



IN DEFENCE

OF LENINISM



IRISH COMMUNIST ORGANISATION

IN DEFENCE OF LENINISM

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P R E F A C E

The two main articles in this pamphlet deal with two aspects of the theory of trotskyism and show their interconnections with the theory of modern revisionism.

The point of the first article, "The Bureaucracy" is that if the various allegations made by Trotsky concerning the Soviet state in the 1930s had been true, (especially the allegation that the working class had been "politically expropriated" by a bureaucracy), the Soviet State would not have been a workers' state but a bourgeois state. However, if Trotsky had held that the Soviet state was bourgeois he would have had to account for the fact that the characteristics of capitalism did not show themselves in the Soviet economy.

In order to avoid this dilemma his imagination created the fantasy of a bureaucracy which had taken away political power from the workers, but which had itself no class nature: it was neither bourgeois nor socialist, and although it was counter-revolutionary it was an instrument of the proletarian dictatorship.

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Under pressure from the proletariat it implemented a form of the dictatorship which oppressed the proletariat. That is the essence of the "deformed, degenerate, Bonapartist so-called workers' state". It is, as Trotsky concisely put it in "In Defence of Marxism", a

"counter-revolutionary workers' state"!

The modern revisionists have revived this notion of "the bureaucracy" in their attacks on the revolutionary forces in China. Their attacks on Mao lead them into the same theoretical swamp as did Trotsky's attack on Stalin.

By contrast, when Communists ("Stalinists" to the revisionists) analyse revisionism and the revisionist bureaucracy they do it strictly in terms of scientific political economy, of Marxism. Since they are making a scientific analysis of actual counter-revolution they do not find themselves entangled in the web of theoretical self-contradiction that the opportunists who try to slander the proletarian revolution as counter-revolution, ("bureaucratic", non-class, counter-revolution), inevitably entangle themselves in.

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When these articles were first published the main trotskyist organisation in Ireland was the Irish Workers Group. The IWG included the bulk of Irish trotskyists and was many times larger than the "Stalinist" ICO. The ICO analyses destroyed the ideological strength of trotskyism, which is always drawn from political confusion. This was followed by the decline of trotskyist organisational strength. The IWG fragmented in 1968/9. One of its fragments (M. Farrell) now controls the "Peoples Democracy". Another (E. McCann) controls the Derry Labour Party. The most substantial fragment has formed itself into the "League for a Workers Republic" (leader P. Healy) Of these only Healy now stands openly for the full absurd litany of trotskyism. At a recent meeting he got himself into a mess trying to explain how, in a state which is controlled by a counter-revolutionary "bureaucracy", which has "politically expropriated" the working class and which oppresses the working class, the working class can still be the ruling class. It is the ruling class "indirectly", he declared. That is to say, it "rules" through a state which oppresses it. So you can see that in the LWR trotskyism maintains its customary "dialectical" brilliance.

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All four articles in this pamphlet were first published in The Irish Communist in 1966. A third article in the series "In Defence of Leninism", Socialism In One Country will be republished shortly in an extended form.

IRISH COMMUNIST ORGANISATION - February 1970.

"THE BUREAUCRACY"

INTRODUCTION

The development of revisionism in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and in the European Communist Parties generally has given new life to old theories; to theories that were long ago refuted by Lenin and whose falseness was demonstrated in practice; to the theories of Kautsky, Trotsky and Bukharin. Khrushchev revisionism is adapting these theories to serve its needs in its struggle against the working class. It is the fact that these theories are being given circulation as Marxist Leninist theories by the revisionists that makes it necessary to deal with them in the year 1966.

Soviet revisionism does not call itself trotskyist or kautskyist, but it assimilates the substance of certain theories of Trotsky and Kautsky (the two being closely related), and does as much as it dare to "rehabilitate" Trotsky and Kautsky. It is noteworthy that in the month of August last year (1965) the CPGB (in an article in 'Marxism Today') and a trotskyist faction which developed in the Irish Communist Group both became the whitewashers of social-democracy (kautskyism) and of the role which it plays as one of the main bulwarks of monopoly capitalism.

Further, when a British capitalist publishing company published a new edition of Trotsky's "History of the Russian Revolution" last summer, its publication was welcomed in the 'Daily Worker' by R. Palme Dutt. After welcoming it Dutt warned that it was not completely accurate. A number of letters on Dutt's review were published subsequently in the 'Daily Worker'. The editorial policy of the 'Worker' is shown clearly in the fact that the letters which were given publication protested against Dutt's raking up of old and unimportant differences with Trotsky which conflict with the bright, new, unity-of-the-left policies of the CPGB.

Furthermore, recent C.P.S.U. pamphlets on China which have been distributed in Britain make attacks on China which are similar in kind to the attacks made by trotskyism on Russia before revisionism usurped the leadership of the CPSU and began its attacks on the dictatorship of the proletariat there.

Some comrades in the British anti-revisionist movement have disagreed with us when we held that a thorough refutation of trotskyism is required. It is becoming increasingly clear however that the exposure of revisionism involves the exposure of the theories of Trotsky, Bukharin and Kautsky, and of the contributions which these theories have made to the theories of the revisionists. We began our exposure of trotskyism and of its connections with modern revisionism in the March issue of 'The Irish Communist' when we dealt with the theory of socialism in one country. We are continuing it in this issue with an exposure of the trotskyist theory of the bureaucracy.

4. THE THEORY OF THE BUREAUCRATIC STATE

The trotskyist theory of the 'bureaucracy' was set out comprehensively in 'The Revolution Betrayed' in 1937. The problem which Trotsky had to solve was how he, Trotsky, the super-revolutionary, the man who, with no false modesty, he represented in his 'History of the Russian Revolution' as the superior of Lenin as a Marxist, came to lose the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, and how Stalin "the outstanding mediocrity" came to be the leader instead. Here is how he solved it:

"...the outstanding representatives of the working class either died in the civil war, or rose a few steps higher and broke away from the masses. And thus after an unexampled tension of forces, hopes and illusions, there came a long period of weariness, decline and sheer disappointment in the results of the revolution. The ebb of the 'plebeian pride' made room for a flood of pusillanimity and careerism. The new commanding caste rose to its place upon this wave." (P89)

"The young bureaucracy, which had arisen at first as an agent of the proletariat, began now to feel itself a court of arbitration between classes. Its independence increased from month to month ... The international situation was pushing with mighty forces in the same direction. The Soviet Bureaucracy became more self-confident, the heavier the blows dealt to the world working class ... The leaders of the bureaucracy promoted the proletarian defeats; the defeats promoted the rise of the bureaucracy." (P90)

"The bureaucracy...defeated all these enemies, the Opposition, the party and Lenin, not with ideas and arguments, but with its own social weight. The leaden rump of the bureaucracy outweighed the head of the revolution." (P95)

"Before he felt out its own course, the bureaucracy felt out Stalin himself. He brought it all the necessary guarantees: the prestige of an Old Bolshevik, a strong character, narrow vision, and close bonds with the political machine as the sole source of his influence. The success which fell upon him was a surprise at first to Stalin himself. It was the friendly welcome of the new ruling group, trying to free itself from the old principle and from the control of the masses, and having need of a reliable arbiter in its inner affairs. A secondary figure before the masses and in the events of the revolution, Stalin revealed himself as the indubitable leader of the Thermidorian bureaucracy, as the first in its midst." (P93) (Thermidor was the month in French revolutionary calendar in which the left Jacobins (Robespierre) were overthrown by a right wing coup.)

The gist of this is that Trotsky failed because he was too revolutionary --in fact the masses failed him--, and Stalin succeeded because he sold himself to the 'bureaucracy' to lead their counter-revolution. Furthermore the 'bureaucracy' in order to consolidate their dominant position in Russia, stopped the world proletarian revolution.

LENIN ON THE STATE

Trotskyism makes a pretence of being Leninist. The essence of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state is as follows:

"The state, even in a democratic republic, is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another." (The Proletarian Revolution. Lenin. Appendix 2)

"Proletarian dictatorship is similar to the dictatorship of other classes in that it arises out of the need, as every other dictatorship does, to forcibly suppress the resistance of the class that is losing its political sway." (Theses on Bourgeois Democracy and Proletarian Dictatorship. 1919)

"The essence of Marx's doctrine of the state is assimilated only by those who understand that the dictatorship of a single class is necessary, not only for class society in general, not only for the proletariat which has overthrown the bourgeoisie, but for the entire historical period, between capitalism and 'classless society', communism. The forms of the bourgeois state are extremely varied, but in essence all the same: in one way or another, in the last analysis, all these states are inevitably the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The transition from capitalism to communism will certainly create a great variety and abundance of political forms, but in essence there will inevitably be only one: the dictatorship of the proletariat." (State and Revolution: 1917)

During the period of Lenin's leadership, 1917-23, Russia was called a socialist state by Trotsky and by many others who later found other names for it. This could not have been because the main form of property was socialist. It was not. The main property form was petty-bourgeois/peasant. And in 1921 a temporary revival of capitalism was permitted. It can only have been because the political power in Russia represented the interests of the working class. Nor was it the case that the entire class exercised its rule directly. The rule of the class in the circumstances was necessarily exercised through the most advanced, the most class conscious, the most politically conscious, section of the class. This section was the political party of the class. And the most advanced section of the Party was its Central Committee.

In the dictatorship of the proletariat politics has absolute priority over economics. It is only by conscious political action that the working class can emancipate itself.

