is not all that significant, or even that the new version of the basic programme is more correct. It might seem that the task of overthrowing the bourgeoisie and other exploiting classes has been accomplished and now the task is to eliminate them. But that ignores, or really denies, the all-important fact that so long as the bourgeoisie continues to exist, it will not only repeatedly attempt to overthrow the proletariat and restore capitalism, but will succeed, as part of this, in usurping portions of power even in the conditions where the proletariat holds power overall in society. And this becomes all the more an urgent question when it is grasped that the core of the bourgeoisie and the commanders of the reactionary forces in society consists precisely of revisionists in the Communist Party itself, especially at its top levels.

In order to deal with this problem and to continue to consolidate its dictatorship and advance toward communism, the proletariat must not merely suppress the bourgeoisie (and other exploiting class elements) but must continually seize back the portions of power usurped by the bourgeoisie. And this means overthrowing those die-hard revisionists who occupy these positions of power and are determined to take the capitalist road. In other words, eliminating the bourgeoisie means repeatedly *overthrowing* it, by mobilizing the masses to seize back *from below* those portions of power the bourgeoisie repeatedly usurps in socialist society. This is the point Mao was stressing when he insisted (in his conversations with his nephew Mao Yuan-hsin) in 1964 that the question of who will overthrow whom was not settled.

It was at this same time that Mao clearly pinpointed who it was that posed the main target of the continued advance of socialism to communism, and hence who it was that constituted the main target of danger to the revolution at its present stage. Speaking with reference to the Socialist Education Movement then in progress, Mao said:

The main target of the present movement is those Party persons taking the capitalist road." (*Ninth Party Congress Documents*, p. 25.)

In other words, the main target was no longer the bourgeoisie in society in general, or outside the Party in particular, but had become Party persons in power taking the capitalist road, or "capitalist-roaders," as they came to be called.

It can be seen that this was another significant advance in the understanding of class struggle under socialism. And this understanding was deepened in the course of the next few years, as the class struggle in China sharpened. For of course, with Mao opening the attack on revisionists in the Party, and making them the main target, the revisionists were going to fight back. They tried in every way possible to block the formulation of these policies by Mao and their adoption by the Party, and where they couldn't do that they tried in all sorts of ways to block their implementation. In particular at that time they did everything they could to sidetrack the Socialist Education Movement and turn it into a fight among the masses.

Cultural Revolution

Things were coming to a head, and they erupted two years later with the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. It will not be possible here to recount the history of this unprecedented and earth-shaking revolution and the different events and twists and turns which it involved. The important thing for the purposes of this article is the theoretical underpinnings of the Cultural Revolution, how the theory that guided it represented the greatest of Mao's immortal contributions to the science of Marxism-Leninism.

Mao explained, in 1967, why this Cultural Revolution was a necessity in the following words:

In the past we waged struggles in rural areas, in factories, in the cultural field, and we carried out the socialist education movement. But all this failed to solve the problem because we did not find a form, a method, to arouse the broad masses to expose our dark aspect openly, in an all-round way and from below. (*Ibid.*, p. 27.)

This quotation brings out many things, one of which is that the Cultural Revolution was unprecedented, not only in general or in China, but in the history of socialism. It went against all the "norms" of what socialism was supposed to be, what a communist party is supposed to do, and so on. This of course is true only in a superficial sense, because in reality the sole purpose of a communist party is to lead the proletariat in making revolution to achieve communism, and this is what Mao was leading the Communist Party of China to do. But it was something that went against all the traditions and the force of habit that had been built up

and had in fact become obstacles under socialism. The force of habit cannot be followed in making revolution, including under socialism. Social habit and tradition has been built up by thousands and thousands of years of class society, and following such tradition will not lead toward classless society.

And of course it was unprecedented for the chairman of a communist party to call upon the masses to rise up and strike down powerful persons in the party. But revolution does not work on precedent, and in fact within the Party there were two headquarters. The capitalist-roaders had their own machine and their own headquarters, and this was what was necessary to dislodge them in order to prevent China from being taken down the road to capitalism.

Thus Mao summed up that it was not enough to talk about upholding the leading role of the Party, etc. It was a question of constantly revolutionizing the Party as part of revolutionizing society as a whole. Of course overall the Party had to play its leading role. Even when the Party in China was being shaken to its very roots and ceased to exist in many areas, it never ceased to exist nationally, of course, and Mao had every intention of reconstituting the Party. The Cultural Revolution was also the form for reconstituting and strengthening the Party, and doing it unit by unit, area by area, from the base up, through the mass action of the people. And unless such revolutionization was carried out within the Party, unless the masses were mobilized to recognize, to drag into the light of day, to strike down top leaders of the Party who were trying to turn it into a bourgeois party, and to subject to mass criticism and supervision the leading cadres in general, then through the force of habit and the conscious action of revisionist high officials the Party would become an instrument of the bourgeoisie, and society would be taken "peacefully" down the capitalist road under its leadership.

So Mao summed up this most important point from the historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat both in China and internationally, particularly the counter-revolution in the Soviet Union, and began to develop the ways and means of reconstituting and revolutionizing the Party, driving out of its ranks those in authority taking the capitalist road. And the form, the method, that was found was basically *reliance upon the masses*. The Party was reconstituted by bringing the Party leaders and members before the masses to receive their criticism and supervision. In this way, together with guidance from the proletarian headquarters in the Party headed by Mao, the Party units on the various levels were reformed and linked together according to democratic centralist organizational principles. Such a rectification of the Party was, like the Cultural Revolution as a whole, completely unprecedented. For with regard to the Party, as well as the society as a whole, it was determined that the so-called "normal way" of doing things was not sufficient to root out revisionists and shake the upper levels of the Party in particular out of the bureaucratic mold into which they were being increasingly cast. A party in power, Mao summed up, must continue to be the vehicle for leading the proletariat in the continuing class struggle under socialism, but it can also become the vehicle for a bureaucratic stratum to pursue bourgeois interests. Only mobilizing and relying on the masses, under the guidance of a Marxist-Leninist line, could solve this problem. (This is very much related to Mao's analysis of the bourgeoisie in the Party itself—which will be dealt with in detail later.)

