

TEN YEARS ON ...

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FROM

REVOLUTION

THROUGH COUNTER-

REVOLUTION

TO THE CONSOLIDATED RULE OF
THE NATIONAL CAPITALIST CLASS
IN CHINA



THE MYSTIQUE OF "MAO
TSE-TUNG THOUGHT"

OPEN LETTER TO THE
COMMUNIST WORKERS'
LEAGUE OF BRITAIN (ML)

MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANISATION
OF BRITAIN

I N T R O D U C T I O N

THE HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA SINCE 1966 HAS FULLY VINDICATED THE MLOB'S EXPOSURE OF THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY "GREAT PROLETARIAN CULTURAL REVOLUTION"

It is now almost 10 years since the Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Britain issued its historic "Report on the Situation in the People's Republic of China". This now classic analysis of the origins, development and alignment of class forces in the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" of 1966-68 showed that, behind the demagogic mask of "socialism" in China lay a tactically concealed apparatus of power through which the Chinese national capitalist class could make its dictatorship effective in the specific conditions of a China the workers and peasants of which had carried through, 17 years earlier, a victorious national-democratic revolution and whose revolutionary zeal and striving for fundamental social change remained at a high level.

The objective situation in the newly-founded People's Republic of China in which, in the years immediately following the victory of the national-democratic revolution in 1949, the national capitalist class found itself, in which it was compelled to lay the first foundations of its economic system and to mould and strengthen its state apparatus of rule - the two together, base and superstructure, making up the system of "new democracy", the blueprint for which was put forward by Mao himself at the 7th Congress of the CPC held in Yenan in 1945 - was one in which the workers, peasants and progressive intellectuals of China were demanding and expecting, as an inalienable right flowing to them as the natural outcome of the revolution which their class power had made and carried through, the building of a thoroughgoing socialist system in China, one in which the fruit of the working people's labour would be guaranteed them through the establishment of common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange in the hands of a state based on and discharging their class power, the power of the worker-peasant alliance. It was this demand which the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung" was able to exploit by distorting it into the deceptive, because essentially classless, slogan of "People's Democratic Dictatorship". Indeed, it had been the chief qualification of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" as the guiding ideology mobilising the mass of China's working people behind the national capitalist class in the difficult task of bringing an independent and organically viable capitalist China into being, that it provided just the kind of inverted ideological framework needed as a cover behind which the subjective demand of China's toiling millions for a socialist China and for a state of their own democratic dictatorship could be satisfied in the world of illusion, whilst in reality there was built a viable, resilient and - from the all-important aspect of its power to evoke an emotively persuasive and disarming social response - effective state apparatus of rule embodying the dictatorship of the national capitalist class of China as the essential precondition, in terms of class power, for the building of a state-capitalist system disguised as "socialism".

For the national capitalist class, the chief merit of "new democracy" as a political blueprint for a state-capitalist system in China lay in its ability to "give" to the makers of the revolution, the workers and peasants, the illusion that the uninterrupted transformation of the national-democratic into the socialist revolution was being put peacefully into effect through such measures as the nationalisation of the "commanding heights" of the economy previously held by the comprador bourgeoisie and the setting-up of joint state-private boards for that sector of industry - by far the largest - owned by the national capitalist class, which took care to preserve for itself the tactical pose of a "weak and vacillating force" which would even go to the lengths of undergoing "voluntary ideological remoulding to accept socialism". What, of course, was in reality being given, and to whom, was the reality of political and state power for the national capitalist class, albeit a power carefully concealed and disguised behind the facade of a false "socialism" and the illusory "joint dictatorship of the bloc of four classes". That this "new democratic system" proved in practice to be one which rendered yeoman service to the national capitalist class through all the difficult vicissitudes of New China right through to the Great Impresario's final tour de force in the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" is incontrovertibly demonstrated in the Report.

Among the well-known tenets of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" which form the foundation of the political principles on which the system of "New Democracy" is based, the following are shown by the Report to be fundamentally unscientific and contrary to the principles of Marxism-Leninism:-

"That the capitalist class in China represents a social force which supports and works for the building of socialism;

that the transition to socialism can be brought about peacefully, without the violent opposition of the capitalist class;

that the capitalist class can grow into socialism by ideological remoulding;

that socialism can be built without the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, by means of a 'state of the whole people' in which the working people share power with the capitalist class;

that socialism can be built without the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist Party, but with leadership shared between the party of the working class and the parties of the capitalist class on the basis of 'mutual supervision';

that during the building of socialism the capitalist class should be allowed to put forward the ideology of its class;

and that during the building of socialism the Party should adopt a policy of 'liberalism' in all cultural fields."

(Report of the CC of the MLOB on the Situation in the People's Republic of China, "Red Front", January 1968; p.5-6).

The Report went on to demonstrate that the so-called "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution", which destroyed the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese trade union movement and launched armed attacks against the working class, was a counter-revolution launched under cover of the most shameless, rabid and scientifically dishonest "left" demagogic slogans yet known in the history of the world struggle for socialism, a concentration of counter-revolutionary force launched with the aim of destroying the fruits of the national-democratic revolution which the forces representing Marxism-Leninism in China had declared their intention of carrying through to a socialist revolutionary conclusion.

One of the important points argued by the Report was that the aim of eliminating the Communist Party of China and the entire national-democratic revolutionary movement which had been built up under its revisionist leadership for the carrying through of the national-democratic revolutionary stage was not because that party and that movement had suddenly become transformed into a force threatening the continued existence of state capitalism in China and the rule of the national capitalist class headed by Mao Tse-tung. Indeed, how could this be so? For the CPC as the vanguard of the Chinese revolutionary forces had been under the leadership and control of the revisionist group around Mao Tse-tung from at least 1935. This had lasted until 1959, and the brief period from 1959 until 1966, when the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" was launched and brought the epoch of "new democracy" to its end, constituted in itself a far too brief interval of time for the organisational power and political authority of the new socialist-orientated leadership around Comrades Liu Shao-chi and Peng Chen to have consolidated their position. This group and its supporters, educated by the experience of Soviet modern revisionism as well as by its growing understanding of the true class role and content of the strategic perspectives developed by the faction headed by Mao Tse-tung, had only then begun their development towards a Marxist-Leninist understanding and mastery of the laws of motion of the socialist revolution in China and of their relation to the national-democratic revolution.

A fact which is not generally grasped or its significance understood by those whose political and theoretical development is moving towards a break with Maoist "left" revisionism and towards a Marxist-Leninist understanding of the Chinese revolution is that, as the Report showed, the date at which a Cultural Revolution was first launched in China was not in the spring of 1966 - this, indeed, marks only the inception of the counter-revolutionary phase in the development of the pre-revolutionary class struggles in China - but a whole year earlier, in May 1965. In that month the CPC launched the Socialist Cultural Revolution, and this event of itself marked the decision taken by the new leader-

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ship under Liu Shao-chi and Peng Chen that the political situation and balance of class forces in China had, as a result of successful battles both within the party and in the working class and peasant movement as a whole to restrict and cut down the authority and influence of the faction headed by Mao Tse-tung, culminating in the successful restitution to full party status and activity of most of the 300,000 cadres who had been removed as a consequence of the liberal "Let a Hundred Flowers Blossom" policy advocated by Mao, reached a point at which the task of incepting the first initial stages in the mounting of a socialist revolutionary movement could be undertaken.

However tenuous and elementary the measures embodied in the unleashing of the Socialist Cultural Revolution in May 1965 may have been, they together amounted to the inescapable and - for the Chinese national capitalist class - potentially fateful and doom-laden fact that a section of the Political Bureau of the CPC had come under the leadership of cadres who were moving towards the adoption of a Marxist-Leninist theory and practice in relation to the revolutionary process in China. This, it was recognised by Mao Tse-tung and his faction - whose empirically limited intellectual horizons, as with most reactionaries, open or concealed, tended to be counterbalanced by an acute nose for impending trouble - represented the threat of a potential socialist revolutionary situation in the future which, however remote, they were not prepared to tolerate. With the not inconsiderable experience in the manipulation of the revolutionary process in a colonial-type country such as China possessed by the faction headed by Mao Tse-tung, it was known that, if left to develop according to its own inherent and organic laws of motion and given, as a vital element of revolutionary consciousness within that process the leading role and scientific practice of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party - a qualitative inner-Party transformation which would in time undoubtedly have taken place within the CPC following upon the final removal from power of the "left" revisionists headed by Mao Tse-tung - that process would and could only culminate in the expulsion of the national capitalist class from the "new democratic" state, the instrument of its concealed dictatorship, to the destruction of that state and to its replacement by a state of the democratic dictatorship of the working class and poor peasantry; that is, to the carrying through to victory of the socialist revolutionary tasks which the strategy and tactics imposed on the Chinese Revolution by Mao Tse-tung and his faction had, for 16 years from 1949 to 1965, been instrumental in frustrating and aborting.