RIDDLE-ME-RIDDLE-ME-RANDEEO

Bearing this in mind let us return to Trotsky and his attack on the Soviet Socialist state in 1936 in "The Revolution Betrayed":

"We have defined the Soviet Thermidor as a triumph of the bureaucracy over the masses." (P105) ---- "The tired and disappointed

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masses were indifferent to what was happening on the summit." (P. 105) ---- "The Soviet state has acquired a totalitarian-bureaucratic character." ---- "The means of production belong to the state. But the state, so to speak (!) 'belongs' (!!!) to the bureaucracy." (P249) ---- "The Soviet bureaucracy has expropriated the proletariat politically..."

Let us start from there "the political expropriation of the proletariat". This can mean only one thing: the proletariat has lost state power. And that in turn can mean only one thing: the bourgeoisie, through the bureaucracy, have recaptured state power. If we accept it as a scientific law that in class society every state is the political expression of the 'dictatorship' of a "single class" and if it is a fact that "the Soviet bureaucracy expropriated the proletariat politically", this could mean only one thing, in class terms, in Russia in the 1920's or thirties: a bourgeois counter-revolution.

Did Trotsky say that? He did not. The sentence continues:

"The Soviet Bureaucracy has expropriated the proletariat politically in order by methods of its own to defend the social conquests" of the revolution!

What was the main "social conquest" of the revolution? It was the conquest of political power by the proletariat, an absolutely necessary pre-requisite for the constructing of a socialist economy. So what Trotsky says is: The Soviet Bureaucracy has taken political power away from the proletariat "in order by methods of its own to defend" the conquest of political power by the proletariat!!

That is what he says if we take his words to have a scientific Marxist meaning; if we take it that they are not merely the jargon of a liberal journalist. But if we plough on through the verbiage we find this highly 'original' argument:

"The Soviet bureaucracy takes on bourgeois customs without having beside it a national bourgeoisie. In this sense we cannot deny that it is something more than a bureaucracy. It is in the full sense of the word, the sole privileged and commanding stratum in the Soviet society." (P249)

"The Soviet bureaucracy has risen above a class which is hardly emerging from destitution and darkness, and has no tradition of dominion or command." (P248) ---- "In no other regime has a bureaucracy ever achieved such a degree of independence from the dominating class." (P248)

Yet: "the attempt to represent the Soviet bureaucracy as a class of 'state capitalists' will obviously not withstand criticism. The bureaucracy has neither stocks nor bonds..." (P249) ---- "The nationalisation of land, transport and exchange, together with the monopoly of foreign trade, constitute the basis of the Soviet social structure. Through these relations, established by the

proletarian revolution, the nature of the Soviet Union as a proletarian state is for us basically defined." (P248)

"The bureaucracy has not yet created social supports for its domination in the form of special types of property. It is compelled to defend state property as the source of its power and its income. In this aspect of its activity it still remains a weapon of proletarian dictatorship. (P249) ---- "The Soviet Union is a contradictory society halfway between capitalism and socialism" (P255) ---- "...the social revolution, betrayed by the ruling party, still exists in property relations and in the consciousness of the toiling masses." (P255)

So the bureaucracy "has expropriated the proletariat politically"; "has risen above" the proletariat; has achieved an unparalleled "degree of independence" from the proletariat; and is "the sole privileged and commanding stratum in the Soviet society": and yet, though it has done all of these things, it has not become the political instrument of the bourgeoisie (the class which held dominant political power internationally). Though it has risen above the working class, and has expropriated it politically "it still remains a weapon of the proletarian dictatorship", that is, of workers' political power. It has "expropriated the proletariat politically", yet it is the political representative of the workers, "a weapon of proletarian dictatorship"!

How does this miracle come about? It comes about because "the social revolution, betrayed by the ruling party, still exists in property relations and in the consciousness of the toiling masses."

How about these masses! On the one hand "the tired and disappointed masses were indifferent to what was happening on the summit", and because of their tiredness and indifference allowed the bureaucracy to expropriate them politically. Yet on the other hand "the consciousness of the toiling masses" is at such a high revolutionary level that it causes the bureaucracy which took political power away from them to rule in their interests.

And then: "The social revolution, betrayed by the ruling party, still exists in property relations." Which means that socialism can exist without the political rule of the proletariat. And what does this "socialism", deprived of state power, and existing "in property relations", consist of? It consists of "the nationalisation of land, transport and exchange, together with the monopoly of foreign trade" which "constitutes the basis of the Soviet social structure. Through these relations established by the proletarian revolution, the nature of the Soviet Union as a proletarian state is for us basically defined."

So the proletarian state, the socialist dictatorship equals nationalisation of land, transport and exchange, together with the monopoly of foreign trade. These are measures which could be implemented by a bourgeois state: which under certain circumstances would necessarily be implemented by the bourgeois state. So the

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bourgeois state becomes a proletarian state if it nationalises sufficient portions of capitalist society. Some present day sects of trotskyists, applying this standard, arrive at the conclusion that Syria, and perhaps Egypt, are "workers' states". And the Irish Free State, whose main industries --electricity, sugar, turf etc.-- have developed as nationalised industries could also claim by this standard, to be verging on a proletarian state.

This "proletarian state", which does not exist in the form of political power of the proletariat, (the proletariat having been expropriated politically) but which exists as "socialist property relations" (i.e. Nationalisation) under a form of political power hostile to the proletariat: this "proletarian state" is an absurdity. James Connolly's theory of the state was possibly the least satisfactory party of his development of Marxism, but it stands miles higher than Trotsky's (is qualitatively different from Trotsky's). Connolly wrote as early as 1899:

"State ownership and control is not necessarily Socialism --if it were, then the Army, the Navy, the Police, the Judges, the Gaolers, the Informers, and the Hangmen would all be Socialist Functionaries, as they are all state officials --but the ownership by the State of all the land and materials for labour, combined with the co-operative control by the workers of such land and materials would be Socialism.

"...to the cry of the middle-class reformers, 'Make this or that the property of the government', we reply, 'Yes, in proportion as the workers are ready to make the government their property.'"

Nationalised industry, state industry, takes its social nature from the nature of the state. Under a bourgeois state nationalised industry is a form of capitalist industry. Under a proletarian state it is a form of socialist industry. Trotsky turns reality inside out, making the formal organisation of industry as nationalised industry determine the nature of the state as proletarian, even though the state has been seized by a 'group' whose interests are hostile to the proletariat. (This brand of 'Marxism' is worthy of a man who could write, like a bourgeois liberal, of Marx, that he "expected the Frenchman would begin the social revolution, the German to continue it, and the Englishman to finish it; as the the Russia, Marx left him far in the rear. But this conceptual order was upset by the facts.")

This trotskyist conception of the state being forced to be socialist despite itself; of a "ruling caste" hostile to the proletarian interest being forced by the "politically expropriated tired and indifferent" proletariat, by the spontaneous pressure of this dispirited proletariat, to act in the proletarian interest, and to be "a weapon of the proletarian dictatorship"; is merely a rehash (and a bad rehash at that) of the spontaneous revolution theories which Lenin refuted thoroughly between 1903 and 1917.

The pressure of objective circumstance alone can never cause a

proletarian revolution. The proletarian dictatorship must be est-
-ablished consciously by the proletariat. It can only be establi-
-shed under the leadership of the most advanced section of the prol-
-etariat, organised in a politically conscious and disciplined par-
-ty of the proletariat. And after the conquest of state power, when
the immense task of transforming class society into classless soc-
-iety has to be tackled, the importance of political consciousness
becomes greater, not less.

Trotsky's concept of a 'bureaucracy' which was "in the full sense
of the word, the sole privileged and commanding stratum in Soviet
society", which was sufficiently powerful to be able to defeat
"the party and Lenin, not with ideas and arguments but by its own
social weight", and which stopped the international revolution in
order to preserve its own rule in the Soviet Union: his concept
that such a bureaucracy could be forced to act in the working class
interest, by a working class which was too tired and indifferent to
prevent political power being taken away from it by that bureaucr-
-acy, belongs to the world of fairy stories. If the workers could
perform the miracle forcing a powerful, hostile bureaucracy to act
as "a weapon of proletarian dictatorship", they would certainly be
capable of carrying out the far simpler task of sweeping this bur-
-eaucracy out of political power and taking political power into
their own hands.

In this aspect trotskyism is merely a dressed up version of anarch-
ism.
And when trotskyism reaches the conclusion that a "caste" of bure-
-aucrats (engaging in caste struggle?) in Russia stopped the world
proletarian revolution to consolidate their own privileged posi-
-tion, it reaches the conclusion that the tail wagged the elephant --
which is idealism.

REVISIONISM LEARNS FROM TROTSKYISM

Trotsky said that in some ways the dictatorship of the proletariat
was worse than Nazism. We saw in the first article in this series
how Irish trotskyism says that Leninism is Nazism. Soviet revisi-
-onism has now adopted this method of attacking the proletarian dic-
-tatorship in China. A short while ago the theorists of the Brit-
-ish C.P. told us that the Chinese Communists were fascist and rac-
-ialist. This attack was echoed a short while later by the Irish
revisionists. The attacks by the British revisionists were them-
-selves echoes of attacks by the Soviet revisionists who in 1964
published a pamphlet, "Certain aspects of the Inner Life of the
C.P.C.", which closely followed the trotskyist methods. Trotsky
developed the "theory" of the political expropriation of the work-
-ers by the non-class bureaucrats. Compare that with the following
from the Soviet pamphlet:

"At the election of Congress delegates in 1956 the C.P.C. had 10
.7 million members. Today it has 18 million members, almost
twice as many: however the delegates elected in 1956 still rep-
-resent the entire party and retain their powers though the five

year term envisaged by the Rules expired long ago. This means that almost half the Party, more than 7 million members never elected delegates to the Congress." (P4)

And we are told that important questions "are now decided in the C.P.C. not by the Rules, but by the directives of Mao Tse-tung, as was also the case with us for a certain period after the war, when Stalin was alive." (P5)

A more recent pamphlet, "From party of Working Class to party of Entire People", refers sneeringly to "Sinified Marxism", and to

"...the fallaciousness of attempts to build socialism alone, in isolation from the rest of the world." (This refers to the measures taken by the Chinese workers to make themselves economically independent of the Soviet revisionists, who tried to wreck the proletarian dictatorship in China a few years ago.) And: "It is known that the narrower/^{the} Party democracy, the larger the Party apparatus. In no other C.P. is the Party apparatus so colossal as in the C.P.C. ... A secretary is really regarded as a commander, a Party organisation as a military unit, Party life as army routine." (P19)

And we are told that the C.P.C. is hampering the process of social development in China. (P19)

In 1927 Trotsky tried to overthrow the proletarian dictatorship in Russia by leading an insurrection. He failed miserably and had to resort to other more devious methods: The Soviet revisionists -- the heirs of Trotsky who for the moment, are succeeding in doing what he failed to do-- tried a few years ago to destroy the proletarian dictatorship in China by direct means: economic measures, and failed, and have now, like Trotsky, resorted to more indirect means. And the source of many of the distortions of Marxism which they use is "The Revolution Betrayed".