Through this Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, further transformations were not only made in the Party, but throughout society. Here again the working class, led by Mao and other communist revolutionaries, carried out changes which were unprecedented. Divisions and inequalities were reduced between different strata and sectors of society, including between the country and the city. The people rose up in their hundreds of millions, developing not only new economic and social relations and the revolutionization of culture, of people's thinking, etc., but also the different forms of struggle so characteristic of the Cultural Revolution—big-character posters, public mass criticism of persons in power, the organization of brigades of youth, which came to be called the Red Guards, and so forth.

Mao warmly supported the struggles and initiatives of the masses, and constantly urged them on to persevere in their revolutionary upsurge. He wrote an open letter to the Red Guards, for instance, saying that their actions

... express your wrath against and your denunciation of the landlord class, the bourgeoisie, the imperialists, the revisionists and their running dogs, all of whom exploit and oppress the workers, peasants, revolutionary intellectuals and revolutionary parties and groups. They show that it is right to rebel against reactionaries. I warmly support you. (*Ninth Congress Documents*, p. 35.)

To provide leadership and guidance to the masses in this momentous mass struggle, in August 1966 the "Decision of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party Concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" was issued. (All quotations below are from the pamphlet of the same name [Peking, FLP].) Commonly known as the "16-Point Decision," this was worked out under Mao's personal guidance, and obviously represented a victory of his line over fierce opposition on the leading bodies of the CCP. There are many important points in this deci-

sion, and it warrants the close study of all communists. Some of its points were brought out in the previous article in this series. What should be emphasized here are the following:

The "16-Point Decision" highlights the fact that "the outcome of this great cultural revolution will be determined by whether or not the Party leadership dares boldly to arouse the masses." The title of this section expresses what might be called the motto of the Cultural Revolution: "Put Daring Above Everything Else and Boldly Arouse the Masses." The article points out in the same vein in the next section: "In the great proletarian cultural revolution, the only method is for the masses to liberate themselves, and any method of doing things in their stead must not be used."

The "Decision" reaffirms that "the main target of the present movement is those within the Party who are in authority and are taking the capitalist road." It gives basic guidance on correctly handling both contradictions among the people and the question of cadres, as well as the policy towards scientists, technicians and "ordinary members of working staffs" (i.e., not those in authority). It talks about the line on education and the armed forces. It emphasizes the real connection between revolution and production:

The great proletarian cultural revolution is a powerful motive force for the development of the social productive forces in our country. Any idea of counterposing the great cultural revolution to the development of production is incorrect.

But, perhaps most importantly for the purposes of this article, the "16-Point Decision" also talks about the organizations created by the masses:

Many new things have begun to emerge in the great proletarian cultural revolution. The cultural revolutionary groups, committees and other organizational forms created by the masses in many schools and units are something new and of great historic importance.

These cultural revolutionary groups, committees and congresses are excellent new forms of organization whereby the masses educate themselves under the leadership of the Communist Party. They are an excellent bridge to keep our Party in close contact with the masses. They are organs of power of the proletarian cultural revolution.

These groups became, through a process of development in the Cultural Revolution, the Revolutionary Committees which were set up at many different levels of society. Note how these creations of the masses are hailed by Mao. And note how the capitalist-roaders who have usurped power for the time being in China have hastened to do away with them on the basic levels of society and to transform them into bourgeois-bureaucratic devices where they have been retained in form.

Through the course of the Cultural Revolution, however, Mao did not stand still, but continued to both sum up the practice of the revolution up until that time and to map out the strategy and tactics for its further advance. The Cultural Revolution itself went through many twists and turns, during all of which Mao provided guidance in the struggle, but what will be concentrated on here is the overall sweep of the revolution and the *general* theoretical lessons which Mao drew from it.

One of the deepest and most important of these lessons is that it is not enough to conduct struggle against revisionists only "at the top"—that is, only on the leading bodies of the Party and state—or only "from the top down"—that is, deal with revisionists and other counter-revolutionaries by decision of the leading bodies first and then conduct education among the ranks of the Party and the masses about why a particular person was purged, what the issues and questions of line, etc. were. Instead it was necessary, as Mao said, to arouse and lead the broad masses to wage struggle and defeat the class enemies *from below*. And the mass upsurge of the Cultural Revolution was an unprecedented example of exactly this. It represented, on a broad and deep scale, a new form and method, as Mao summed up, for defeating die-hard capitalist-roaders and further revolutionizing society.

Mao often stated that the Cultural Revolution was "absolutely necessary and most timely." In speaking at the First Plenary Session of the Ninth Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in April 1969, he gave an important indication of why this was so:

Apparently, we couldn't do without the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, for our base was not solid. From my observations, I am afraid that in a fairly large majority of factories—I don't mean all or the overwhelming majority—leadership was not in the hands of real Marxists and the masses of workers. Not that there were no good people in the leadership of the factories. There were. There were good people among the secretaries, deputy secretaries and members of Party committees and among the Party branch secretaries. But they followed that line of Liu Shao-chi's, just resorting to material incentive, putting profit in command, and instead of promoting proletarian politics, handing out bonuses, and so forth. . . . But there are indeed bad people in the factories. . . . This shows that the revolution is still unfinished. (Quoted in Chang Chun-chiao, *On Exercising All-Round Dictatorship Over the Bourgeoisie*, Peking, FLP, pp. 9-10.)