These revisionist elements in party and state therefore began to organise themselves, as the Report has shown, under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung and his faction and according to a skilfully devised tactical plan, for the elimination by force of the potential Marxist-Leninist nucleus which had begun to develop around Comrades Liu Shao-chi and Peng Chen and for the counter-revolutionary replacement of the unstable - even if tactically astute - framework of "new democracy" by a tighter form of state apparatus - albeit one still retaining for obvious tactical reasons the false facade of "socialism" - in which the leading role would be fulfilled, not by the People's National Consultative Conference and still less by the residue rump of the CPC left over from the ravages of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution", but by the People's Liberation Army - after, of course, this had been purged of any genuinely socialist and proletarian elements and transformed into a fascist-type repressive militia. The chief social role of these Chinese blackshirts with false red banners was and remains to impose an iron discipline upon the worker and peasant masses not only in society at large, but above all at their place of work, and thereby to assist in the most direct way possible not only in the maintenance of a repressive state apparatus as such, but also in the bread-and-butter tasks associated with the primitive accumulation of capital in the hands of that state through the heightened exploitation of the workers and peasants.

This was the ignominious end of "new democracy", a political and state system which, at bottom and in the most fundamental sense, represented a variant of bourgeois democracy - perhaps the last that history will see emerge from the womb of developing capitalism before the onset of the coming era of victorious socialist revolutions led by the proletariat of all lands and its Marxist-Leninist International brings the epoch of capitalism to its final end.

The Report also showed, however, that the rule of Chinese national capital for a period of some ten years after the completion of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" remained a basically unconsolidated one. The truth of this has been proved by the entire sequence of events, from the high point of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" in August-September 1966 onwards. Having succeeded in its primary aim of destroying the developing Marxist-Leninist section within the leadership of the CPC, headed by Liu Shao-chi and Peng Chen, the dominant pro-US clique around Mao Tse-tung were compelled for several years thereafter to rely on the petty-bourgeois "ultra-left", led first by Lin Piao and later by Chiang Ching. Only after both the consolidation of their own rule in the new conditions prevailing after the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" had eliminated the CPC as a potential socialist revolutionary vanguard - a potential role which might have become reality if the developing Marxist-Leninist section had succeeded in carrying through their plans and perspectives for the transformation of "new democratic" China into a socialist China based on the democratic rule of the workers and poor peasants - and their developing alliance with US imperialism had paved the way for the later unfolding of "large-power cooperation on an increasing scale" - did the ruling Mao faction feel its position sufficiently secure as to move against the ultra-left and so to begin the task of dismantling, stage by stage, the "left" mask, composed of the most unbridled demagoguery and deceit, which hitherto they had needed as a cover behind which to consolidate the real apparatus of their political and military power.

The first step in this process of consolidation was the expulsion of Lin Piao, who represented that section of the national bourgeoisie whose interests brought it into opposition with US imperialism and hence to the conclusion of an alliance with it. The second step, the moment for launching which was felt to have arrived with the death of Mao himself in 1976, was the elimination of the "Gang of Four" headed by Chiang Ching, the group of petty-bourgeois adventurers whose only objective base of power lay in the discontented student masses which, after the hysterical euphoria engendered by the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution", had looked to the speedy dawning of a hazily conceived populist millennium, and on whose backs the Chiang Ching mountebanks had hoped to ride to power.

The validity of the analyses presented in the MLOB Report has been proven up to the hilt by reference to the entire sequence of events in China throughout what may be termed "the decade of the 'left' demagogic circus" from 1966 to 1976. However bizarre and inexplicable they may have seemed on the mere surface of history at the time, especially when looked at individually as separate events without a conjoint evaluation being made - a task which was virtually impossible in the thick of the artificially-inspired tumult of the post-1966 manoeuvres and sallies themselves - a careful study of those events forming the seemingly anarchic backcloth to the later development of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" can be seen as the ideological mobiliser and inspirer of a counter-revolutionary mass movement which, in the different conditions prevailing in an economically and socially backward country but recently emerged from semi-colonial subservience, fulfils the same objective role as that played by a fascist mass movement in the more advanced and polarised conditions of a developed monopoly-capitalist country.

Indeed, it may be said that the "Thought of Mao Tse-tung", as a hothouse for the engendering of unbridled populist demagoguery, only fails to attain to the ideological leadership of an out-and-out fascist counter-revolutionary mass movement because the general level of social development in China was and remains at an as yet insufficiently advanced level for fascism to form a suitable ideological-political framework and cover for maintaining the rule of Chinese national capital.

As far as the present situation in China following upon the death of the founding father of Chinese "left" revisionism, Mao Tse-tung, is concerned,

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the internal situation of factional dispute and rivalry has now, since the accession of the openly (as distinct from "left") revisionist Hua Kuo-feng regime, given place to one of relative stability, and this in itself provides an indication of the need felt by Chinese national capital to consolidate the grip of the state-capitalist system and its military-bureaucratic super-structure more thoroughly over the population as a whole.

As for recent Chinese foreign policy, this also gives undeniable evidence of the now thoroughly reactionary character of the ruling national capitalist class. In the international arena, the People's Republic of China - once the guiding star and example to millions of Asia's exploited and oppressed - is now linked in reactionary alliances with the forces of US imperialism in Pakistan, Chile, Iran and, finally in Angola and Zaire, whilst the invitation extended to the discredited ex-President Nixon, the political spokesman of the oil-space-arms magnates who has been discarded by US monopoly capital but remains honoured in Peking for his "services to Sino-US cooperation", reveals the lengths to which the architects of Chinese foreign policy will go in their efforts to whip up a war alliance directed against their implacable rivals, the Soviet neo-imperialists, whose need for imperialist expansion represents at one and the same time the greatest threat to US world hegemony and to the national security of the People's Republic of China.

Despite these obvious and provable aspects of the "Thought of Mao Tse-tung", Maoism still retains some of its pseudo-theoretical aura precisely through its claim to a "dialectical base" which seeks to dress up the practice of class collaboration, of harmony between labour and capital, in the "theoretical" disguise of "an enrichment of Marxism-Leninism". For precisely this reason we print the article "The Mystique of Mao Tse-tung Thought" with the aim of finally dispelling any claim on the part of "The Thought" to be a development, a "refinement" (to use the somewhat precious terminology of Professor George Thompson) of scientific dialectical materialism. We also print our Open Letter to the Communist Workers' League of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) - not because we have any illusion that its contents will have much effect on the group itself, but in the hope that its content may communicate itself to some of the more questioning members of the various Maoist groups and so succeed in pulling away some of the support which "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" is still able to command, not just in Britain, but throughout the world.

Insofar as the former US President Ford felt himself able to express his sorrow at the death of Mao Tse-tung in the following words - so different from any delivered by a leading spokesman of world imperialism on the death of the real Marxist-Leninist, J.V. Stalin:

"Mao was a most remarkable and great man ... (who) .. had the vision and imagination to open the doors so the United States and the People's Republic of China could do things in a new era and a new day";

- a love-feast was inaugurated which, for sheer obscenity and monstrous incongruity, puts the mating of Silenus with the Nymph in the shade. The music accompanying this unholy matrimony was provided, not by the Wedding March from Lohengrin (Richard Wagner's turbulent spirit may, for once, rest in peace), but by the staccato rat-tat-tat of machine-gun fire sounding off in Squire Calley's Manor of Mi Lai, with the boom of heavy calibre bombs landing on Hanoi and Haiphong as a ground-bass setting off the more delicate themes in the higher registers of the Dance Macabre of Vietnam.