SOCIALIST IN SPITE OF ITSELF ?

Whereas Trotskyism during the period of proletarian dictatorship in Russia supplied the theoretical weapons to imperialism for attacking that proletarian dictatorship, it now supplies revisionism with a way of trying to conceal its counter-revolutionary work of destroying the proletarian dictatorship with a camouflage of revolutionary phrases. The trotskyist distortions of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state, and of the part which the state plays in the building of socialism, are of immense service to revisionism.

Proletarian revolution is, to use the words of Engels, man's leap from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom. It marks the beginning of man's conscious activity as the organiser of human society for human ends. Hitherto social development has been determined by blind economic laws. Having reached a scientific understanding of the laws of development of human society (Marxism-Leninism), the working class consciously applies these laws to

eliminate all forms of class and national exploitation and oppression from human society, and to develop a classless communist society. This can only occur through the conscious activity of the working class guided by Marxism-Leninism. This means that in the building of socialism the political superstructure must play an active and conscious part. Without the conscious activity of the Party and State of the proletariat there can be no building of socialism.

We have been informed by the trotskyist members of the Irish Workers' Group that the proletarian revolution in China took place despite the leadership of the CPC which wanted to hold back the revolution. Trotsky informed us that in Russia in the 1920s and 1930s the "bureaucracy" which is supposed to have "expropriated the proletariat politically", and whose interests were hostile to the proletarian dictatorship, were still made to be a "weapon" of the proletarian dictatorship by pressure from below, by pressure from the "tired and indifferent masses". This is a negation of reality. Proletarian revolution cannot occur despite the opposition of the vanguard of the class. The proletarian dictatorship cannot be carried out despite opposition to it by the State and Party. The state must be the conscious agent of the proletarian dictatorship if the proletarian dictatorship is to exist. The theory of pressure from below coercing a powerful anti-proletarian "caste" of bureaucrats to carry out the functions of a proletarian dictatorship is an absurdity, is in total contradiction with reality, and is profoundly anti-Marxist.

An example of how trotskyism functions as a whitewasher of revisionism is given in the "Newsletter" of March 19th 1966 in an article, "The Bureaucracy and Economics in the Soviet Union", by M. Best, which accuses the "Chinese Stalinists" of asserting that "the Soviet Union is returning to capitalism", when in fact it "is still in the transitional stage between capitalism and socialism." The Soviet economy is being made more and more subject to the market and to the material incentive. But this, according to the "Newsletter", is not a deviation from socialist development. It "will merely indicate an advanced economy in production; it will not create capitalists..." In fact these changes are an improvement since "better quality goods will appear" and "the standard of living of the workers may rise slightly."

Along with the word "caste" to describe the social nature of "the bureaucracy", trotskyism uses the word "transitional" to describe the nature of the society ruled by this "caste". Now it is a fact that every state has a class nature. In the present period it is either socialist or bourgeois. To say it is "transitional" is meaningless. In the long run every form of state is "transitional" to another form, and finally to the withering away of the state. In

"The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky", Lenin dealt with the theory that "there are many transitional stages between the capitalist state...and the proletarian state." He said:

"...the transitional stage between the state as an organ of the rule of the capitalist class and the state as an organ of the rule of the proletariat is revolution, it means overthrowing the bourgeoisie and breaking up, smashing the state machine."

Thus the transitional period between the capitalist state and the socialist state is the period when the capitalist state is being destroyed. So much for the "transitional theory", which holds that this period of transition between the capitalist and socialist states lasts for generations, and that in this period the state is neither capitalist nor proletarian.

Because it abandoned Marxism-Leninism trotskyism arrived at many weird concepts: at the "ruling caste" which has not class nature; at this "caste" becoming the main enemy of world revolution while still remaining a "weapon of the proletarian dictatorship"; at the state with the "transitional" nature; at the theory of the "Napoleonic state" which "balances" itself between the working class and other classes and somehow manages to give partial representation to two antagonistic class interests, being both "a weapon of proletarian dictatorship", and at the same time an agent of world imperialism; and finally at the very interesting concept of the "deformed, degenerate, bureaucratically distorted, Bonapartist, so-called workers' state".

We have not attempted, in this article, to explain developments in the Soviet Union in 1920's and 1930's. We have only taken Trotsky's statements about them and showed that these statements are absurd, and that the trotskyist theory of "the bureaucracy" as a ruling class, or caste, or group, is absurd, is non-Marxist, and is an abandonment of materialism.

"Bureaucrat" is a word that Trotsky liked to fling around. First he flung it at Lenin for nearly fifteen years. He described Lenin as a dull-witted, dictatorial bureaucrat whose only gift was bureaucratic manipulation of second-rate people who allowed him to dominate them. That was before 1917. After 1917 it became expedient for him to call himself a Leninist. After Lenin's death he called trotskyism "Leninism", and he called Leninism "Stalinism", and for another fifteen years he applied to Stalin all the names which he previously applied to Lenin. In "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back" (1904) Lenin dealt with Trotsky's view of "bureaucracy". He reached this conclusion:

"It is clear, I think, that the cries about this celebrated bur

-bureaucracy are just a screen for dissatisfaction with the personnel composition of the central bodies... You are a bureaucrat because you were appointed by the Congress not in accordance with my wishes, but against them..."

This is very true of Trotsky's campaign against bureaucracy in the 1920s and 1930s. While he occupied a leading position he was himself exceptionally bureaucratic in his approach. In 1921 his activity was described by Lenin as "bureaucratic project-hatching". Stalin described him as "this patriarch of the bureaucrats". His campaign against the bureaucracy did not begin until, through opportunism and lack of principle, he had lost his leading position in the Bolshevik Party. Long before this campaign began, Lenin and Stalin had been dealing with the serious problem of bureaucracy in the state. Trotsky never dealt with this problem in serious terms. With him "the bureaucracy" was merely the catch-cry of an opportunist.

Developments in Russia in the 1920s and 30s will be dealt with in future issues. Here we will only deal briefly with Stalin's exceptional position in the Soviet Party and State for over 20 years. Opportunists shout "dictator" and imagine that disposes of that. But Lenin dealt with the question of principle involved as early as 1918 (The Immediate Tasks Of The Soviet Government). He dealt with the allegation that "personal dictatorship is absolutely incompatible with Bolshevik (i.e. not bourgeois, but socialist Soviet democracy)". He wrote:

"The question has become one of really enormous significance: first, the question of principle, viz., is the appointment of individual persons, dictators with unlimited powers, in general compatible with the fundamental principles of Soviet government? ... The irrefutable experience of history has shown that in the history of revolutionary movements the dictatorship of individual persons was very often the vehicle, the channel of the dictatorship of revolutionary classes. Undoubtedly, the dictatorship in individual persons was compatible with bourgeois democracy."

But is it compatible with socialist democracy? "If we are not anarchists, we must admit that the state i.e. coercion, is necessary for the transition from capitalism to socialism. The form of coercion is determined by the degree of development of the given revolutionary class, and also by special circumstances.... Hence there absolutely no contradiction in principle between Soviet (i.e. Socialist) democracy and the exercise of dictatorial powers by individual persons."

This raises the question out of the realm of opportunist catch cries and dogma, into which it has been dragged by Khrushchevite and trotskyist opportunists, and into the realm of concrete analysis of concrete questions of class interest and class struggle. On that level we will attempt to deal with the question of Stalin in future

issue of the Irish Communist.

(SUPPLEMENT to The Irish Communist. May. 1966)

THE INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF LABOUR

This article will deal with Trotsky's theories on the international division of labour, imperialism, world revolution, and nations. It is important to understand, and expose the nature of trotskyism on these essential questions because modern revisionism is increasingly adopting a trotskyite position on them.

PRODUCTIVE FORCES AND NATIONS

Trotsky held that socialism could not be built on a national scale, that it could only be built on a world scale, and that if it could not be built on a world scale it could not be built at all. In the "Draft Programme of the Communist International: A criticism of Fundamentals" (1928. All extracts in this article are from this pamphlet unless otherwise stated.) he wrote: "...the socialist revolution can begin only on a national basis, while the building of socialism in one country is impossible." (P 23/4) This is because of the international division of labour brought about by imperialism. Trotsky views socialism as the highest organisation of the productive forces. Under advanced capitalism the productive forces have already outgrown national boundaries:

"The productive forces are incompatible with national boundaries... The productive forces of capitalist countries have long since broken through the national boundaries. Socialist society can be built only on the most advanced productive forces.... Socialism... must not only take over from capitalism the most highly developed productive forces but must immediately carry them forward, raise them to a higher level and give them a state of development such as has been unknown under capitalism. The question arises: how then can socialism drive the productive forces back into the boundaries of national state which they have violently sought to break through under capitalism?"