And it follows, as the last sentences make clear, that the Cultural Revolution, while preventing a revisionist

seizure of power and capitalist restoration right then, did not and could not solve this problem once and for all. The revolution must be continued under the dictatorship of the proletariat for a long time—in fact throughout the long transition period of socialism, during the entire course of the dictatorship of the proletariat, until the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes are completely extinguished and classes as a whole have been abolished. And, as Mao insisted, many more mass upsurges, like that of the Cultural Revolution in its first few years, would be necessary in the future in order to accomplish this historic mission, together with the people of the entire world.

And this in turn has to do with the deeper purpose of the Cultural Revolution. In 1967, in the midst of this upsurge, Mao had this to say:

Here I'll ask you a question: Tell me, what is the object of the great proletarian cultural revolution? (Someone answered that it was to struggle against the capitalist roaders in the Party.) The struggle against the capitalist roaders in the Party is the principal task, but not the object. The object is to solve the problem of world outlook and eradicate revisionism.

The Center has repeatedly stressed the importance of self-education, because a world outlook cannot be imposed on anyone, and ideological remolding represents external factors acting on internal factors, with the latter playing the primary role. If world outlook is not reformed, then although two thousand capitalist roaders are removed in the current great cultural revolution, four thousand others may appear the next time. We are paying a very high price in the current great cultural revolution. The struggle between the two classes and the two lines cannot be settled in one, two, three or four cultural revolutions, but the results of the current great cultural revolution must be consolidated for at least fifteen years. Two or three cultural revolutions should be carried out every hundred years. So we must keep in mind the uprooting of revisionism and strengthen our capability to resist revisionism at any time. ("Talk by Chairman Mao with a Foreign [Albanian] Military Delegation," *People's China*, ed. David Milton, Nancy Milton and Franz Schurmann, Vintage Books, 1974, pp. 263-64.)

In the course of the Cultural Revolution, and most especially during the mass upsurge of its first few years, the profound truth that Lenin expressed—that masses of people learn in a few weeks of struggle in a revolutionary period what they could not learn in years of "normal times"—was once again powerfully demonstrated and proved to be of decisive importance not just for the struggle in capitalist society but in socialist society as well. All this has everything to do with the fundamental question of who is to be relied on in advancing society to communism. Reliance, Mao insisted over and over, could only be placed on the broad masses. The dictatorship of the proletariat can only be really that, if it is dictatorship exercised by the broad masses themselves, which means mobilizing and arming them with a Marxist-Leninist line to fight against the class enemy—and enabling them to distinguish the correct from the incorrect line and the actual interests of the proletariat from those of the bourgeoisie through the course of their own struggle and the study of Marxism-Leninism to master its basic stand, viewpoint and method.

If any other method is used, Mao summed up, then if revisionists seize leading positions and are able to put the official "stamp of approval" on a counter-revolutionary line—in the guise of Marxism—the masses will be in a passive position politically, and in the name of adhering to the line of the Party and loyalty to its leadership, they will be led back to the hell of capitalism. In short, the dictatorship of the proletariat must not be treated metaphysically—in a static and absolute way—or it will be lost. Exercising dictatorship over the bourgeoisie, Mao showed, meant and could only mean *continuing the revolution* under the dictatorship of the proletariat, continuing to wage the class struggle against the bourgeoisie and all exploiting classes through reliance on the broad masses. This does not mean that the kind of mass upsurge characteristic of the first few years of the Cultural Revolution is always necessary and possible. What it does mean is that, through different forms, the masses must be politically mobilized and led to wage the class struggle and that, repeatedly through the socialist period, at certain points in the development of the class struggle such mass upsurges will indeed be "absolutely necessary and most timely."

As noted, Mao stressed many times that the Cultural Revolution which began in 1966 could not be the only one if China was to remain a socialist country. At different times Mao gave somewhat different estimates of how often such a thing would be necessary, and possible, but the important thing, of course, is not the exact timetable, which will be determined by the twists and turns of the class struggle both within the country and internationally, but the fact that such a revolution is necessary repeatedly, again and again, throughout the historical period of socialism. And Mao also indicates above *why* this is so. Of course the people who are the targets at a particular time, individual capitalist-roaders, may be overthrown and cast down—and certain ones may even be won over. But throughout the period of socialism new individuals (or sometimes the same ones again) will come to the fore as revisionist leaders constituting the core of a new bourgeoisie, and they must be continually overthrown. That is why the real object of the Cultural Revolution, as Mao points out here, is not just to overthrow those capitalist-

readers who have, at that time, entrenched themselves in the party of the proletariat; rather, it must be to remold the world outlook of the masses of people, so that they take up the stand, viewpoint and method of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism, and thus are increasingly armed to recognize and strike down revisionists whenever they raise their heads.

The same point is stressed again when Mao talks, a year later in 1968, of the victories which have been won through the Cultural Revolution:

We have won great victory. But the defeated class will still struggle. These people are still around, and this class still exists. Therefore we cannot speak of final victory. Not even for decades. We must not lose our vigilance. According to the Leninist viewpoint, the final victory of a socialist country not only requires the efforts of the proletariat and the broad masses of the people at home, but also involves the victory of the world revolution and the abolition of the system of exploitation of man by man all over the whole globe, upon which all mankind will be emancipated. Therefore, it is wrong to speak lightly of the final victory of the revolution in our country; it runs counter to Leninism and does not conform to facts. (*Ninth Congress Documents*, pp. 64-65.)