Surely the time has come to put an end to the ghastly parody of Marxism-Leninism which is the "Thought of Mao Tse-tung"? We hope that this pamphlet might make a modest beginning in this important polemical task.

September 1977

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THE MYSTIQUE OF "MAO TSE - TUNG
THOUGHT "

THE RESOLUTION OF CONTRADICTIONS AS THE KERNEL OF MAOIST PHILOSOPHY

A fundamental component of the philosophical system known as "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", an absolutely essential feature of its world outlook and the basic method by means of which it cognises the world, is the philosophical method of the resolution of contradictions. This philosophical basis is typified by, for instance, the theory of "national unity of the national bourgeoisie with the working class and poor peasantry in the building of socialism", a classic formula for the "harmony of labour and capital" indeed, in which such contradictions are allegedly "resolved" in the teeth of their inherent antagonism. From this Original Sin of Maoism flow a number of liberal-democratic panacea, all of them, as we shall see, characteristic of that fundamental mechanical-determinist world view which is summed up in the concept of "the peaceful resolution of contradictions", and which is so typical a foundation of the philosophy of a bourgeois class during its revolutionary phase, the phase of its birth and early development:

"In our country the contradiction between the working class and the national bourgeoisie is a contradiction among the people. ... This is because of the dual character (Sic - Ed.) of the national bourgeoisie in our country. ... The contradiction between exploiter and exploited, which exists between the national bourgeoisie and the working class, is an antagonistic one. But in the concrete conditions existing in China, such an antagonistic contradiction, if properly handled, can be transformed into a non-antagonistic one and resolved in a peaceful way." (Mao Tse-tung: "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People"; Peking; 1964; p.3-4. Our emphasis).

Just why and for what precise reasons, "in the concrete conditions existing in China, such an antagonistic contradiction (i.e., between the working class and the national bourgeoisie - Ed.) can be transformed into a non-antagonistic one and resolved in a peaceful way" (p.3-4) is not made clear at any point in the above or any other of Mao's writings. In fact, the crux of the ideological deceit perpetrated in the above quotation lies in the so deceptively unengaging and prosaic "in the concrete conditions existing in China". It is a well-known characteristic of modern revisionism and its special pleading that it seeks to justify its vulgarisations and distortions of Marxist-Leninist theory, its desertion of revolutionary class principles, by reference to the "special conditions" prevailing in the given country, which necessitate a unique, nationally distinct road to socialism.

In the case of Mao and his special pleading on behalf of the Chinese national bourgeoisie for its inclusion in the bloc of revolutionary classes, he is not, in fact, able to cite a single characteristic of the Chinese national bourgeoisie which distinguishes it qualitatively from the bourgeoisie of any other colonially subservient and economically underdeveloped country:

"... the Chinese national bourgeoisie also has another quality, namely, a proneness to conciliation with the enemies of the revolution ... it is neither willing nor able to overthrow imperialism (unaided? - Ed.) ... in a thorough way." ("On New Democracy"; Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung: Vol.II, Peking 1965; p.349).

All this is indicative that, as Mao himself admits:

"When confronted by a formidable enemy, they (i.e. the bourgeoisie - Ed.) united with the workers and peasants against him, but when the workers and peasants awakened, they turned round to unite with the enemy against the workers and peasants. This is a general rule applicable to the bourgeoisie everywhere in the world, but the trait is more pronounced in the Chinese bourgeoisie." (ibid., p. 349).

All this relates to the oneness of the Chinese bourgeoisie with the bourgeoisies of other lands, and as such it may be looked upon as so much window-dressing.

When it comes to establishing the special features which distinguish the Chinese bourgeoisie from the bourgeoisies of other, and particularly the developed lands, again Mao has to fall back on a vague and unsubstantiated generalisation:

"The Chinese national bourgeoisie retains a certain revolutionary quality." (Ibid.; p.348).

Absolutely no objective evidence is given to prove that the Chinese national bourgeoisie is any more capable of fulfilling a revolutionary role in the carrying through of the national and democratic tasks than was the Russian bourgeoisie two decades earlier.

In the passage from "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" quoted above, the deception resorted to is of exactly the same order. To the national bourgeoisie is attributed a "dual character" consisting on the one side of an economic relationship resting on the exploitation of the working class. The other side in this duality, however, is never indicated, much less defined. However, at least as far as the economic strength of the national bourgeoisie is concerned, the statistics issued by the Government of the People's Republic of China in 1966 show that:

"In 1949 capitalist industry accounted for 63.3% of the gross output value of the country's industry. In 1950 the total volume of private trades occupied 76.1% of the country's wholesale and retail trades respectively. (Mao Tse-tung: Speech at the Supreme State Conference, January 1956; cited in: Kuan Ta-tung; "The Socialist Transformation of Capitalist Industry and Commerce in China"; Peking; 1966; p.28-29).

Such are the threadbare ideological devices covering the true class nature of Maoist "New Democracy". On the panorama of history, the classic simplicity of the French bourgeoisie's "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" towers above it.

A basic feature of the Maoist perspective leading up to the achievement of a "socialist" society is therefore cooperation between the working class and the national capitalist class in the building of "socialism" - the outcome in practice, in the real world of classes, of relations between classes and, above all, of the struggle between them, of the application to social life and practice of the method of resolution of contradictions in a non-antagonistic way:

"The year 1956 saw the transformation of privately-owned industrial and commercial enterprises into joint state-private enterprises. ... The speed and smoothness with which this was carried out are closely related to the fact that we treated the contradiction between the working class and the national bourgeoisie as a contradiction among the people. ...

In building a socialist (Sic - Ed.) society, all need remoulding, the exploiters as well as the working people." (Mao Tse-tung: "On the Correct Handling ...; p. 27).

The result is a theory in which the clear and incisive analysis and definition of class and of the relations between classes which is characteristic of Marxism is blurred and confused in such a way as to produce an inverted view of an imaginary chimerical class of national capitalists which can be induced through "ideological remoulding" to adopt measures and to agree to social policies which, if they were in reality socialist in character, would quite obviously be in opposition to their class interest, so as to achieve the peaceful resolution of the contradiction between labour and capital in the joint and non-antagonistic building of "socialism". Since, in reality, it is not socialism which is being built, but state capitalism, the real cause of the ineffable and heart-gladdening hush of peace which descends on China just at the moment when those "socialist" construction works are being embarked on is the fact that it is very much in the interest of the national capitalist class to support them since, as a direct consequence of their implementation, the entire surplus value produced by the working class is milked from it by an apparatus of discipline and coercion which is part of the state and then paid out to the national capitalists as a gilt-

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edged security. In this way do the mechanical-determinist prescriptions of Mao help to bring about class peace between labour and capital:

"On the one hand, members of the bourgeoisie have already become managerial personnel in joint state-private enterprises and are being transformed from exploiters into working people living by their own labour. On the other hand, they still receive a fixed rate of interest on their investments in the joint enterprises ..." (ibid.; p.28).

"The vast majority of the bourgeoisie and intellectuals who come from the old society are patriotic; they are willing to serve their flourishing socialist motherland ..." (ibid.; p. 39)

In the text of "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People" it is stated that "the socialist system was basically established in 1956" (p.43). It is clear, however, that whatever had been established in China in 1956, it did not possess the social characteristics associated with and inseparable from the successful laying of the economic foundations and political superstructure of a socialist society. These consist, in their most essential form, in the taking firm root of socialist production relations based on ownership and control by the whole working people through their state of at least the predominant part of industry, commerce, banking and trade (together with appropriate transitional forms of quasi-socialist property, such as collective farms, in the case of the peasantry); whilst, as far as the political superstructure is concerned, the essential prerequisite for and component of a socialist society is the completion of the class basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat achieved through the consolidation of the class alliance between the proletariat and the poor peasantry, together with the strengthening of its state apparatus of power - this being the particular form of the dictatorship of the proletariat which is appropriate to the objective conditions prevailing in a country emerging or newly emerged from colonial-type oppression through the intermediate stage of the national-democratic revolution.