The theory of socialism in one country is "a reactionary theory because it is irreconcilably opposed not only to the fundamental tendency of development of the productive forces but also to the material results which have already been attained by this development." (P44)

Britain because of the great development of her productive forces, requires "almost the whole world to furnish the necessary raw

materials and to dispose of her products". Britain "precisely because of that" stands "no chance for successful socialist construction within the limits of its own island. Great Britain, if blockaded, would simply be strangled in the course of a few months." (P48. Note well)

It is the case then that "highly developed productive forces" (which are dependent upon the international division of labour) "are by no means a lesser obstacle to the construction of socialism than low productive forces" (which are subjected to constant pressure from the highly developed economies). All of this leads to the conclusion that "The most important contradiction inherent in the imperialist epoch" is "the contradiction between the productive forces and the national barriers". (P48/9. Our emphasis.) And that the world socialist economy "can take shape in its fundamental aspects only on the soil of the world wide division of labour." (P 46 Again, note well.)

Since Trotsky held that socialism can only be built on the base of the "world wide division of labour" created by monopoly capitalism, and since he held that the era of socialist revolution had come, his contention was that the world was ripe for socialism. No parts can ripen before the whole since it is only on the base of the whole that the building of socialism can be begun. This was Trotsky's view. What was Lenin's view? Was it, as Trotsky held, identical with Trotsky's on this matter?

LENIN ON NATIONAL FRONTIERS

"The method of accomplishing a socialist revolution under the slogan, "down with frontiers", is utterly absurd... I described this view as 'imperialist economism'. What does the 'method' of socialist revolution under the slogan, 'down with frontiers', mean? We maintain that the state is necessary, and the existence of a state presupposes frontiers. The state may, of course, be ruled by a bourgeois government, while we want Soviets. But even Soviets are confronted with the question of frontiers. What does 'down with frontiers' mean? This is the beginning of anarchy... The 'method' of socialist revolution under the slogan 'down with frontiers' is a hodge-podge. When the time is ripe for a socialist revolution, when the revolution finally occurs, it will sweep across into other countries, and we shall help it to do so, but how, we do not know. (Speech on the National Question. May 1917.)

In numerous writings in 1915-16-17, Lenin insisted that socialists must unconditionally recognise the right of nations to self-determination. He insisted that in the era of imperialism national revolutions are not only possible, but inevitable: "To imagine that social revolution is conceivable without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe...means repudiating social revolution." (The Irish Rebellion. 1916)

"If national uprisings are possible under imperialism, so are

national wars. Politically there is no important difference between them... Junius (i.e. Rosa Luxemburg -ed.) and the "International" group... deny that national wars are possible under imperialism. And this denial is the only conceivable theoretical ground for the view which repudiates self-determination of nations under imperialism... What is a 'national uprising'? It is an uprising that has for its aim the political independence of the oppressed nation, i.e., the establishment of a separate national state". (A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism. 1916)

For Lenin, therefore, revolution in the era of imperialism does not necessarily consist in abolishing the existing national state boundaries but very often results in new national states coming into existence. If, as Trotsky held, the "most important contradiction inherent in the imperialist epoch" is "the contradiction between the productive forces and national barriers", then any movement to set up new national states would have to be regarded as reactionary. But, according to Lenin, the coming into existence of new national states, the setting up of new national boundaries, is in certain circumstances, progressive. He held that "imperialism is the progressing oppression of the nations of the world by a handful of Great Powers". (The Revolutionary Proletariat and Self-Determination); and that:

"in the undeveloped countries...in the whole of Eastern Europe and all the colonial and semi-colonial countries...we still have oppressed and capitalistically undeveloped nations. Objectively these nations have national tasks to fulfil, namely, democratic tasks, the tasks of throwing off foreign oppression". If "we must support an uprising of oppressed nations" (and Lenin held that we must), then we have to agree that "the establishment of a new, separate state, of new frontiers, etc., in the event of the uprising being successful, is progressive." (A Caricature of Marxism.)

In 1914-17 Trotsky, in opposition to Lenin's theory of the rights of nations to self-determination, put forward the theory, derived from his view that the main contradiction under imperialism was between the productive forces and national boundaries, that the period for national revolutions had passed. (Trotsky's position was more or less that of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Radek, whose condemnation of the Irish Rebellion as a "putsch" caused Lenin to come to its defence.)

"The time for national revolutions has passed --at least in Europe-- just as the time for national wars has passed. Imperialism...does not set up the bourgeois nation in opposition to the old regime, but the proletariat in opposition to the bourgeois nation". (The Struggle For Power. 1915)

"The national state has outlived itself --as a frame for the development, as a basis for the class struggle, and thereby also as a state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat... The economic and political union of Europe is clearly a pre-requi-

site of self-determination of great and small nations." (Peace Programme 1917)

TROTSKY ON IMPERIALISM

In order to understand clearly the full significance of the trotskyist line on imperialism, colonial revolution, and European-North American revolution, it is necessary to come to a clear understanding of Trotsky's analysis of imperialism, which is the hub of trotskyism, and the differences between it and Lenin's analysis. Trotsky :

"Wherein lies the distinction between the advanced and backward countries? This distinction is great, but it still remains within the limits of capitalist relationships. The forms and methods of the rule of the bourgeoisie differ greatly in different countries. At one pole, the domination bears a stark and absolute character: The United States. At the other pole finance capital adapts itself to the outlived institutions of Asiatic mediaevalism by subjecting them to itself and imposing its own methods upon them: India. But the bourgeoisie rules in both places. (Permanent Revolution. P 129)

Here, colonial India (of the 1920's) and the imperialist U.S.A. are seen merely as bourgeois countries at different levels of development.

"In contrast to the economic systems which preceded it, capitalism inherently and constantly aims at economic expansion, at the penetration of new territories, the surmounting of economic differences, the conversion of self-sufficient provincial and national economies into a system of financial inter-relationships. Thereby it brings about their rapprochement and equalises the economic and cultural levels of the most progressive and most backward countries." (P22)

Capitalism has on the one hand the effect of "drawing countries economically closer to one another and levelling out their stages of development", and on the other hand, because of the anarchy inherent in it, it tends to "set one country against another". And "Imperialism...lends vigour to both these tendencies." (P.22) That is, it draws them closer together on the one hand and sets them father apart from one another on the other. (!?!)

"Imperialism links up incomparably more rapidly and more deeply the individual national and continental units and rendering their economic methods, social forms, and levels of development more identical." (P22)

In the same section he refers to the "diminishing gap between India and Great Britain " under imperialism.

He gives the following as one of the distinguishing features of capitalism:

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"Capitalism finds various sections of mankind at different stages of development, each with its profound internal contradictions. The extreme diversity in levels attained, and the extraordinary unevenness in the rate of development of the different sections of mankind during the various epochs, serve as the starting point of capitalism. Capitalism gains mastery only gradually over the inherited unevenness". (P22)

And on Page 11:

"...the epoch of imperialism, i.e., of world economy and world politics under the hegemony of finance capital..."

(Lenin didn't waste much time with Trotsky's "theory" of imperialism: "Take Trotsky's articles 'The Nation and Economy'... and we see his usual eclecticism: on the one hand economy unites nations and, on the other, national oppression divides them." (Discussion On Self-Determination Summed Up. 1916) And for Lenin's opinion of eclecticism, of "on the one hand...on the other hand", see "Once Again The Trade Unions... And The Mistakes of Trotsky and Bukharin. 1921)

THE INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF LABOUR

We will take as an example the "international division of labour" between England and Ireland. This is a very appropriate example, probably the best that could be found. Capitalism developed in England in what is sometimes called the classical manner. At the start of the capitalist era in England the two countries did not differ greatly in population or in the general cultural level of the people.

English feudalism had spent a few centuries trying to subdue Ireland without any great success. The "conquest" was limited to a narrow strip on the east coast inside which the "conquerors" boxed themselves up. Generation after generation of "conquerors" mixed with the people, and far from bringing a superior to the Irish people, had the culture of the Irish people imposed on them. This continued to happen despite strict laws designed to stop it. The conquerors became "more Irish than the Irish", showing clearly that in that period at least, it was not the Irish culture which was weak and inferior.

In this case, there was very little "diversity in levels attained" and very little "inherited unevenness" for capitalism to "gain mastery over". Yet, over three centuries after the capitalist revolution in England, capitalism has not quite succeeded in "drawing Ireland and England economically closer to one another" (except in the way that the cat gets close to the mouse), or in "levelling out their stages of development."

In fact the "difference in levels attained" between Ireland and England was never before so great as it is after 350 years of capitalist levelling out.

Precisely the same thing is true of relations between India and England: Trotsky held that the functioning of imperialism would cause a "diminishing gap" between them. But 200 years after British capitalism began to take a serious interest in India, the Indian masses exist on starvation level. And, even in the 40 years since Trotsky wrote this, the "gap" between the two societies, instead of diminishing is greater than ever it was. (In Ireland, too, imperialism led to an increase in absolute poverty until a "solution" was found which was not open to India, i.e. mass emigration.)

What has the growth of the "international division of labour" between Britain and Ireland meant? It has meant this: that the development of the Irish economy was strictly subordinated to the needs of expanding capitalism in England, that Irish industry was aborted to prevent it from competing with English industry, that Irish natural resources were looted to serve English capitalism, that a couple of million Irish were starved to death because it would not have been economical for English capitalism to keep them alive by letting them eat the grain they had produced, that the worker and small peasant population of Ireland became a source of labour supply for English industry and that after centuries of plunder Ireland is to be a beef producer for England.