Here Mao makes clear that final victory cannot be achieved for a long time both because exploiting classes still exist in the world as a whole and because the bourgeoisie still exists in China itself. And, with regard to the second point in particular, Mao is not merely describing a phenomenon—that the bourgeoisie still exists in China—but is emphasizing again a fundamental *objective law of socialist society*—that, as he had summed up several years earlier, socialism is not an end in itself or something which can be fully consolidated as such but is precisely a long period of transition, all throughout which the bourgeoisie will continue to exist and with it the danger of capitalist restoration, and that the key link in continuing the advance toward communism is class struggle, in unity with the struggle of the proletariat and oppressed people the world over.

At this point in the Cultural Revolution—1968-69—Mao also summed up the need for a change in the form of struggle and gave leadership to this process, building on the achievements and transformations that had been made and carrying them forward, further developing and consolidating them. Mao acted here in accordance with the law that the class struggle does not proceed in a straight line and always at the same level of intensity, but proceeds in a wave-like fashion, or in spirals. The 9th Party Congress in 1969 represented the consolidation of the struggle, and the achievements of the Cultural Revolution so far, at a certain stage and laid the basis for carrying forward the struggle and building on these achievements in the next period. But at the same time Mao warned again that, even though the form of the struggle might change, this did not mean that the struggle was over or that there would not again be a need to overthrow a bourgeois headquarters in the Party. In fact, right after the 9th Congress, Mao stated that such an all-out battle would probably have to be fought within a few years.

And indeed a new bourgeois headquarters did arise within the Party within the next few years, this time led by someone who had been closely associated with the Cultural Revolution. The person of course was Lin Biao, who tried to pull off a coup in 1971, including a plot to assassinate Mao, and was killed in a plane crash trying to flee the country after his plan was foiled. Mao had recognized quite early that Lin Biao had treacherous characteristics, even though he had played a generally positive role at an earlier stage of the Chinese revolution, and even though Mao felt it was necessary to unite with Lin during the first stage of the Cultural Revolution in order to knock out the strongly entrenched Rightists associated with Liu Shao-chi.

The defeat of Lin Biao's plots and the smashing of his headquarters, although a great victory for the proletariat, also created new conditions—new contradictions and new problems. Many of the veteran leaders of the Party who, in the face of the mass upsurge of the Cultural Revolution and the determined support for it by Mao and other revolutionary leaders, had to one degree or another been won—or forced—to go along, began to back off and oppose it, using Lin Biao's treachery as a rationalization—or pretext—for their opposition.

In effect Mao's opponents argued that almost no one was more identified with the Cultural Revolution than Lin, and now that he had shown his true colors, one should suspect everything that he had promoted and been involved in. They covered over the fact that there had been many defects in the way in which Lin had promoted the Cultural Revolution, that by the time of the Ninth Congress he had begun to attack many of the achievements and gains of the Cultural Revolution, and that he had argued that revolutionary turmoil was fine for a while (namely for as long as it took for him to get on top), but that the time had come for the masses to quiet down, put their noses to the grindstone and just produce. Those who now saw their chance to attack the Cultural Revolution, of course, tried to ignore this, the rightist thrust of Lin Biao's line, as well as its rightist essence, and instead wanted to portray him as a wild-eyed "ultra leftist," and by implication to smear the Cultural Revolution as a whole with the same brush.

In the course of this struggle Mao made some extremely important summations, which pushed even further forward the Marxist-Leninist understanding of

continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus in late 1974 Mao publicly focused attention on the crucial question,

Why did Lenin speak of exercising dictatorship over the bourgeoisie? It is essential to get this question clear. Lack of clarity will lead to revisionism. This should be made known to the whole nation. (Editor's note, *Marx, Engels and Lenin on the Dictatorship of the Proletariat* [Peking, FLP, 1975], p. 1.)

After its publication in February 1975, soon after the end of the Fourth National People's Congress, this instruction of Mao's launched the campaign to Study the Theory of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Combat and Prevent Revisionism. What Mao was stressing in this quotation, and what was stressed in this campaign, is that it is necessary to understand *why*, for what purpose, the dictatorship of the proletariat is being exercised. It is not enough just to understand that there must be a dictatorship of the proletariat—it is necessary to understand what the proletariat must accomplish, and in what direction it must be moving, through its dictatorship.

What this direction is, is clarified in another quotation from Mao from the same time:

Our country at present practices a commodity system, the wage system is unequal, too, as in the eight-grade wage scale, and so forth. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat such things can only be restricted. Therefore, if people like Lin Biao come to power, it will be quite easy for them to rig up the capitalist system. That is why we should do more reading of Marxist-Leninist works. (*Ibid.*, p. 2.)

What Mao is talking about here are the remnants—what Marx called the "birth marks"—of the old society which exist within the socialist economic base—within socialist production relations themselves. Such things—the commodity system, differences in distribution, etc.—can be generally described as bourgeois right, since they belong to the category of economic relations characterizing the bourgeois epoch and signal that the horizons of these relations have not been entirely crossed (to use Marx's words), although these things operate within a different context under socialism, since the exploitation of wage labor is abolished by socialist production relations. These "birthmarks" spring from the continued existence of what the Chinese often called the "three great differences"—between workers and peasants, town and country, and mental and manual labor.

Mao is calling attention to the fact that, on the one hand, bourgeois right—broadly defined as above—continues to exist throughout the period of socialism and that the dictatorship of the proletariat can only restrict it. This is why capitalist restoration continues to be a very dangerous possibility. But on the other hand, he is emphasizing that the proletariat must precisely *restrict* bourgeois right and that the increasing restriction of bourgeois right, in accordance with the material and ideological conditions at each point, must be carried out throughout the period of socialism. Otherwise, the growth and power of the bourgeoisie will be fostered and it will be strengthened in its attempt to seize power, impose bourgeois dictatorship over the masses and restore capitalism with its supreme bourgeois right—the right to exploit the proletariat.