As we have seen, the illusion of socialism is necessary to the Chinese national capitalist class in order to disguise the essentially state-capitalist character of the production relations established through the joint state-private boards. However, taking for the moment the illusion of socialist production relations and a socialist economic base at its face value, let us see how the chimerical "socialism" achieved in the perspective presented by the "Thought of Mao Tse-tung", i.e., the process of peaceful, non-antagonistic "remoulding" of the national capitalist class (and, remember, of the workers, for, as we have seen, "all need remoulding, the exploiters as well as the working people") to accept "socialism" looks from the point of view of the political superstructure of "New Democracy" and its development, as provided for in the programme laid down by Mao Tse-tung, in which the formula has been amended as follows:

"The democratic parties of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie ... exist side by side with the party of the working class Because we have no reason not to adopt the policy of long-term coexistence with all the democratic (sic - Ed.) parties which are truly devoted to the task of uniting the people for the cause of socialism." (ibid.; p. 43).

It will be noted here that, in maintaining that the democratic parties are "truly devoted to ... the cause of socialism", Mao is declaring that the national capitalist class, whose political instruments the "democratic parties" are and are intended to be under the New Democratic constitution, can play a positive role, not merely in the completion of the national-democratic revolutionary tasks (in which revolutionary stage Leninism also recognises that a nascent and oppressed capitalist class of a colonial-type country can make a positive contribution) but also in the socialist revolution.

However, unlike Leninism, Maoism does not recognise the transition from capitalism (in the new form of state capitalism established by the New Democratic Revolution) to "socialism" as being a revolutionary process necessitating the transfer of economic and political power from one class (the national capitalist class and its allies) to another class (the working class and its allies). On the contrary, it

conceives of the transition to socialism as a peaceful, gradual and harmonious development, i.e., merely as quantitative change, which can be brought about purely by technological development and "political engineering" ("the correct handling of contradictions ..."). No role whatever is played in this process by the class struggle waged by the working class and poor peasantry or its qualitative outcome in revolution, socialist revolution led by the working class against the capitalist class.

Hence the national capitalist class, according to "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", is able to grow peacefully from capitalism into socialism, and from this to the contention that the political parties representing the interests of that national capitalist class can become "truly devoted to the task of uniting the people for the cause of socialism" forms a leap from "quantity" (mere "long-term coexistence") to "quality" ("devotion to the cause of socialism") which, unlike the genuine dialectical leap from a capitalist society to a socialist society taking place in the real world of classes, class struggle and revolution, the "Thought of Mao Tse-tung" is fully able to encompass in its system.

ON "CORRECT HANDLING" - AN EMPIRICAL SUBSTITUTE FOR DIALECTICAL REASONING IN THE "THOUGHT OF MAO TSE-TUNG"

We have already dealt with the fundamental aspect of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" as it relates to the basic class role of the national bourgeoisie. But it is in the course of "correctly handling" those class relationships that the more immediately transparent and anti-Marxist manifestations of "The Thought" come to light. A basic lack of comprehension of the fact that capitalism and socialism are, according to Marxism-Leninism - or, for that matter, and to the extent that their own pragmatic world view permits it, according to the representatives of the capitalist system - locked in a life and death struggle on a world scale, is revealed in what has come to be recognised as the clearest and most definitive statement summing up the revisionist content underlying the entire opus of Mao Tse-tung: "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People". It is in this work also that there is revealed in its clearest form the view that the contradiction between the capitalist class and the working class, between capital and labour, can be "resolved" peacefully within the eclectic framework of "people's democratic dictatorship". This qualitative break with Marxism-Leninism is revealed in the view of class relations adopted by "The Thought", which sees the national bourgeoisie not as a clearly defined class which, in accordance with dialectical materialist method, is characterised according to the relationship it bears to the ownership and control of the means of production, distribution and exchange, but as one which can become either an ally or an enemy according to the purely subjective criterion of how it is "handled":

"... if it is not properly handled, if, say, we do not follow a policy of uniting, criticising and educating the national bourgeoisie, or if the national bourgeoisie does not accept this policy, then the contradiction between the working class and the national bourgeoisie can turn into an antagonistic contradiction as between ourselves and the enemy." (Ibid.; p.4)

However, the ambiguity of this method as a guide to action - even one which claims to be "scientific" - is revealed in the following examples - examples which show how, amidst the surface turbulence and anarchy of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" it could happen that even "the closest Comrade-in-Arms and Great Successor" of the Godhead himself could become overnight a "capitalist roader":

"Quite a few people fail to make a clear distinction between these two different types of contradictions - those between ourselves and the enemy and those among the people - and are prone to confuse the two. It must be admitted that it is sometimes easy to confuse them." (Ibid.; p.12)

"As regards the suppression of counter-revolution, the main thing is that we have achieved successes, but mistakes have also been made. There were excesses in some cases and in other cases counterrevolutionaries were overlooked. Our

policy is: 'Counter-revolutionaries must be suppressed whenever they are found, mistakes must be corrected whenever they are discovered.' ..." (Ibid.;p. 20).

It should be clear that, without a clear analysis based on the objective phenomena of classes, class relationships and class struggle, not merely on the subjective factor of how they are "handled", it becomes difficult indeed to distinguish between progressive and reactionary, revolutionary and counter-revolutionary class forces. However, insofar as China is not a socialist country - and, in fact, in the period prior to the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution", the CPC and the state of the People's Republic of China never claimed that it was, defining China as a "new democracy" which, in its turn, was claimed to be "a transitional form on the road towards socialism" - it is important to be very clear that the pseudo-dialectical effusions about "the suppression of counter-revolutionaries" and "opposing the top party person in authority taking the capitalist road" are merely a means of papering over the cracks in the edifice of ideological deception and political concealment - i.e., concealment of the truth concerning the real social character of the production relations in China and concerning the question as to which class holds political and state power - which is the system of "People's Democratic Dictatorship", as these cracks and scisms inevitably arise, and arise ever more frequently, as a result of the discrepancy between the capitalist reality of the "joint state-private boards" and the illusion of "socialism" becoming more and more glaring and acute and hence tending to reveal the truth about the incipient struggle between capital and labour which lurks always not so far beneath the surface of "new democratic" society in China.

Indeed, it is inevitable that, in China as in all other capitalist-type countries, the antagonism between capital and labour, between the national capitalist class (in alliance with one or other section of the remnant comprador bourgeoisie) and the working class (in alliance with the poor peasantry) should break out into violent conflict, into the struggle between revolution - i.e., the struggle of the working class and its allies to bring about the transformation (hardly, however, uninterrupted) of the national democratic revolution into the socialist revolution, of "new democracy" into socialism - and counter-revolution - i.e., the struggle of the national capitalist class and its allies to maintain the state-capitalist system in being and to strengthen its dictatorship as embodied in its state apparatus of rule. Just such a period of revolution and counter-revolution was the period of the "Socialist Cultural Revolution" and its counter-revolutionary aftermath in the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" between 1965 and 1968. These had their origins, however, in the first of these struggles and class engagements in the People's Republic of China, when a section of the national bourgeoisie whose interests were represented by the "democratic" parties, made the attempt in 1957 to force their majority class compatriots, who retained their allegiance to Mao Tse-tung and the revisionist CPC, to abandon the facade of "new democracy" and to adopt instead the state formation of an open bourgeois republic. They were, of course, suppressed - but Mao used the opportunity to strengthen the system of people's democratic dictatorship still further and to lay down the first tactical moves which were to enable him, 8 years later, to defeat the attempt by the most advanced section of the working class led by the new Liu Shao-chi - Peng Chen leadership of the CPC to bring about the long-delayed transition to the socialist revolution in China.

Here is how Mao used his method of pseudo-dialectical misrepresentation as a means, on the one hand, of drawing false, inconsequential inferences and on the other, of lending an aura of bogus scientific authority to his essentially empirical concept of "people's democratic dictatorship":

"In 1956, small numbers of workers and students in certain places went on strike."

"We do not approve of disturbances, because contradictions among the people can be resolved with the formula 'unity-criticism-unity'. ... We believe that our people (who include the national capitalists - Ed.) stand for socialism, that they uphold discipline and are reasonable ..." (Ibid.; p.46).