The present relationship between Ireland and Britain is perfectly justified if we take the needs of the "international division of labour" as our standard. There is no doubt that English industry is more productive than Irish industry and that it would therefore be "inefficient" for Ireland to supply herself with manufactured goods. England on the other hand finds it more economical to import food at prices which she is able to keep low than to make an attempt to be self-sufficient. So let each do what it is best at: let England concentrate on industrial production and let Ireland concentrate on beef production and agriculture!

The exploitation by the imperialist countries of the raw material resources of Asia, Africa and Latin America is also "justified" by the international division of labour. And the attempt by the Soviet revisionists to turn, for instance, Rumania into a country producing raw materials and food for Russia, and taking her industrial goods from Russia, was also justified by the international division of labour, because Rumanian production was not as efficient as Russian production.

The monopoly capitalist countries in Europe and the U.S.A. try to turn Asia, Africa and Latin America into cheap sources of raw materials for imperialist industry, and markets for the export of capital and industrial goods. That is the "international division of labour". It is only by defying, by obstructing, by going against the "international division of labour", by setting up strong national barriers within which it will not be allowed to operate, or within which its operation will be severely restricted, that these countries can develop. But, according to Trotsky, this is the way of reaction, since the productive forces must have their

international division of labour like a horse must have its oats.

SOCIALISM AND THE INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF LABOUR

Trotsky states that "socialist society can only be built on the most advanced productive forces". These productive forces have "broken through" national boundaries, and it is not possible for socialism to "drive them back into the boundaries of the national state which they have so violently sought to break through". For that reason socialism must begin in the imperialist countries of Europe and North America which have the most advanced productive forces. The question then is: Since these advanced productive forces of imperialism are based on a highly developed "international division of labour" --or in other words, on the ever increasing exploitation of the undeveloped countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America by the monopoly capitalist countries-- is socialism in these countries to base itself on the international division of labour, on imperialist exploitation? For the workers in the advanced countries there are now few questions it is so important to answer as this.

The advancement of the advanced capitalist countries has its roots in the exploitation of the colonial and neo-colonial countries. Lenin put it clearly when he said that monopoly capitalism was parasitic. Can socialism base itself on parasitism, on the international division of labour? (Or, instead of saying "parasitism", should we say "interdependence", as Trotsky does?) Trotsky says that, because it is a "highly developed capitalist country" (read, parasitic imperialist country), Britain would stand "no chance for socialist construction within the limits of its own island." In isolation it would simply be strangled in a few months. In fact for all "the 'advanced countries'", the building of socialism on a national basis would imply...a general decline, a wholesale cutting down of the productive forces, that is to say, something directly opposed to the tasks of socialism." (P48)

It would therefore be a matter of life and death for a socialist Britain to "extend the revolution" to her colonies and neo-colonies. Does this mean that it would be vital for her to keep control of her neo-colonies, of the places where her capital is exported, of her sources of raw materials? If socialism is to be based on the imperialist exploitation, on the imperialist division of labour, it would of course be necessary to retain imperialist conditions. Would extending the revolution mean something other than safeguarding the sources of imperialist exploitation?

THE RIPENESS OF THE WORLD FOR SOCIALISM

"All talk to the effect that historical conditions have not yet 'ripened' for socialism is the production of ignorance or conscious deception. The objective prerequisites for the proletarian revolution have not only 'ripened'; they have begun to get somewhat rotten." (Trotsky: Transition Programme of 4th International. 1938. P.8)

"Capitalism has come far closer to proletarian revolution than the Soviet Union to socialism". (History of Russ. Rev. Vol 3. Appendix 3)

"World economy in its entirety is ripe for socialism. But this does not mean that every country taken separately is ripe." (Permanent Revolution. P 131)

Remember that Trotsky defined imperialism as "world economy and world politics under the hegemony of finance capital". Trotsky's position then is that the world as a whole is "rotten" ripe for socialism, but that not every part of it is; in fact not any part of it is, only the whole in its entirety. He holds that imperialism has created one world society "under the hegemony of finance capital". This world society has backward and prosperous areas, like any capitalist society. Revolution must occur in the entire society, not by a splitting off of the backward areas from the prosperous areas. That would be reactionary in the way, for instance, that a revolution of the English North-East against the more prosperous South and Midlands would be. It would set up new national frontiers which would only have to be overcome again by the productive forces. In fact, this view of the world as one society is essentially false, it does not reflect what actually exists.

Lenin wrote:

"The social revolution cannot be the united action of the proletarians of all countries, for the simple reason that the majority of the countries and the majority of the inhabitants of the globe have not even reached the stage of capitalist development, or are only at the beginning of that stage." (A Caricature of Marxism 1916)

"It is quite conceivable that the workers of a certain country may overthrow the bourgeoisie before even one fundamental democratic reform has been accomplished in full. It is entirely inconceivable, however, that the proletariat, as a historical class, will be able to defeat the bourgeoisie if it is not prepared for this task by being educated in the spirit of the most consistent and determinedly revolutionary democracy." (The Revolutionary Proletariat and Self Determination. 1915)

"The characteristic feature of imperialism is the division of the whole world...into a large number of oppressed nations and an insignificant number of oppressor nations, which, however, command colossal wealth and powerful armed forces." (Report on National and Colonial Questions. 1920)

"The West-European capitalist countries...are consummating their development towards socialism...not as we formerly expected. They are not consummating it through the gradual 'maturing' of socialism in them, but through the exploitation of some countries by others, through the exploitation of the first of the

countries vanquished in the imperialist war combined with the exploitation of the world of the East". And "precisely as a result of the first imperialist war the East has been definitely drawn into the revolutionary movement." (Better Fewer, But Better. 1923)

World society does not exist. "World economy and world politics under the hegemony of finance capital" is in actuality imperialist exploitation of the backward countries. Imperialism does not do away with national revolution. On the contrary, "it means the extension and sharpening of national oppression on a new historical basis" (Lenin. The Revolutionary Proletariat and Self-Determination. 1915), and thereby lays the basis for a new era of national revolutions against imperialism.

Within a year of Trotsky's announcement that "the time of national revolutions has passed" (1915) the era of great national revolutions against imperialism began. (Thereafter Trotsky could make no sort of theoretical sense on the national question.)

A world society does not exist. Human society exists in a world system of national societies, some of which are striving to develop on a socialist basis, some of which are imperialist and exploit others (are parasitic), and some of which are colonial or neo-colonial and are having their development retarded and distorted by imperialist exploitation, (and some of the latter are vainly trying to build themselves up on a national bourgeois basis).

Bearing this in mind, and bearing in mind Trotsky's position on the national question (the setting up of new nations is reactionary because national boundaries impede the development of the productive forces), on the nature of imperialism (as an "equalising" force), and on the international division of labour (as being the standard by which progress is judged) -- what conclusions must be reached about Trotsky's theory that the socialist revolution must take place in "a world socialist economy based on international division of labour". (P45)?

Is it not clear that trotskyism is precisely what Lenin said it was in 1916 (about 10 years before it reached its full bloom) -- "social imperialism"? Trotskyism is a species of West European imperialist chauvinism which has misrepresented the nature of imperialism, which has abandoned internationalism (except as a phrase), and which has become an expression of "social imperialism", advocating the building of socialism on an imperialist base, i.e. giving imperialism a "socialist" gloss.

(How often have we heard "anti-imperialist" spoken sarcastically or written in quotation marks by trotskyists. It is irrelevant whether trotskyism reaches the position consciously or unintentionally. It is indisputable that many of the people who call themselves trotskyists in Ireland or Britain have the best of intentions. So have many of the social democrats. Who hasn't? But as Marx said, "I don't give a damn about his intentions". It is not

good or bad intentions that determine the nature of a political line, but its actual content with relation to the actually existing objective conditions.)

The matter of the obstacles to socialism in the highly developed capitalist countries caused by the fact that they are imperialist, and the problems that would face a socialist government in an imperialist country, have scarcely been dealt with at all in the past 40 years, and insofar as they have been dealt with it is chiefly the more superficial aspects of imperialism (or the old colonial form of imperialism) that have been touched upon.

Marx, in his writing on the Irish question around 1870, wrote: "I used to think the separation of Ireland from England impossible. I now think it inevitable" (in letter to Engels). "It was precisely from the standpoint of the revolutionary struggle of the English workers that Marx in 1869 demanded the separation of Ireland from England..." (Lenin. Rights of Nations. 1916). Previously, Marx had held the opinion that the national oppression of Ireland would be ended after the socialist revolution in England. But then he saw that the freeing of Ireland from English national oppression, was necessary to the developing of socialism in England. The statement that no people that oppresses another can itself be free must be taken in dead earnest.

After Marx's death the development of modern imperialism on the basis of monopoly capitalism intensified national oppression and exploitation, and therefore increased the importance of this question.

Lenin wrote in 1916:

"...Engels quoted India, and said that she may make a revolution against victorious socialism, for Engels was remote from that ridiculous 'imperialist economism' which imagines that the proletariat in the advanced countries, will 'automatically', without definite democratic measures, abolish national oppression everywhere." (A Caricature of Marxism)

So far were Engels and Lenin from the view that socialism must be based upon the international division of labour created by capitalism, and that it was reactionary to set up national barriers against the international division of labour, that they were able to envisage progressive national revolutions occurring in the undeveloped countries after the success of socialist revolutions in the advanced countries.

If the working class took power in one of the imperialist strongholds, and if it undertook to govern the colonies and neo-colonies of imperialism, there would be an immense pressure on it, caused by the objective circumstances (imperialist exploitation) to adopt an opportunist policy towards the colonies. And opportunism would immediately bring it into antagonistic conflict with the people of the colonies. If it saw the imperialist system, not as a system in

which one society exploits other societies, but as an international society ("World economics and world politics under the hegemony of finance capital"), or if it held the view that socialism must be based on the international division of labour, it could not avoid opportunism, and could not prevent itself from becoming "social imperialist" instead of socialist.