What exactly the difference between socialism and old China was and in what ways they were the same was further clarified in something else that Mao said at the same time:

In a word, China is a socialist country. Before liberation she was much the same as a capitalist country. Even now she practices an eight-grade wage system, distribution according to work and exchange through money, and in all this differs very little from the old society. What is different is that the system of ownership has been changed. (*Ibid.*, pp. 1-2)

This makes a precise and scientific economic differentiation of capitalism from socialism. The system of ownership has changed. It has become basically socialized. But this does not mean that the relations of production have been *totally* transformed, by any means—and Mao is emphasizing that although there has been an advance, it is only the first step.

Further, there is the question of whether the system of ownership itself has been fully socialized. When agriculture becomes collectivized, as it was in China by the late 1950s, with the land and major implements of production being owned collectively by groups of people who also work the land, this is socialization, but it is not full socialization—this only comes when the land and means of production are collectively owned by the working class, through its state, and the peasants are transformed into workers. This step in the socialization of agriculture has never yet been completed in any socialist society. Further, as Chang Chun-chiao shows in an important article not long after the publication of these quotations from Mao, even in commerce and industry, state ownership is not complete. Chang points out:

However, we must see that with respect to the system of ownership the issue is not yet fully settled. We often say that the issue of ownership "has in the main been settled"; this means that it has not been settled entirely, and also that bourgeois right has not been totally abolished in this realm. The statistics cited

above show that private ownership still exists partially in industry, agriculture and commerce, that socialist public ownership does not consist entirely of ownership by the whole people but includes two kinds of ownership, and that ownership by the whole people is still rather weak in agriculture, which is the foundation of the national economy. The disappearance of bourgeois right in the realm of the system of ownership in a socialist society, as conceived by Marx and Lenin, implies the conversion of all the means of production into the common property of the whole of society. Clearly we have not yet reached that stage. Neither in theory nor in practice should we overlook the very arduous tasks that lie ahead for the dictatorship of the proletariat in this respect.

Moreover, we must see that both ownership by the whole people and collective ownership involve the question of leadership, that is, the question of which class holds the ownership in fact and not just in name. (*On Exercising All-Round Dictatorship Over the Bourgeoisie*, Peking, FLP, pp. 8-9.)

Second, there is the fact that ownership, while it is the most important and basic aspect of the relations of production, is not the only aspect. There are also two other aspects: (1) the relations among people in the process of production, and (2) the relations of distribution. Both of these, under socialism, continue to be infected, to varying degrees, with bourgeois right. We saw that Marx, in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, talks about the bourgeois right which is inherent in the socialist system of distribution according to work, and Mao refers to this in the above quotation as well. Bourgeois right cannot be completely eliminated in this aspect of the relations of production under socialism, but it can and must be continually restricted. That was one reason Lenin hailed the communist *subbotniks*—because they represented an overcoming of bourgeois right in distribution relations in a certain respect. Even the eight-grade wage scale represented a restriction—for there had been many more grades in the wage-scale earlier, in the 1950s—but it could not be viewed as a static thing and the final limit of such restriction.

If bourgeois right is not continually restricted in these aspects of the production relations—in distribution and in relations among people in production, the division of labor—then it will grow, and these aspects will react back upon the ownership relations. Chang Chun-chiao sums up these important points as follows:

It is perfectly correct for people to give full weight to the decisive role of the system of ownership in the relations of production. But it is incorrect to give no weight to whether the issue of ownership has been resolved merely in form or in actual fact, to the reaction upon the system of ownership exerted by the two other aspects of the relations of production—the relations among people and the form of distribution—and to the reaction upon the economic base exerted by the superstructure; these two aspects and the superstructure may play a decisive role under given conditions. Politics is the concentrated expression of economics. Whether the ideological and political line is correct or incorrect, and which class holds the leadership, decides which class owns these factories in actual fact. (*Ibid.*, p. 10.)

A result of these inevitable contradictions under socialism, both within the economic base (the relations of production), and between the base and superstructure, is that a new bourgeoisie is constantly, and likewise inevitably, generated within socialist society. Mao also spoke to this in the following statement:

Lenin said that "small production engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale." They are also engendered among a part of the working class and of the Party membership. Both within the ranks of the proletariat and among the personnel of state and other organs there are people who take to the bourgeois style of life. (*Marx, Engels and Lenin on the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, pp. 2-3.)

In all these areas, as a result of the contradictions in socialism and the continued existence of bourgeois right, there are people who "take to the bourgeois style of life" and thus become the social base for a new bourgeoisie to seize power. But the leading force, the real bourgeois headquarters, is not here under socialism—at least after socialist transformation of ownership has in the main been completed. Rather, it is actually in the communist party of a socialist country, as Mao points out later:

With the socialist revolution they themselves come under fire. At the time of the co-operative transformation of agriculture there were people in the Party who opposed it, and when it comes to criticizing bourgeois right, they resent it. You are making the socialist revolution, and yet don't know where the bourgeoisie is. It is right in the Communist Party—those in power taking the capitalist road. The capitalist roaders are still on the capitalist road. (Quoted in *People's Daily* editorial, March 10, 1976, reprinted in *Peking Review* #11, March 12, 1976, and in *And Mao Makes 5*, ed. R. Lotta, Banner Press, 1978, p. 262.)

When Mao refers here to those who opposed the co-operative transformation, or in other words the socialization, of agriculture, he is referring to those in the Chinese Communist Party who were revolutionaries in the new-democratic stage of China's revolution, but who wanted to bring a halt to the

revolution when it came to moving into the socialist stage and increasingly came into opposition to the revolution as it advanced in the socialist stage. In other words they had never really advanced, in actuality, beyond being bourgeois democrats, never made a radical rupture with bourgeois ideology. This phenomenon of "bourgeois democrat to capitalist-roader" had to do specifically with a country like China where the revolution involved a long democratic struggle as the direct prelude to the socialist stage.