It is, then, no accident that the "theoretical" armoury of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" contains no clear analysis of the classes in "new democratic" China which

conforms, or even makes any attempt to conform, with the scientific criteria of Marxism-Leninism and the dialectical-materialist method. Instead, the "Thought" presents the following eclectic rag-bag of classes and strata - even political parties are lumped together under the same heading:

"The Chinese Communist Party, the democratic parties, democrats not affiliated to any party, intellectuals, industrialists and businessmen, workers, peasants and handicraftsmen." (p.51).

As for the all-important presentation of the transition to "socialism" in China as a peaceful, harmonious unfolding of historical events as a result of "skilful social engineering", Mao takes care to devote more than adequate attention in his speeches and articles - in particular in "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People", the definitive statement laying down the strategy and tactics to be pursued by the revisionist CPC on behalf of the national capitalist class in the difficult and stormy period following the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956 and the subsequent degeneration of the International Communist Movement into opportunism and revisionism - to the question of the "voluntary ideological remoulding of the national bourgeoisie to accept socialism":

"After they have attended study groups for some weeks, many industrialists and businessmen, on returning to their enterprises, find they speak more of a common language with the workers and the representatives of state shareholdings, and so work better together." (p.29).

When, by 1958-9, it had become clear that the empirical prescription of "correctly handling" the social and class contradictions of "new democratic" China had proved powerless to prevent the revolutionisation of a sizeable part of the industrial working class and the development of a Marxist-Leninist outlook amidst a section of the leadership of the CPC, Mao was quick to change his tactics. When, in 1956-7 it had been the opposite class forces, the dissident elements in the national bourgeoisie and the urban petty bourgeoisie, which had adopted a radical stance vis-a-vis their own class interest and had taken it upon themselves to attempt to bring the system of "new democracy" to an end, Mao had adopted a soothing, conciliatory tone, speaking in terms of "Let a Hundred Flowers Blossom, a Hundred Schools of Thought Contend", and blaming "excessive bureaucracy", "commandism" and "authoritarianism" in the CPC for the disturbances, thus letting the real authors, the right-wing of the national bourgeoisie, off the hook.

In 1958-9, on the other hand, when it was the working class which was mobilising its forces for the qualitative leap towards socialism which was embodied in the aim of expelling the representatives of the national capitalist class from the "new democratic" state and liquidating the democratic parties, Mao adopted a very different stance. As adept a political quick-change artist as ever was Thiers on the eve of the Paris Commune, he suddenly appears in the guise of the bold innovator of social forms and architect of the most breathtaking leap in production relations ever seen in history: the leap from the semi-feudal backwardness characteristic of China's countryside straight into communism! He comes forward with his proposal for "people's communes", in which the free production relations of communism shall be established at the stroke of a pen! Let that sly rascal Liu cap that one if he can!

It was with this, the supreme demagogic move of his whole career - for it is unlikely that Mao's failing health enabled him, by 1966, to have played any very considerable part in the organisation and unleashing of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" itself, it being more feasible that this role was fulfilled jointly by Lin Biao and Kang Sheng - that Mao and his revisionist group laid the first and essential basis in "left" demagogy for the sweeping counter-revolutionary manoeuvres of 1966-68 and perfected the quasi-fascist techniques of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution". It was then, in the midst of the bloodbath which was what became of the steel city of Anshan when, in the summer of 1966, units of the PLA under the control of the counter-revolutionaries attacked this stronghold of Marxism-Leninism and the organised working class in China, that a pitched

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battle ensued which lasted for many months. This great class battle, which, when the archives are opened up, is destined to go down in history alongside the Wall of the Communards or the barricades of Wedding and Neukölln as a scene of great class heroism and fortitude on the part of China's industrial proletariat, gives the lie to the utopian picture painted in the writings and speeches of Mao Tse-tung of harmonious class relations and a peaceful, harmonious growth into socialism.

For, in China as in every land in which socialism and the democratic dictatorship of the working class has either been attained, as in the Soviet Union, or come near to attainment, the actual or approaching victory of the revolutionary proletariat has been the qualitative outcome or near-outcome of intense and bitter class struggles, accompanied at times by the most bloody and destructive massacres which have thrown back the tide of proletarian revolution for a period and ended in a new and strengthened form of rule for the capitalist class and its state. So also has it been in China, and just as the higher form of organisation of monopoly capital in the countries of the developed heartlands - the corporate state - will most surely act as the dialectical touchstone compelling the working class movements of those countries to deepen and enrich the science of Marxism-Leninism, to build new, yet more influential, powerful and scientifically organised communist parties and so prepare for the final victory over corporate state monopoly capitalism in the future, so also will the present all-powerful military-bureaucratic state embodying the rule of the national capitalist class in China compel the ultimately invincible proletariat and poor peasantry of China to reform their ranks, carry through an allround criticism of the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung", make a profound theoretical analysis of the social and class reality of the People's Republic of China after the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" and on that basis re-establish their vanguard, destroy the rule of the national capitalist class and bring the socialist revolution to final victory.

To sum up, therefore, the main points of criticism and conclusions developed in this section, there can be no doubt but that "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" is the ideology reflecting the rule of the national capitalist class of China, a prescription for "correctly handling" and resolving the social and class antagonisms underlying and arising out of the rule of capital over the working people and peasantry of China. In this connection, the simple words of the democratic artist Käthe Kollwitz come to mind, who said "Life is struggle, struggle and always struggle". She thereby revealed that she had a more profound grasp of the essence of dialectics than had the "great philosopher" Mao Tse-tung who, in spite of his much-vaunted claim to be "the creative developer of Marxism-Leninism", the "great dialectician", the "Lenin of our era", and so on, was yet unable to comprehend that the essence and motive force of all development and change in nature, society and human thought is contradiction and struggle, not resolution and harmony.

This claim on the part of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" to be "the Great Continuator of Marxism-Leninism" and the "Lenin of our Era" exists despite the fact that it stands in clear contradiction to Stalin's exposition of the dialectical method. Where "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" stands for "the harmonious resolution of contradictions":

"We must continue to resolve such contradictions in the light of the specific conditions Contradictions arise continually and are continually resolved; this is the dialectical law of the development of things." (Ibid.; p. 16-17) (Our emphases - Ed.);

"Progress and difficulties - this is a contradiction. However, all contradictions not only should, but can be resolved." (Ibid.; p. 34) (Our emphasis - Ed.);

"Every contradiction is an objective reality, and it is our task to understand it and resolve it as correctly as we can." (Ibid.; p. 54) (Our emphasis - Ed.),

Stalin, in contradistinction to this, upholds the dialectical materialist view which is the diametrical opposite to that of Mao Tse-tung:

"The dialectical method therefore holds that the process of development from

the lower to the higher takes place not as a harmonious unfolding of phenomena but as a disclosure of the contradictions inherent in things and phenomena, as a 'struggle' of opposite tendencies which operate on the basis of these contradictions." (J.V. Stalin, "Dialectical and Historical Materialism", FLPH Moscow 1938; p.717) (Our emphasis- Ed.).

Our critical examination must therefore begin with a comparison of the utopianism and metaphysical inversion underlying "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" with the objectively verifiable scientific method, the generalised essence of scientific practice, which is dialectical materialism - the scientific philosophy of the revolutionary proletariat and its vanguard and the foundation of Marxism-Leninism.

In doing so, we must lay bare the essential distortion which exists, behind all the pseudo-dialectical sophistry and phrasemongering, between the world view and philosophical method which cognises all development and change as arising out of the synthesis of contradictions through the emergence of a new quality at a higher level - the philosophical method of dialectical materialism - and that which cognises development and change as the mechanical and quantitative resolution, or merging, of contradictions at a given level, thereby emasculating the very contradictions it attempts to cognise by stripping them of their essential contradictoriness, their mutual opposition and antagonism.

We shall come to see further, that the latter of these two fundamentally opposed world views and philosophical methods - that of Mao Tse-tung - is but a variant - a highly sophisticated and tactically concealed one, it is true - of bourgeois metaphysical philosophy. More specifically, we shall see that, in its system, or world view, it is a variant of bourgeois idealism, whilst in its method, in its theory, it is a variant of bourgeois mechanical materialism, or determinism.

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM: THE QUESTION OF CONTRADICTION AND RESOLUTION

One thread lies at the heart of materialist dialectics: that is, that in the division of unity and the cognition of its contradictory parts lie the fundamental feature of dialectics - indeed, 'the essence of dialectics' (Lenin):

"The unity of opposites is conditional, temporary, transitory, relative.

The struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute, just as development and motion are absolute." (Lenin).

Thus the fundamental and continuous process in change is the struggle between opposites. Engels speaks of the "resolution of the contradiction, to a radical qualitative change of the thing." We see from this, however, that there can be no question of this resolution taking place without a qualitative leap into a new entity; that, for instance, it is not possible for the contradiction between the working class and the national bourgeoisie to be resolved through harmonious, contradictionless and fundamentally eclectic merging of the one with the other. Such a concept of "development" has nothing at all to do with real development in a real world, which unfolds through the qualitative supercession of the old quality in its entirety by a new quality through a leap to a higher level.

As is true of any society, the dialectics of the development of Chinese society in the leap to a socialist society must, by a similar process of revolutionary change, negate the national bourgeoisie as a class. Marx wrote that "No development that does not negate its previous forms of existence can occur in any sphere.

And so it is that there can be no process of change through the conflict of opposites within an entity without such process leading to and reaching its final outcome in a leap from quantity into quality. Change of quantity is still change within and inherent to the old quality, whereas change of quality is the negation of the old quality and the synthesis of the contradictions within it into a new quality - a new quality which then, from the moment of its birth, will contain within it a new fundamental contradiction, a new structure of subsidiary contradictions dependent upon that fundamental contradiction and a new process of dialectical change through which these levels of contradiction in their totality will move.

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The "Thought of Mao Tse-tung", by mechanistically merging these two distinct stages of the dialectical process - quantity and quality, quantitative and qualitative change - into one another, achieves the representation of what is in fact a mere change of quantity - the secondary, finite and limited aspect of change - as if a change of quality, a leap into a new quality, had taken place. And, conversely, qualitative change - the fundamental and primary aspect of change, its revolutionary essence - is effectively disguised behind the veil of a mere change of quantity. In this way "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" postulates the harmonious coexistence and development of contradictions in a metaphysical relationship in which - by means of a mechanical-determinist system which is fundamentally related to the old mechanical-materialist philosophy of the French Enlightenment whilst lacking any of the latter's wit or its trenchant criticism of the old society and its relations - change is conceived as a change of form pure and simple, as a mere surface rearrangement of the fundamental elements of the universe which in themselves are eternal and changeless.

In the case of Mao Tse-tung and his "Thought", these metaphysical elements take on the more specific and tangible form of the fundamental classes comprising Chinese society, the relationship between which in reality is one of unremitting and irreconcilable struggle. As in any other capitalist nation-state, these struggles will one day lead to the qualitative supercession of the old capitalist society through the qualitative leap made by the victorious socialist revolution, but "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" presents this process as a smooth, contradictionless and harmonious progression or unfolding of successive phenomena in which the developmental distinction between quantity and quality is obliterated - a "transformation" which smacks more of the old stageless, mystical metamorphoses so beloved of the transcendentalists than it does of any materially based developmental change brought about by the conflict of real opposed forces comprising a real sphere of opposites in the real world of man, society and the natural universe.

The metaphysical connotations attaching in the popular imagination to the otherwise simple word "transformation" are thus made use of in "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" in order to construct a process of "change" which appears on the surface to bear all the hallmarks of a profound and deep-seated dialectical progression, but which, upon closer critical examination, is seen to bear a purely semantic or associative significance. For instance, according to "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", the working class, in being "transformed" from the oppressed and exploited into the ruling class as a consequence of the victory of the socialist revolution, is presented by Mao as an example of "the two poles in a contradiction reversing their positions and changing places." The impression is created, almost spontaneously and unnoticeably, that nothing much has really changed - only the two chief dramatic personae on the stage of capitalism have "swopped roles". The reality of dialectical development and change, whereby the two fundamental poles, bourgeoisie and proletariat, thesis and anti-thesis, are both qualitatively superceded in the new classless quality of communism, the synthesis of the totality of contradictions underlying capitalism, is obscured behind a sweeping historical generalisation which, through its very vagueness and formlessness, attains to an aura of false profundity.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, the classic founders of Communism and the materialist conception of history, of the dialectical materialist method in science and philosophy and the first to place social practice in general and the practice of revolution in particular on a scientific basis, comprehended with brilliant insight and mastery the dialectics of history in both their generality and their concreteness. They understood full well the fundamental significance of the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the embodiment and essential expression of the leap from capitalism to socialism, the qualitative outcome of all the class struggles between bourgeoisie and proletariat throughout the history of capitalism and the highest form of organisation reached by the proletarian-socialist revolution - its culmination and its essence, when the victorious proletariat organises itself as the ruling class over its former exploiters and oppressors.

Precisely because they were the first to cognise and master the laws of motion of the transition from capitalism to Communism, they also understood that the qualita-

tive supercession of the fundamental poles of contradiction in capitalist society, bourgeoisie and proletariat, could be attained only in the classless society of communism.

For all these reasons, Marx and Engels, like Lenin after them, saw the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat not only as occupying an entire historical epoch, the epoch of the transition from capitalism to communism, but they understood the stage it occupied within the total process of dialectical change from capitalism to communism as being the negation of the old quality, capitalism, through the emergence or birth of the new quality, socialism (or the lower stage of communism). They understood with profound insight that, although upon the completion of the proletarian-socialist revolution the working class becomes the ruling class and thereby exchanges its social and class role with that of the defeated capitalist class, the outcome of the whole subsequent development of socialist society up to the dawn of communism ends in the negation of the rule of the working class, the negation of its revolutionary negation of capitalist society - an act through which it thereby abolishes itself as a class, and hence as a ruling class, through the building of communism. These are the profound dialectics of the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the transition from capitalism to communism, which "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" not only obscures but fundamentally misrepresents by vulgarising it to the level of mechanical determinism.

This negation of the old quality through the first emergence of the new quality - its revolutionary birth, its leap into being and into a new becoming - represents but the first and inceptive stage in the development of the new quality *. This is followed by the stage in which the new quality - in the case under consideration, the newly born socialist society - develops and consolidates itself to its full maturity in communist society. It is with this stage that our examination of the dialectics of the transition from capitalism through to full communism must next be concerned.

The sphere of contradiction in which the most fundamental and formative processes of change in society take place is the sphere of the production relations, the economic base. This is as true of the developing socialist society as it is of any spontaneously developing class-divided society preceding it. That socialist society must grow through the lower stage of communism (socialism, characterised by the continued prevalence, though on an ever-diminishing scale, of commodity relations, the operation of the law of value and bourgeois right as the regulators governing the exchange of commodities and the distribution of social wealth between individual producers) right up to the consolidation of fully mature and developed communist relations, the relations of free producers and consumers interacting with one another without the intervention of the law of value and bourgeois right, when all the birthmarks inherited from the old quality, capitalism, still adhering to the body of the new society, socialism, shall have disappeared. The essential content of this second stage in the dialectical development of the new quality, socialism developing-into-communism, during which it strengthens, consolidates and completes itself in communism, is seen by Marxist-Leninist philosophy, by dialectical materialism, as the negation of socialism's earlier negation of capitalism as a result of the growth of the lower stage of communism (socialism) into its higher, and fully developed stage, communism, through the unfolding and full development of all the essential and organic features of the classless society, the society of fully conscious producers freely associating in the utilisation of means of production held (the word "owned" would no longer be apposite) in common.

* It is, of course, already the second stage in the total process of dialectical development and change, the first having been the stage of quantitative change within the old quality which took place by virtue of the conflict of the opposite poles of force inherent to it, but before that conflict had reached a point of intensity at which the framework of the old quality could contain it no longer and it had of necessity to burst asunder, thereby enabling the new quality to emerge .

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It is this final and most profound stage in the total process of dialectical change, the stage of the negation of the negation of the old quality through the full development of the new quality, which "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" denies and replaces with a superficial, essentially undevelopmental, ahistorical and, at root, profoundly undialectical "reversal of poles", which is then presented, not as a stage in the "dialectical" development towards the fully formed new quality, but as itself the end product of a "process" which is essentially mechanical, not dialectical.