The actual course of history since 1917 has not been the development of the world socialist revolution through the socialist revolutions in the imperialist countries. The actual course of history, of course, is not accidental.

Lenin wrote in 1916:

"The undeveloped and oppressed nations are not waiting, they are not ceasing to live, they are not disappearing, while the proletariat of the advanced countries is overthrowing the bourgeoisie. ..." (A Caricature of Marxism)

And in 1923: "The West-European capitalist countries...are consummating their development towards socialism --not as we formerly expected. They are not consummating it through the gradual 'maturing' of socialism in them, but through the exploitation of some countries by others, through the exploitation...of the whole of the East". Because of this "the East has definitely been drawn into the revolutionary movement."

The poverty and backwardness of the undeveloped countries is not eliminated by imperialism. Imperialism does not "equalise" conditions in the colonies and neo-colonies with conditions in the metropolitan countries. And it is precisely this exploitation and this widening difference that holds back the revolution in the imperialist countries.

But what is to be done in the colonies. As Lenin said, "they are not ceasing to live." In order to develop they ^{must} throw off imperialism: that is, they must make national revolutions, democratic revolutions. The colonial bourgeoisie cannot lead these revolutions because their class interests lead them to compromise too readily with imperialism, for fear of their own masses. The petty bourgeoisie cannot because of their class nature. Trotsky held that the workers ought not. He held that the workers must always engage only in proletarian revolution (and never in the national revolution which must precede the building of socialism) even when conditions are such that (according to trotskyism) socialism could not possibly be built and a proletarian state could not possibly be established. (See "The Permanent Revolution", on China, P 131-2). Trotskyism therefore would condemn the colonial workers to futile playing at making a revolution which in the objective circumstances can not be made.

Lenin, on the other hand, basing himself on the absolute need for democratic revolution in these countries, held that since the

bourgeoisie cannot, the workers must, lead the democratic revolution to success.

Likewise capitalism can not build up the economies of these countries, not even 'national capitalism', because the weakness of national capitalism, the immensity of the task, and fear of the revolutionary masses, lead the most 'national' capitalist ruling class to compromise with imperialism, to invite the imperialists back in return for a share in the spoils (e.g. India and the 26 Counties.)

The building up of a strong national economy in the backward countries, which is absolutely necessary to the further development of the world revolution, cannot be done under capitalist leadership and cannot be based on capitalist production. And there is only one alternative to capitalist production -- socialist production.

The objective situation, therefore, has determined that, in the present era, the advance to socialism should be led by countries which are, at the beginning of the socialist construction very backward economically in comparison with the imperialist economies! And the objective world situation does not heed Khrushchev's sneers about "goulash socialism", or Trotsky's sterile dogmatism about the level of the productive forces which is necessary to socialism, or the sacredness of the international division of labour.

CONCLUSION

Trotsky says that the "main contradiction" of the imperialist epoch, is that between the productive forces and national boundaries. This "contradiction" is not a class contradiction at all. And, since it counter-poses, not the imperialist against the anti-imperialist forces, but the productive forces of imperialism and the imperialist international division of labour against national boundaries, and represents the former as being progressive and the latter as reactionary since they distract the former, it leads directly to "social-imperialism". And it categorises one of the chief progressive forces, the anti-imperialist forces of the nations exploited by imperialism, as reactionary, since it is their object to set up national barriers against the imperialist "international division of labour". The Soviet revisionists are now using this trotskyist theory to try to conceal their "social imperialism", and to justify, for example, their attempt to wreck the socialist economy of China.

Trotsky held that capitalism and monopoly capitalism work towards overcoming the "inherited unevenness" which was handed down from the previous modes of production. In fact, imperialism, being a system in which monopoly capitalist countries exploit the colonial and neo-colonial countries, worsens the unevenness which it inherited from previous modes of production. By defining imperialism as "world economy and world politics under the hegemony of finance capital", trotskyism conceals the real nature of imperialism, as made clear by Lenin. The modern revisionists also try to prettify imperialism.

Trotskyism aims at building socialism on the basis of imperialist exploitation, on the basis of the "international division of labour" created by imperialism. Social-democracy adopted this aim a very long time ago (in England, ^{long} before Trotsky came along e.g. Fabian "socialism" in the 1880s). More recently the modern revisionists have given up the struggle to expose and eliminate imperialism, and have based their policies on imperialism. The hope to build socialism within the imperialist system. In view of their essential agreement on the fundamental question of imperialism, in view of the fact that all three have adopted a completely opportunist attitude towards it, it is no matter for wonder that social-democrats ('left-wing', of course), trotskyists and modern revisionists should now be melting into one another's arms.

The Communist Party of China is now accused of "nationalism" because it is relying on its own resources to build up its socialist economy. But for any country now building a socialist economy to do other than rely on its own resources, would be to put itself at the mercy of imperialism. Those who are attacking China for "nationalism", and jabbering about the "international division of labour" are in fact demanding that China should prostrate herself before imperialism.

The "international division of labour" is something to be overcome by socialism: it is not something on which socialism should be based. The "international division of labour" declares that Ireland should be a beef ranch and a tourist resort: that is, that it should remain a neo-colony. Socialist requires that Ireland should have an all-round development and should be basically self-reliant: that is, that the international division of labour should be destroyed. The theory of trotskyism, and kindred theories, with their view that the setting up of national barriers against the sacred "international division of labour" is reactionary, would regardless of the present intentions of their adherents, keep Ireland on her knees before imperialism, would keep her under the heel of imperialism.

(Supplement to "Irish Communist". June 1966)

PREOBRAZHENSKY:

A VERY MUDDLED MARXIST

Preobrazhensky's book "The New Economics", which was published in English for the first time at the end of last year (1965) by the Oxford University Press, requires to be understood by the Marxist-Leninist movement. It was first published in the Soviet Union in 1926 where it became the centre of an intense political controversy. Many of the issues raised in it are as relevant today as they were forty years ago because of the revisionism that has taken over the Soviet Party, and the Parties of the "advanced" countries

of imperialist Europe.

1. Preobrazhensky was a founder member of the Bolshevik Party in 1902.
2. At the Bolshevik Congress held in the summer of 1917 he opposed Lenin and Stalin on the question of building socialism in Russia. Taking a trotskyist line, he attempted to lead the Party into stating that it would not attempt to build socialism in Russia unless socialist revolutions occurred in imperialist Europe. This attempt was defeated.

In the Spring of 1918 Preobrazhensky was prominent in forming an opposition group within the Bolshevik Party (it published a newspaper called "Communist") which opposed the Leninist line of the party on the question of the Treaty with German imperialism. In 1921 he became one of the secretaries of the Party. From this time onwards he was increasingly associated with Trotsky. With the introduction of the New Economic Policy by Lenin in 1922 Preobrazhensky became one of the chief critics of Leninism with the "Left Opposition" groups. While Trotsky was trying to ride two horses at once (party and opposition), Preobrazhensky was the chief theoretician of the "Left Opposition". During these years he stood for a very shallow form of extreme "leftism", opposing any form of compromise with German imperialism in 1918, or with the capitalist elements in Russian Society in 1922, when without such compromises, the Soviet state could not have maintained itself.

The main problem dealt with in "The New Economics" is the development of the weak socialist sector of the Russian economy, and the halting of the growth of the non-socialist sector. (Until the beginning of the 5 year plans in 1929 production in the non-socialist sector remained greater than socialist production). The hostility of the private sector to the socialist sector made itself felt in the "goods famine" of 1924. During the Civil War (1918-21) the country had to live off its capital equipment. At the end of the war capital equipment in industry had been completely run down. The peasants had been the main economic beneficiaries of the October revolution. They had acquired land. In 1924 their rents were as little as one third of the pre-revolutionary figure, and the forced delivery of crops (often 50% of their product) to landlords had been abolished. They found themselves in possession of their own surplus product which they could either consume or exchange for manufactured goods.

If they consumed it that meant short supply and high prices for farm products and raw materials in the towns, and an increase in hardship for the workers. It also meant a shortfall in government revenue. And when the peasants chose to exchange their produce for manufactured goods they found the supply of goods inadequate, the quality poor and the prices high. This excess demand within the economy, together with the changing attitudes to trade, produced a wildly fluctuating price level. In such circumstances it was possible for traders to accumulate large fortunes in short periods (a large proportion of trade was still private.).

For Preobrazhensky and his kind the situation was bad and the prospects gloomy. The Soviet state was based on an alliance of workers and the smaller peasants in opposition to the landlords and capitalists internally, and against international capitalism externally. With regard to the alliance against foreign capitalism, as Preobrazhensky points out: "the peasants inevitably waver, because a breakdown of the monopoly of foreign trade and the customs barrier would offer them access to cheaper foreign goods and, to some extent, an increase in the prices they would get for their agricultural produce --that is such a breakdown would offer them a betterment of their conditions" --in the short run. So, not only was the state being starved of funds, not only was the excess demand leading to an antagonism between town and country, not only was the private accumulation of capital taking place, but the prospect of the peasants attempting to link up with world capitalism and destroying the Soviet state was on the horizon.

There was only one possible solution: a massive increase in investment in the means of production. The resultant rise in productivity would raise the quantity and cheapen the price of goods produced in the socialist sector, and enable the state to eliminate the antagonism between town and country by curtailing price fluctuations and establishing a stable trade between town and country. This would also remove the greatest source of private capital accumulation. By making the goods produced by Soviet industry more competitive with those produced by imperialist industry, the gravitational pull of the peasants towards capitalism would be lessened.