But Mao's remarks are much broader, and have application to any socialist society. The socialist revolution, as we have seen, *must* continue to move forward, and as it does so there will be people who think it has gone far enough, and do not want to move forward with it. Mao dealt with this same phenomenon in another important statement during his last great battle:

After the democratic revolution the workers and the poor and lower-middle peasants did not stand still, they want revolution. On the other hand, a number of Party members do not want to go forward; some have moved backward and opposed the revolution. Why? Because they have become high officials and want to protect the interests of the high officials. (Quoted in Chuang Lan, "Capitalist-Roaders are Representatives of the Capitalist Relations of Production," *And Mao Makes 5*, pp. 372-73. This article contains a good discussion of this whole subject.)

In any revolution there will be people who get some benefits from it and a tendency for some of them not to want the revolution to go further lest their benefits are endangered. As Chang Chun-chiao put it:

They do approve of the dictatorship of the proletariat at a certain stage and within a certain sphere and are pleased with certain victories of the proletariat, because these will bring them some gains; once they have secured their gains, they feel it's time to settle down and feather their cosy nests. As for exercising all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie, as for going on after the first step on the 10,000-li long march [i.e., continuing the revolution after the seizure of power], sorry, let others do the job; here is my stop and I must get off the bus. (*On Exercising All-Round Dictatorship Over The Bourgeoisie*, p. 18.)

This does not mean that all such people are hopeless reactionaries. Some may be won over through struggle—but there does have to be struggle. Immediately after the statement above, Chang Chun-chiao goes on to say:

We would like to offer a piece of advice to these comrades: *It's dangerous to stop half-way! The bourgeoisie is beckoning to you. Catch up with the ranks and continue to advance!* (*Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.)

But it is crucial to grasp that those who are not won over form an important part of the social base for the revisionists at the top levels of the Party in their attempts to mobilize support for the usurpation of power from the proletariat and the restoration of capitalism.

As emphasized several times already, it is precisely the top leaders of the Party who take to the capitalist road who constitute the greatest danger to socialism and must be the main target of the revolutionary struggle. It is they who can give support to more privileged strata in society in resisting further transformations that strike at this privilege and who can play upon the negative aspects—the bourgeois thinking and style of life—that tend to arise among these strata on the basis of this privileged position. Further, it is they who are in a position to coordinate opposition to the advance of socialism throughout the society, who can unite the forces of such opposition around a common line and program, give them leadership and direction and actually mobilize them for an attempt to usurp power. And, of course, it is they who not only act as the commanders of these forces, but can provide the best cover for counter-revolution, since they are leading members of the Party and can capitalize on the respect that the masses have for the Party and its leadership.

The contradictions of socialist society itself—the remaining division of labor, differences in income, the persistence of commodity relations, etc., as well as the continuing influence of bourgeois ideology—provide the basis not only for bourgeois elements to be constantly generated in society generally but especially for them to repeatedly emerge at the top ranks of the Party and for them to mobilize a social base for counter-revolution. This does not mean that all leading people, by mere virtue of their position, are bound to become bourgeois and turn traitor to the revolution. But it does mean that some of them—in particular those who take to the bourgeois style of life and adopt a revisionist ideological and political line—will do so and that they will then have both the necessity and the opportunity to rally a following for an attempt to seize power and restore capitalism. This, as Mao summed up, will continue to be the case all throughout socialism, until the contradictions of socialism are resolved through the revolutionary advance to communism.

Class struggle not only does not and cannot die out under socialism, but it remains the motive force in socialist society, and the outcome of that struggle—and specifically the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie—determines whether society continues the advance toward communism or (in the short run) is dragged back to capitalism. As Mao summed up near the end of his life:

In 1949 it was pointed out that the principal contradiction within the country was one between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Thirteen years later the question of class struggle was reiterated, and mention was also made of the fact that the situation began to turn for the better. What is the Great Cultural Revolution for? To wage class struggle. Liu Shao-chi advocated the theory of the dying out of class struggle, but he himself never ceased to wage class struggle. He wanted to protect his bunch of renegades and sworn followers. Lin Piao wanted to overthrow the proletariat and attempted a coup. Did class struggle die out? (Quoted in "Firmly Keep to the General Orientation of the Struggle," *People's Daily* editorial, April 6, 1976, reprinted in *Peking Review* #15, April 9, 1976 and in *And Mao Makes 5*, pp. 271-272.)

In concluding this article, it is necessary to return in a concentrated way to several points which were touched on earlier and which relate to some major questions that are raised either in the form of uncertainty about, disagreement with or outright attacks on Mao's basic line on classes and class struggle in socialist society and the theory of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Bourgeoisie in the Party

Is it correct to say, as Mao explicitly did, that in socialist society, even after the socialization of ownership is (in the main) completed, the bourgeoisie, as a class, actually continues to exist? Further, is it correct to say, as Mao did, that the bourgeoisie is right in the Communist Party and how should this be understood?

First, it must be said that the bourgeoisie does not, of course, exist under socialism (after socialization of ownership) as a class which privately owns the means of production, as it does under capitalism. By applying such a definition to socialist society we would have to conclude that indeed the bourgeoisie does not and could not exist after the ownership system is transformed. But by using this same method—which, it must be said, is scholastic and not Marxist—we would also have to conclude that the proletariat no longer exists once ownership is socialized, because strictly speaking the proletariat is by definition a class deprived of all ownership of the means of production. And if this were the case, then naturally it would be ridiculous to talk of the dictatorship of the (non-existent) proletariat—over the (non-existent) bourgeoisie. Thus it can be seen what trouble such a method would quickly land us in—and how it would in fact land us in unity with Khrushchev-type revisionists with their theory of "the state of the whole people."