In its epistemology, its theory of knowledge, this particularly subtle form of the disembowelment of the dialectical materialist method is not confined to "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung". Indeed, it is to be found in most of the treatises on "dialectical materialism" prepared by the modern revisionist falsifiers of Marxism-Leninism and materialist dialectics, whether of the right, the ultra-right or the "left" revisionist stables. But it is to "The Thought" that we must turn for the most classic and formative statement of the new mechanical-determinist philosophy, the philosophy of the new bourgeoisies of the developing and emerging countries, the classic exposition which gives us the clearest insight into the inverted ideological motivations underlying it. As such, and in spite of its formative and classical significance, it is the most typical and concentrated expression in vulgar philosophy of the world view of the bourgeoisie at the new stage in the development of capitalism, on the threshold of which history now stands: the stage of corporate-state monopoly capitalism or its equivalent in the newly-emerged countries: bureaucratic state capitalism. Of these, the latter is increasingly revealing itself throughout the peripheral regions of the capitalist world market - where, in the previous stage, that of imperialism and state-monopoly capitalism of the old type in the last dying phase of which we still find ourselves, the national bourgeoisie, where it had existed at all, had been the colonial-type adjunct of the developed metropolitan countries - as the most appropriate form of the political and state organisation of the national capitalist classes of those areas in the conditions of the crisis of absolute retraction and the increasingly antagonistic mode of operation of the falling rate of profit characteristic of it. In short, "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" is one - and an extremely important one at that - of the various forms of metaphysical philosophy characteristic of a capitalist mode of production which has its back against the wall of history, the philosophy of a bourgeois ruling class which, whether in the developed or the emerging countries, is prepared to fight with the ferocity of a wolf-pack, not only against the revolutionary proletariat and its allies in defence of its wealth and its system of exploitation as a whole, but also and in the first place against its class rivals in the desperate struggle for a share in, and if possible control of, the dwindling sources of profit and super-profit.

Thus "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" is the philosophy of a new national bourgeoisie both at its revolutionary stage, before it has ousted imperialism and gained state power in a united national terrain, and at its post-revolutionary stage, when its prime concern is the struggle for the acquisition of the social and class terrain which it so desperately needs as a soil on which its new system - new, that is, within capitalism - may grow. As the philosophy of a capitalist class with its fangs bared, and which can make headway against the ever more adverse tide of history only by battening down on the proletariat and its allies and exploiting them even more thoroughly - in particular by preventing the outbreak and victorious completion of the proletarian-socialist revolution - its direct equivalent in the philosophy and politics of the developed countries is fascism.

Just as fascism is the counter-revolutionary response of monopoly capitalism to the developing proletarian-socialist revolution, so also does "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" form the disguised counter-revolutionary response of the newly emerged national capitalist class of China in its struggle to prevent the uninterrupted (or, for that matter, interrupted) transition to the proletarian-socialist revolution, a revolutionary transition which it can only halt by launching a violent, armed counter-revolution against the working class disguised, as was Hitler's onslaught on the German working class, under the foulest and most rabid pseudo-revolutionary demagogy.

Small wonder, then, that in his characterisation of the false dialectics of the

"transition to socialism" (i.e., bureaucratic state capitalism) Mao Tse-tung should be at pains to avoid conveying any sense of the profoundly rich and contradictory content underlying the historical epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the transition from capitalism, not merely to a false "socialism" which, by being stripped of its developmental nexus with its fulfilment and completion, communism, can only be a new and higher form of the one and same mode of production, capitalism, namely, bureaucratic state capitalism, but to a real socialism based on and reflecting the precept "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work".

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA - 1959-65

In the context of the distortions and onesidednesses wrought upon the living body of Marxist-Leninist theory and dialectical materialist philosophy by the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung", it is important to note the illuminating and highly educative controversy which took place in the PRC during the Spring and Summer of 1965 between Chou Yang, chief spokesman of the Liu Shao-chi - Peng Chen leadership on questions of theory and Marxist-Leninist philosophy and representatives of the revisionist faction headed by Mao Tse-tung. The high point of this revealing debate was the publication by Chou Yang of his speech "Fighting Tasks in the Field of Philosophy and the Social Sciences". In this work, Chou Yang was concerned to demonstrate that dialectical development and change proceeded from the division of an entity or quality into its contradictory parts, and not from the quantitative merging, or combination, of two entities with one another. He showed that when, for instance, the class-divided society of capitalism is ultimately superceded qualitatively by the unified, classless society of communism, this is not the result of the two opposed classes under capitalism, proletariat and bourgeoisie, combining together to form one, but of the birth of a qualitatively new entity, communist society, in which both poles of the old capitalist society, bourgeoisie and proletariat, are not merged into one another, but qualitatively overcome and their existence brought to an end through the supercession of the very society, capitalism, of which they were a part. To make his thoroughly scientific point as clear as possible, Chou coined the expressive phrase "One divides into two, two never combines into one". That this struggle in the field of philosophy should have been taking place at that time reveals not only the absolutely primary importance of the battle of ideas in all social development and class struggle, but also that, more specifically, the comrades grouped around the Liu Shao-chi-Peng Chen leadership were already at that stage, i.e. early in the development of the Socialist Cultural Revolution, having to take up positions of active struggle against the Mao faction and its revisionist, anti-Marxist-Leninist ideas and policies. Needless to say, after the defeat of the working class and socialist forces at the hands of the counter-revolutionary "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution", Chou was hounded out of open political and party life - if, indeed, an even worse fate has not befallen him - and his books banned and destroyed.

MATERIALIST DIALECTICS OR METAPHYSICS ?

One of the ideologues of Maoism, Professor George Thompson, in an article entitled "On Contradiction" published in "The Broadsheet", organ of the China Policy Study Group *, unwittingly reveals the fundamental deception which underlies "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung". He writes:

"In general, as (Mac Tse-tung) explains, the economic basis is the principal aspect of the contradiction in the movement of society, as opposed to the ideological superstructure, which is the non-principal aspect; but in certain conditions the non-principal aspect of a contradiction may be transformed into the principal aspect, just as a non-antagonistic contradiction, if incorrectly handled, may become antagonistic." (G. Thompson: "On Contradiction", published in "The Broadsheet"; London; 1965)

A feature of this passage which immediately impinges itself upon the critical

* A group of bourgeois academics and professionals attached to the Maoist "cultural" front, The Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding.

awareness of any reader acquainted with the fundamental principles of dialectical materialism is the usage adopted in it for the word "aspect". The Oxford Dictionary defines the meaning of this word as follows: "The way a thing presents itself to eye or mind; look; expression". It would appear at first sight that Prof. Thompson, in choosing a word with so heavy a subjective bias in its meaning, is seeking to secure for himself, not only a justification of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", but also as advantageous a terrain as possible in which to manoeuvre freely in the tactically quite complex and risky business of falsifying and distorting materialist dialectics in the process of eulogising the above-mentioned "Thought". For, if a complex sphere of contradiction (which, in the real world, all contradictions are, a "pure" contradiction consisting simply of a single sphere comprising two opposite poles of force being an ideal construction useful for purposes of theoretical or philosophical exposition or clarification) is made up, not of a main sphere of contradiction and a number of subsidiary contradictions, but of suitably vague "aspects" which differ from one another according to how they present themselves to an external force impinging on that sphere of contradiction or organism - included in which is the matter of how they present themselves to the "eye"- i.e., to the subject - then we have, in effect, succeeded in our task of smuggling in subjective idealism under the guise of outlining a materially based dialectical process. By means of this singularly useful skeleton key giving access to the Caligari's Cabinet of "theoretical" confidence tricks which is "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", it is possible to transform any quality into its opposite, smoothly, harmoniously and peacefully, without any reference to the relationship of this bogus "contradiction" to the total process of dialectical change which underlies the laws of motion and development of real organisms moving and having their being in the real world, but simply by reference to the "aspect" of the "contradiction" which the subject (in the case under consideration, the Chinese national capitalist class as represented by the revisionist leadership of the CPC headed by Mao Tse-tung) chooses as being the one which concerns him or in which his interests - in this case class interests - are most closely involved.

As the opposite side of the coin existing in unity with this subjective idealism, having once chosen which "aspect" of a contradiction is to be the "principal" and which the "non-principal" one, that "aspect" can then be allowed to impinge itself directly upon the development in question, so determining the outcome in a mechanical way and ensuring that it is "correctly handled" in the interests of the national capitalist class.