The chief obstacle to the building of socialism was the class of rich peasants, which was a powerful class, and was becoming more powerful every year. The biggest question facing the Party was how to deal with this class. Preobrazhensky's book, which expounded his theory of "primitive socialist accumulation", is his proposal for a solution to the question.

The essence of Preobrazhensky's theory was to employ a special price policy which maintained the prices of manufactured goods at a higher level than increasing productivity would justify under the law of value, but which passed on a portion of the increased productivity by slightly lowered prices. The principle was to exchange smaller quantities of labour from the socialist sector for larger quantities of labour from the private sector and thus eradicate the rich peasants. His policy was to fool the peasants out of their surpluses by price manipulation. He claimed that the rich peasants would not react against the taking of their surplus product by the state because a share of the increased productivity would be going to them in the form of lower prices for manufactured goods.

This scheme is much like the schemes of modern social-democratic parties who, in order to win the support of the workers, flaunt ambitious plans for an egalitarian society, for greatly increased social services, which will come into being, without a direct confrontation with the capitalist class, by diverting a share of increased productivity to produce it. The contradiction between

capital and labour can be overcome, without class war, by increased productivity. "Increased productivity" becomes a magic slogan for overcoming class contradictions. Like his social-democratic brothers in the west, Preobrazhensky in 1926 tried to escape from existing class contradictions. He failed to recognise the antagonistic contradiction which existed in the Soviet Union between the powerful class of rich peasants and the workers and poor peasants.

Lenin said time and again that classes cannot be fooled. Preobrazhensky worked out an elaborate theory for fooling the class of rich peasants out of existence by price mechanisms. The question of how to deal with the rich peasants was a fundamental question for the Soviet state. Their growing power had to be smashed if the existence of the state was to be secured. Apart from this make-believe solution of price mechanisms, neither Preobrazhensky nor Trotsky nor any others of the "Left Opposition" had any policy for dealing with the problem. Yet the problem was, in essence, a simple problem, and its solution was a simple solution,

The intricate and unreal arguments of Preobrazhensky were attempts to avoid the problem rather than attempts to solve it. Lenin had stated the problem and the solution to it in very direct terms:

"Either the kulaks (rich peasants) massacre vast numbers of workers, or the workers ruthlessly suppress the revolts of the predatory kulak minority... There can be no middle course. Peace is out of the question... That is why we call the fight against the kulaks the last decisive fight". (Forward to the last Decisive fight. August 1918)

The only thing in doubt was the matter of timing. The only matter at issue was the simple matter of power. The only possible solutions were the destruction of the kulaks or the destruction of the proletarian dictatorship. At the critical moment the method would be direct violence not price mechanisms. In 1930-31 the masses guided by the Party, under Stalin's leadership, engaged the kulaks under the slogan: "Liquidate the kulaks as a class". The matter was solved by the forcible dispossession of the kulaks by the poor peasants under the guidance of the Party.

Preobrazhensky's failure to deal, in terms of reality, with the kulak problem, threw the whole of his thinking awry. His "price mechanism" theory was palpably inadequate in comparison with the immensity of the task it was designed to achieve. He had to find a supplementary way out, find another solution. This pre-supposed a revolution in an advanced capitalist country (Germany was considered most likely) which would relieve the Soviet state from the need of finding within Soviet society the resources for industrialisation. Germany would become the first country to build socialism and would become the vanguard of world socialism. Russia with German aid, would industrialise gradually over a long period.

This was not a new idea. In the 1920s in Russia, for people like Preobrazhensky, it became a very alluring one. However it is not

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the job of Marxists to indulge in wish fulfilment. They must deal in realities. Since there were no revolutions in imperialist Europe (for reasons explained by Lenin in 1923) they could not help the Soviet state. A solution to the problems facing Russia in 1926, which was based on the occurrence of socialist revolutions in Europe, was not a solution at all. Revolutions are not predictable happenings like the Spring Equinox. They will occur. Predicting when they will occur is a futile activity.

The failure of this non-solution, this solution based on the unpredictable, produced in its supporters all the characteristic frustrations which are the lot of people who put their faith in unreal notions and who are despondent when the realities of the situation do not conform to their desires. They look for a scapegoat. In this case the scapegoat was the "Stalinist bureaucracy". This bureaucracy (that is, privileged and inefficient officials) stopped the world revolution in order to safeguard its privileges in Russia. This bureaucracy, which was not even a class, made history to order in defence of its privileges, and ruined all Preobrezhensky's very civilised plans for pricing the kulaks out of existence and industrialising Russia with the aid of socialist Europe. Marxism through the looking glass!

But even this is not the full depth of Preobrezhensky's absurdity. In the event of the socialist revolution in imperialist Europe not occurring, he envisages the industrialising of Russia by obtaining massive loans from capitalist Europe. He thought this might happen as a migration of capital from a decrepit economic system (capitalism) to a vigorous and developing system (socialism) in the same way as capital migrated from the decrepit economies of Venice to Holland, and from Holland to Britain in the course of bourgeois development in Europe. That is to say that he envisaged the monopoly capitalists of Europe giving the Soviet state the means for developing a vigorous socialist economy (which did not exist in 1926; or until the 5 year plans of the 1930's) at a time when these capitalists had bright hopes of destroying the Soviet state. Preobrazhensky was led into this absurdity by an abstract, classless view of the productive forces (which is general to trotskyism) and a failure to understand the role of the superstructure.

During the late twenties and early thirties Preobrazhensky was in and out of the party like a jack-in-the-box. Before the start of the 5 year plans he imagined himself to be on the "left" of the Party. At the start of the first 5 yearsplan he co-operated with the Party. The Plan produced some weird effects on the "Left Oppositionists". In one of his last speeches in the mid-thirties Preobrazhensky thought that the plans had gone far enough. He was worrying about an over accumulation. As far as his economics were concerned he was no more than an radical bourgeois.

Politically, Preobrazhensky was an opportunist. He was never a Leninist. On the most serious sissues between 1917-1922 he opposed Lenin. After Lenin's death he became an ardent champion of Leninism, imagining it would be a good stick to beat Stalin with. His

"Leninism" however, was only trotskyism with a new name on it.

(At the 13th conference of the Bolshevik Party in 1924 he tried to explain away his long opposition to Leninism by saying: "I tried to use my own brains". Stalin remarked: "It is very praiseworthy, Preobrazhensky, that you should have wanted to use your own brains. But just look at the result...")

When this book was published in 1965 we were told by the trotskyists that it was yet another breach in the world of "international Stalinism". The legend runs that this book contains a wealth of enlightenment for the working class which the "Stalinists" have had to suppress to avoid exposure. There was even talk about its having been rescued from the cellars of the Kremlin where it had been locked up in a strongroom for the last 40 years. However, the unromantic truth is that a copy of the Russian edition published in 1926 was acquired by the Library of the British Museum, London, on November 8th 1930, and lay there undisturbed for 35 years before anyone thought it worthwhile to translate it and publish it in English.

And who has finally given this proletarian treasure to the English speaking workers in order to heighten their revolutionary consciousness? An imperialist publishing company, the Oxford University Press. A flood of books distorting Marxism-Leninism has come from the O.U.P. in the last few years. That imperialism should publish Preoprazhensky's "New Economics" to further its interests is perfectly understandable.

(Patrick Murphy. Irish Communist. April 1966--)

AN INTELLECTUAL AND STALIN

(Review of "The Dialogue On Marxism" by E. Hobsbawm, Marxism Today, February, 1966)

The similarity between Khrushchev revisionism and trotskyism grows clearer every day. The essential characteristic of both is to attack Leninism under cover of professed loyalty to Leninism. Mr. Hobsbawm's article is the most extreme attack on Leninism that has so far been published by the Communist Party of Great Britain.

It is necessary for trotskyism and modern revisionism to distort the long history of Bolshevism prior to 1917, which was chiefly a history of uncompromising struggle against opportunism and revisionism within the marxist movement. Trotskyists have to account for Trotsky's hysterical opposition to Lenin in these years. Modern revisionists have to explain away Lenin's sharp and uncompromising exposure of all deviations from Marxism.

It has long been a trotskyist tactic to date the birth of Bolshevism as late as possible. Fully fledged Bolshevism is dated as late as April 1917. Until then, according to Trotsky, Lenin's "perspective" was inadequate. In April 1917 Lenin was converted to Trotsky's "Permanent Revolution", and the April theses were in fact a fusing of Leninism and Trotskyism. Before April 1917 both Lenin and Trotsky had been a little wrong. This tale is designed to explain away Trotsky's long and hysterical opposition to Leninism.

When Leninism came under attack from Trotskyists and revisionists in the old Irish Communist Group this tactic was used. In a trotskyist document produced then the following passage occurred:

"...let us remember that up to 1912 even Bolshevism was not an independent party, as one would imagine from the statements of Clifford: only in 1912 did the Bolsheviks become an independent party..."

And now Mr. Hobsbawm tells us that "Even the Russia Social-Democratic Party did not split organisationally until just before World War One, though we mistakenly learned to think of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks as separate much earlier."

What does Lenin say?

"At its inception in 1903, Bolshevism adopted a tradition of ruthless struggle against petty-bourgeois semi-anarchist or dilettante anarchist revolutionness." (Left Wing Communism, Chapter 4; 1920). And "Bolshevism, as a trend of political thought and as a political party, exists since 1903. Only the history of Bolshevism during the whole (Lenin's emphasis) period of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it was able to build up and maintain, under the most difficult conditions, the iron discipline necessary for the victory of the proletariat." (Left Wing Communism. Ch. 2)

So we have to choose between Lenin on the one hand and Messrs. Hobsbaum and the trotskyists on the other.