Dialectics teaches that when the struggle of opposites undergoes a qualitative change, each of the opposites undergoes a change as well. This applies to the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. When the proletariat seizes power from the bourgeoisie, establishes its own dictatorship over the bourgeoisie and socializes ownership, the proletariat changes from the ruled to the ruling class and from being deprived of all ownership of the means of production to being the collective owner of the means of production. But this does not yet eliminate the proletariat; it continues to exist until communism is achieved with the abolition of all class distinctions. So, therefore, must its opposite—the bourgeoisie—exist, for there can be no proletariat without a bourgeoisie, and vice versa. The bourgeoisie in fact has undergone a change in the opposite direction: it has changed from the ruling to the ruled class and from a class privately owning the means of production to a class deprived of ownership of the means of production.

Let's examine more closely this question of the bourgeoisie under socialism. Here what is meant by the bourgeoisie is the social class and not the specific individuals who make it up at any given time—and in particular not merely or even mainly the capitalists who are overthrown when the dictatorship of the proletariat is first established (which, for clarity, can be referred to as the old bourgeoisie). There are instances under socialism where private ownership and the exploitation of wage labor actually takes place literally and in the same basic form as under capitalism. It is not generally possible for the proletariat, after seizing power, to expropriate all bourgeois enterprises at once. Further, even after the old bourgeoisie has been stripped entirely of its former property, there are cases of illegal operations—underground privately-owned sweatshops, etc. Of much more significance, however, is the relationship between leadership and the masses within the socialist economy. If a Marxist-Leninist line is in command, then these relations, while they involve inequality, will be ones of comradely cooperation—and such inequality will be narrowed step by step. But if a revisionist line is in command, then this turns the relationship between the leaders and those under their leadership into one of oppression, and one that is tantamount to exploitation.

If the leading cadres do not take part in productive labor together with the masses, if at the same time they expand their income relative to that of the masses, through expanded wage differentials, bonuses proportional to wages, etc., if they put profit in command, and if they monopolize management and planning while the masses of manual workers are effectively barred from these things rather than being politically activated to take part in them and supervise the leading cadres, then in essence how much different is the relationship between the leading cadres and the working masses from that between the workers and the capitalists in capitalist society? And with regard to the high officials who exercise leadership in the ministries,

in finance and trade, etc., if they follow the same revisionist line, divorce themselves from the masses and productive labor and effectively monopolize control over these spheres, how much different are they than executives of big corporations and banks in the capitalist countries?

There is, of course, one basic difference—the difference between socialism and capitalism. That is, these revisionists, even if they control important spheres of the economy, portions of political power, etc., under socialism, are still operating in the conditions where overall in society the working class has power and the economy is socialist. This is all the more reason that they must make an all-out attempt to seize power so that they can pursue their bourgeois interests more fully through the restoration of capitalism. This is precisely the process that occurred in the Soviet Union.

This does not, however, change the fact that even under socialism such capitalist-roaders will not only emerge but, where and to the extent that they are able to implement a revisionist line, they will be able to transform the relations between themselves and those under their leadership, especially the basic working masses, into ones of oppression and, in essence, exploitation. These revisionists will seek out each other, form factions and blocs and their own apparatus within the Party and state (as well as outside them) in opposition to the principles of the Party, its basic line and the revolutionary leadership and forces within it, as well as to the masses of people. Thus it can be seen that they actually constitute a bourgeoisie—or the heart of it—within socialist society and with the characteristics of that class under the conditions of socialism.

In sum, in socialist society power over the means of production as well as over distribution is concentrated as the power of political leadership. Where and to the extent that power is not in the hands of Marxists and the masses but instead in those of revisionists, then bourgeois relations of production can be generated even within the collective form, although the full development of bourgeois production relations requires the seizure of power by the bourgeoisie—led by the capitalist-roaders in top Party leadership—and the restoration of capitalism in society as a whole.

From this it can be seen why it is not only correct but necessary to speak of the bourgeoisie within the Party—the capitalist roaders in positions of authority. For the great majority of people who hold leading posts in the economy at the various levels are precisely Party members—it is they who (especially after the first few years of socialism) are overwhelmingly the managers, planners, heads of ministries, etc. And those of them who take to the capitalist road and implement a revisionist line become indeed a bourgeoisie within the Party—with its power deriving from the leading positions. This stems from both the contradictions of the socialist system, as summarized earlier, and from the fact that the socialist economy is a collective one, with the state the decisive economic unit and the Party the leading force.

This does not mean, of course, that the entire bourgeoisie resides in the Communist Party. There are many bourgeois elements generated outside the Party. But the core of the bourgeoisie under socialism, those in the position to exercise the greatest power with regard to the economy as well as in the superstructure of politics, culture, etc., are obviously those in the Party itself, especially at the highest levels. Analyzing all this, and developing the means for struggling against these forces as the main target of the class struggle against the bourgeoisie, is truly a great contribution of Mao Tsetung.

Mao's Treatment of National Bourgeoisie

This is closely connected with another question that is raised: why did Mao say, as late as 1957, that in China the contradiction with the national bourgeoisie should still be handled non-antagonistically? Was this correct and if so why, why did it not constitute capitulation to the bourgeoisie?

During the first, the new-democratic, stage of the Chinese revolution the Chinese Communist Party under Mao's leadership had in fact correctly applied the policy of uniting with the national bourgeoisie—as opposed to the big, comprador bourgeoisie—as far as possible (for more on this see the first article in this series, *Revolution*, April-May 1978). Following that, when the revolution entered the socialist stage with the founding of the People's Republic, Mao recognized that it was correct to attempt to win over or at least neutralize as much of the national bourgeoisie as possible, on the basis of its patriotism and desire to see China overcome the legacy of imperialism and feudalism, which objectively could only be accomplished by taking the socialist road. At the same time, Mao also recognized and pointed out that this policy toward the national bourgeoisie could only be accomplished through struggle and that it might not be possible to handle this contradiction non-antagonistically—that the national bourgeoisie, or sections of it, might very well resist this and pose themselves directly in opposition to the advance of socialism (see "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People," Mao, *Selected Works*, Volume 5, especially p. 386).

And, in fact, there were two tendencies among the national bourgeoisie: some sections of it joined with the camp of counter-revolution in attacking socialism, while others among the national bourgeoisie did

basically go along with—or at least did not openly oppose—the socialist system. Mao's policy on this was quite correct—it isolated the enemies, including those among the national bourgeoisie who resisted the policy of the Party and attacked socialism, and it enabled the broad masses to unite more firmly to defeat these enemies.

In fact, especially after the socialist transformation of ownership (accomplished in the main by 1956) the national bourgeoisie in China—which was being phased out of any remaining private ownership—posed much less of a problem than the newly emerging bourgeois elements and in particular the revisionists in the Party itself. For with this transformation, the conditions arose whereby the core and most important elements of the bourgeoisie would be within the Party rather than outside it, as explained earlier.

Under these circumstances, while the national bourgeoisie—or remnants of it—still had a dual character and could possibly be united with, this was not the case with die-hard capitalist roaders in authority in the Party and state, who posed the greatest danger to and must be the main target of the proletariat in exercising its dictatorship and carrying forward the class struggle. Again, analyzing these changes in class relations and developing the means and methods for continuing the revolution in these conditions was a truly great contribution of Mao Tsetung.

The All-Round Dictatorship of the Proletariat

Finally, in summing up Mao's contributions with regard to the decisive question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and in particular the theory of continuing the revolution under this dictatorship, it is ironically appropriate to let his enemies—specifically those in China who have carried out the (temporary) reversal there—point to these contributions. In an attempt to discredit the so-called “gang of four” (and above all Mao), the revisionists in power in China now, in attacking Chang Chun-chiao's article *On Exercising All-Round Dictatorship Over the Bourgeoisie*, cite a statement by a “sworn follower of the ‘gang of four’”:

Lenin merely said that only those who recognized the dictatorship of the proletariat were Marxists. When Chang Chun-chiao was writing this article, he found Lenin's words inadequate in driving home his point.

As he sees it, only those who recognize the all-round dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie are genuine Marxists. But he didn't put it in the article lest others, on reading it, should think Lenin was not a Marxist.” (See *Peking Review*, #3, January 29, 1978.)

To this the revolutionaries in China must plead “innocent as charged.” For what is being emphasized in the statement just above—which is clearly expressing Mao's line, and which just as clearly was in unity with and a development of Lenin's line, and not just Chang Chun-chiao's—is that on the one hand the dictatorship of the proletariat is the necessary product of the development of society through the class struggle at a certain stage, but that it is not an end in itself—it is a transition to communism. It was at the heart of Mao's line on this question that if the dictatorship of the proletariat were treated as an end in itself then it would be turned into its opposite—into a dictatorship by a revisionist new bourgeoisie over the proletariat and masses of people.

As Chang Chun-chiao explained in his article, exercising all-around dictatorship over the bourgeoisie means exercising this dictatorship in all spheres of society and throughout the entire transition period of socialism. To limit this dictatorship to certain spheres can only mean strengthening the bourgeoisie and its attempts to usurp power, and to stop part way along the transition can only mean that the bourgeoisie will overthrow the proletariat and restore capitalism. To curtail this dictatorship and to bring a halt to it at a certain point is, as pointed out earlier, precisely the program of revisionists, especially those in high office, who have secured certain gains from the victories of the revolution and the exercise of the proletarian dictatorship in certain spheres and for a certain time. They do not want the revolution to advance further and the dictatorship of the proletariat to be exercised in an all-around and long-term way, for then the gains they have secured, the privileged position and control over parts of the economy and the superstructure they hold, as well as the basis for these privileges, will be struck out and ultimately eliminated.

Chang Chun-chiao's article explains this point by referring to a famous statement by Marx (cited earlier) where he says that the dictatorship of the proletariat must be “the transit point to the *abolition of class distinctions generally*, to the abolition of all the rela-

tions of production on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, and to the revolutionizing of all the ideas that result from these social relations.” (Marx, “The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850,” Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 282, emphasis in original.) Chang Chun-chiao goes on to give the following explanation, wildly attacked by the revisionists in China:

In all the four cases, Marx means *all*. Not a part, a greater part, or even the greatest part, but *all*! This is nothing surprising, for only by emancipating all mankind can the proletariat achieve its own final emancipation. The only way to attain this goal is to exercise all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie and carry the continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat through to the end, until the above-mentioned four *alls* are banished from the earth so that it will be impossible for the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes to exist or for new ones to arise; we definitely must not call a halt along the path of the *transition*. In our view, only those who understand the matter this way can be deemed to have grasped the essence of Marx's teaching on the state. (*On Exercising All-Round Dictatorship Over the Bourgeoisie*, pp. 16-17.)

Again, “our view” clearly refers not just to that of Chang Chun-chiao but to that of Mao and the other revolutionaries in China. For it is the essential point of Mao's development of Marxist-Leninist theory on the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular that exercising this dictatorship and carrying through the transition to communism can mean nothing less than *continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat*. This theory is the product of Mao's application of materialist dialectics to socialist society, and it represents the greatest of his immortal contributions to Marxism-Leninism and the revolutionary struggle of the international proletariat. Despite what the revisionists in China may say or do, and regardless of the slanders and distortions of reactionaries and opportunists in general, this theory will continue to stand as a powerful weapon of the proletariat and sooner or later will be wielded by it in every country in carrying through the transition to the historic goal of communism. ■