Mr. Hobsbawm knocks Lenin down in order to put Trotsky up: "How could we discuss the history of the U.S.S.R. if we left Trotsky out of it, or thought of him as a foreign agent?" A few weeks ago Mr. Hobsbawm appeared on the same platform in London with an "eminent" trotskyist who has been trying to knock down Leninism for the last 30 years --Mr. Isaac Deutscher. They were speaking about China. Mr. Deutscher as usual attacked the dictatorship of the proletariat and the general theory of Leninism, and spouted the usual liberal cliches of refugees from Marxism-Leninism. And Mr. Hobsbawm expressed his "agreement with my friend Isaac Deutscher."

What Mr. Hobsbawm does next in his article is invite opportunism of every kind to call itself Marxist: "We vaguely assumed that those who had parted company with Lenin, had either ceased to be Marxists then, or had somehow never been real Marxists."

So Mr. Hobsbawm thinks that one can be in opposition to Leninism and still be a Marxist. Of course he must do this since he has himself parted company with Leninism. And having parted company with Leninism, and returned to the bourgeoisie Mr. Hobsbawm, like a man reconverted to a hysterical religion from which he had temporarily strayed, begins to strike his breast and call for repentance for the days when he lived in darkness: "...what we learned to believe and to repeat was not just 'Marxism', but Marxism as developed by Lenin, as frozen, simplified and sometimes distorted under Stalin".

He asks for forgiveness from his new masters for having in the past spread the "errors, oversimplifications and distortions of the Stalin period, or even of the entire period of the Communist International" (Founded 1919). He apologises for "the intellectual ice age" through which Marxism has passed, and says that "Marxist organisations...were fairly heavily discredited intellectually by the revelations of the 20th Congress of the Soviet C.P...."

Mr. Hobsbawm has, of course, turned into a variety of social-democrat: a sophisticated, West-European imperialist type 'Marxist' of the species of Kautsky and Trotsky.

How his sensitive, intellectual-bourgeois soul must have squirmed in those days when he had to repeat the crudities, the vulgarities, the "frozen" oversimplifications of "Marxism as developed by Lenin" and by Stalin! What a vista of "civilised" "Marxism" he must now see opening before him! A child of Israel seeing once more fleshpots of Egypt that he thought he had lost forever. A child of Israel who has shaken off the discipline of Moses, coming panting back to the fleshpots of Egypt, and proclaiming them to be the promised land!

What shall we say of Mr. Hobsbawm? Is he "ceasing to be a Marxist," or is it that he "has somehow never been a real marxist?" It is clear that being a marxist faced Mr. Hobsbawm with a dilemma, as it did many, many bourgeois intellectuals. He did not overcome his bourgeois mode of perception. He was drawn to Marxism by its comprehensiveness, by its rich intellectual content. Marxism was exciting. But how dull the proletariat was! And how dull were the "frozen oversimplifications" of that vulgar ex-theological student, Stalin!

The creative and expansive impulses of his bourgeois soul were being stifled. And our Mr. Hobsbawm dearly wanted to theorise. But if he had given his bourgeois creative impulse full rein he would have been excommunicated, discredited and disgraced by the "Stalin-ists". A dilemma. An insoluble dilemma. But then "The Thaw" began, and a new world opened up for Mr. Hobsbawm. He can now paddle around in the rich "theory" of Kautsky and Trotsky and Bukharin and Togliatti, and even Bernstein. And no doubt Mr. Hobsbawm will make a few theoretical contributions of his own before he is finished. Trotsky bragged like a schoolboy that he never took orders from Lenin, that he was Lenin's equal. We can see that Mr.

Hobsbawm is developing a similar form of meglomania.

The Irish Workers' Group occupies a large tract of territory in common with Mr. Hobsbawm. It is enlightening to compare Mr. Hobsbawm's article with an article in the new An Solas by a Mr. Moran, which also appeared last month. If allowance is made for their different ways of using words, the great similarity between them will become clear. For example, they both think that the destruction of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia after the death of Stalin has led to vast improvements there.

Trotskyism is supposed to be very "left". Yet the I.W.G. includes among its membership and supporters anarchists and liberals who would never have joined or supported the Marxist-Leninist I.C.G. And I.W.G. literature is being increasingly tailored to attract liberals, as are the publications of the C.P.G.B. Furthermore, the CPGB had to take vast strides to the right, into the territory of social-democracy, before Mr. Hobsbawm could talk in public about his "complete agreement with my friend Isaac Deutscher."

We suggest that trotskyist opportunists who are concerned about the "leftness" of their revolutionary "image" should reflect on this. It would be a catastrophe for them if posterity found out that they shared Mr. Hobsbawm's opinions. They might even lose their immortality.

(Brendan Clifford. Irish Communist. March, 1966)

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NOTES ON "THE BUREAUCRACY"

Trotsky's peculiar theory of the non-class bureaucracy underwent a further development in the hands of Oskar Lange, one of the pioneers of modern revisionism in the field of political economy. In 1957 (in "The Political Economy of Socialism") Lange put forward the theory that, though there are certainly social contradictions in socialist society they are not class contradictions and they do not give rise to class struggle. What exists under socialism is no longer social classes but social strata. "The bureaucracy", in Lange's view, would not have a class nature but would be a stratum. Trotsky said it was a caste.

Trotsky and Lange, although superficially they appear to be at opposite extremes, Trotsky being an ultra-leftist and Lange an ultra-rightist, have, fundamentally, much in common. Lange is one of the pioneers of "market socialism". He was opposed to the "Stalinist excess" of freeing the economy from the market. But in his pioneering effort in working out a theory of market socialism in 1936 ("On the Economic Theory of Socialism", in Review of Economic Studies) he was able to quote from a work which Trotsky had published three years earlier: "The Soviet Economy in Danger" (1933). In this "brilliant" work (and every work of Trotsky's shines like

tinsel) Trotsky declared that:

"Economic accounting is unthinkable without market relations"

(P.33)

This precisely was the point which bourgeois political economy had been trying to establish for decades. "Economic calculation is impossible without the market, and therefore is impossible in a true socialist society", they declared. (See von Mises, B. Brutzkus, Hayck, Max Weber etc.) Any attempt at production outside the market leads of necessity to inefficiency and bureaucracy. The market is the greatest enemy of bureaucracy and is the only guide to economic efficiency. So said the bourgeois propogandists. So said Trotsky following the bourgeois propogandists. To combat "the bureaucracy", Trotsky declared in 1933, the second five year plan must be put off, the power of the rouble (of the market) must be restored. The attempt to produce outside the market leads to the creation of "Asiatic bazaars" and bureaucracy. And when he declared that "Economic accounting is unthinkable without market relations" Trotsky was in fact declaring that socialist production was impossible.

From the emigre Russian bourgeois economist, Boris Brutzkus, (who had been given his marching order by Trotsky himself in 1922 when Trotsky was still more or less a Bolshevik) Trotsky took up the cry of "back to the market". Lange took up the cry from Trotsky. And Lange became its chief proponent in the socialist camp after the death of Stalin. From 1956 to his death in 1966 he played a leading part in taking the Polish economy back to the market.

And when in 1957 Lange declared that there were no classes in socialist society, only "strata" he was only developing Trotsky's concept of a bureaucracy which had no class nature: which was a "caste". The words "caste" and "stratum" in this connection play the same part as the word "god" in idealist philosophy. They cannot be defined in materialist terms. They are the suspension of sanity which it is necessary to make at a certain point in any idealist system in order to make that system appear to be consistent and comprehensive. They give the appearance of bridging the chasm which runs through the system.

The Marxist views of Lenin and Stalin on the question of bureaucracy have nothing in common with the phrasemongering of the dethroned bureaucrat, Trotsky. In numerous writings during the 1920's Stalin showed the extent thof bureaucratic influence on the state and the party: and he showed that phrasemongering was powerless against the bureaucratic influence. There was only one possible means of countering the growth of bureaucratic influence, and that was the political development of the masses. He wrote in 1928:

"...one of the most serious obstacles, if not the most serious of all, is the bureaucracy of our apparatus... I am referring to the bureaucratic elements who batten on our weakness and errors, who fear like the plague all criticism by the masses, all control by the masses, and who hinder us in developing self-criticism and

ridding ourselves of our weaknesses and errors. Bureaucracy in our organisations must not be regarded merely as routine and red-tape. Bureaucracy is a manifestation of bourgeois influence on our organisations". ("Against Vulgarising The Slogan of Self-Criticism". Collected Works. Volume 11. P137)

It is clear that if the "political expropriation" of the proletariat by the bureaucracy actually takes place, its essence must be the political overthrow of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie. If the main organs of the state are taken over by the bureaucracy their class content becomes bourgeois.

The opportunists use "the bureaucracy" as a mere phrase, with the object of deceiving, or of disguising reaction. And ultimately, as has been shown in practice by social-democracy, trotskyism and modern revisionism, it is the most thoroughly proletarian forces which they view as the most bureaucratic. That is as it should be. Opportunism bases itself essentially on the bourgeois outlook. The growth of opportunism is thwarted by the proletarian forces.

For opportunists socialism is bureaucracy since socialism struggles against, obstructs, thwarts and smothers opportunism. That which thwarts opportunism appears as bureaucracy to the opportunists: therefore socialism is bureaucracy from their point of view.

That is why Lenin and Stalin appeared as the arch-bureaucrats to Trotsky, and why Stalin and Mao appear as the arch-bureaucrats to the modern revisionists and trotskyists.

But for the proletarian forces bureaucracy is undoubtedly a manifestation of bourgeois influence. It is the bourgeois forces which obstruct the growth of the proletarian forces, whether they take on the form of imperialist militarism or of bureaucracy in a socialist society.

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