Is it, however, the willing acolyte, Prof. Thompson, who in reality has chosen the subjective term "aspect" in order to illustrate the component parts of a contradiction? Is it in fact he who has thereby laid the methodological basis on which an entire metaphysical system for "correctly handling" the class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie under the conditions of "new democracy" can be constructed? As we shall see, and as might have been expected, it is not.

In fact, although the above passage contains a fitting re-exposition of the methodological kernel of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", it is to the Grand Puppet-master himself that we must turn if we are to succeed in our aim of unravelling the pseudo-dialectical phraseology which forms its tactical cover from the metaphysical content which lies behind it. Let us, then, take another and closer look at this matter of the "aspect" of a contradiction:

"In our country, the contradiction between the working class and the national bourgeoisie is a contradiction among the people. The class struggle waged between the two is, by and large, a class struggle within the ranks of the people. This is because of the dual character of the national bourgeoisie in our country. In the period of the socialist revolution, exploitation of the working class to make profits is one side (or "aspect"- Ed.), whilst support of the Constitution and willingness to accept socialist transformation is the other. The national bourgeoisie differs from the imperialists, the landlords and the bureaucrat-capitalists. The contradiction between exploiter and exploited which exists between the national bourgeoisie and the working class is an antagonistic one. But, in the concrete conditions existing in China,

such an antagonistic contradiction, if properly handled, can be transformed into a non-antagonistic one and resolved in a peaceful way." (Mao Tse-tung: "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People"; p. 3-4) (Our emphases - Ed.).

We must begin our examination of this passage by isolating the main aim which Mao Tse-tung is pursuing in it. We see first that the passage is about the relation of the national capitalist class (or national bourgeoisie) to the working class, and it soon becomes clear that Mao is seeking to demonstrate that the contradiction between the working class and the national capitalist class, if "properly handled", can be "transformed" into a non-antagonistic contradiction and resolved peacefully. The motive behind this aim is, of course, that of creating a "theoretical" justification for including the national capitalist class in the bloc of classes which allegedly exercises joint dictatorship within the framework of "new democracy". Without this justification, the presence of representatives of the national capitalist class in the state would have no legality in a "Marxism-Leninism" distorted and falsified by modern revisionism, and the system of "new democracy" would be considerably weakened. This - i.e., the challenge by the developing Marxist-Leninist section in the CPC and its leadership, led by Liu Shao-chi and Peng Chen - was exactly what had happened in the People's Republic of China over the period of approximately one year between 1956 and 1957, and which made the delivery of the speech "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People" a tactically vital necessity for the national capitalist class at that precise historical juncture and in the situation then prevailing in China.

To return, however, to our analysis of the philosophical and ideological foundations of the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung" as exemplified in the above passage, the next stage in the presentation of Mao's argument which must be examined is the method by which he gives credence and the semblance of a material basis to his contention, outlined above, that the contradiction between the national capitalist class and the working class can be resolved peacefully, that it is a contradiction "within the ranks of the people". Mao is here moving into realms which lie very close to that borderline at which the distinction between materialist dialectics and metaphysics becomes crystal clear, so that he must move cautiously and with that judicious combination of astuteness with supreme confidence and simplicity which is the hallmark of the practised politician whose own self-confidence (or semblance of it) generates confidence in others. In achieving this, Mao proceeds from the knowledge that, in the state of popular understanding concerning dialectical materialism and its method, an organism is seen to consist of two parts which are in some way opposed to one another. This perception may or may not reach as far as an understanding that these two parts are, in fact, contradictory and opposite poles which confront one another in a unity of opposites - but, as an experienced politician, he knows that, by and large and for most people, it does not. So he can be fairly confident that, if he refers vaguely to the national capitalist class having two sides (or aspects), this will be associated in the popular mind with the two fundamental poles of contradiction which in reality comprise the motive force underlying the movement and development of an organism, and that this tactic (which is what it really is) will lend to his statement an aura of "dialectical" profundity, even the appearance of a bogus "science".

So the grounds on which Mao claims that the national capitalist class can have its contradiction with the working class resolved non-antagonistically and so grow peacefully into "socialism" is that it has a "dual character", "two sides" which are vaguely different or even opposite to one another; on the one hand, that it exploits the working class to make profits, and on the other that it "supports the Constitution" and is willing to accept and work for socialism. When, in its turn, it comes to providing a "theoretical" justification or precedent for this "dual character", however, Mao's tactical ingenuity, if not exactly exhausted, can find no more plausible peg on which to hang his special pleading than to argue vaguely that it derives from "the concrete conditions existing in China" - thereby, incidentally, creating a model excuse in "special

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OPEN LETTER TO THE COMMUNIST
WORKERS' LEAGUE OF BRITAIN (M. L.)

(In March 1976 the MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANISATION OF BRITAIN received the first of a series of communications from the COMMUNIST WORKERS' LEAGUE OF BRITAIN (M.L.) inviting it to participate in measures to establish a united Marxist-Leninist organisation in Britain. Similar invitations from the CWLB(M.L.) were received by other groups and organisations in what has come to be known as the "anti-revisionist movement". In view of the great importance of the issues raised in this correspondence, the MLOB has decided to issue its reply in the form of an Open Letter.)

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Dear Comrades,

The MLOB acknowledges receipt of your letter of 14.3.76, sent to a number of parties and organisations of the left, concerning the convening of a series of meetings aimed at the ultimate establishment of a united Marxist-Leninist organisation in Britain.

As you will doubtless be aware, the MLOB's immediate successor, the Action Centre for Marxist-Leninist Unity, was formed in 1965 with the aim of preparing for the convening of a Conference of Marxist-Leninist Unity. This Conference was, in fact, held on September 9-10, 1967, and it was at this Conference that the MLOB was founded.

Prior to 1965, those Comrades who had come together to form the Action Centre for Marxist-Leninist Unity had all played a leading role in the Committee to Defeat Revisionism, for Communist Unity headed by Cde. Michael McCreery, whose formative work on the criticism of modern revisionism, and in elaborating some of the principles on which a Marxist-Leninist party should be based, you have acknowledged in your literature.

It will be clear, therefore, that the MLOB has some not inconsiderable experience in the struggle against modern revisionism and for the establishment of a united nucleus of a future vanguard party of the working class based on scientific Marxist-Leninist principles. It is this experience which prompts us, not merely to express in words our wholehearted support for the aim of advancing the unity of all those in Britain who call themselves Marxist-Leninists and who aspire to a Marxist-Leninist revolutionary practice, but also to point out that unity can be achieved not simply by intoning the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism by rote in order to show one's "hatred" of modern revisionism and one's "faithfulness" to Marxism-Leninism (in themselves, such declarations can have no more than purely pious, genuflectory significance), but only by making a concrete and many-sided analysis of the complex, developing reality of contemporary capitalism, of the new mode of operation of its fundamental laws of motion, of the new forms of crisis which are now maturing with increasing speed and thoroughness. In our view the documents issued by your group not only fail even to embark upon these fundamental theoretical tasks; more than this, for all their conscious (one might almost say self-conscious) good intentions, what these platitudes achieve above all else is to throw down a pious and dogmatic smokescreen composed of classical Leninist precepts debased by the very splendour of their isolation from any concrete analysis of contemporary capitalist reality and thus reduced to the level of mere "abstract principles", in order to provide a threadbare cover for the theoretical and programmatic bankruptcy which so obviously lurks behind your high-sounding proposals.

Before any fruitful basis for discussing, much less agreeing upon, the organisational questions attending the achievement of unity between Marxist-Leninists (such as would be embraced by a series of meetings of the kind envisaged in your circular letter), a clear theoretical position must be

hammered out reflecting an analysis of the new features in the development of the capitalist world system which have emerged during the three decades or so since the end of World War Two. Not even the most impressive and high-sounding of organisational proposals can compensate for this failing; and conversely, the failure to make such an analysis the essential basis for the achievement of organisational unity is, in our view, the surest sign of an attempt to achieve a false unity through the development of Marxism-Leninism into hollow dogma and organisational bombast.

It is, above all, the view of the MLOB that no principled basis for unity between Marxist-Leninists can be achieved without a serious, objective and frank discussion of the problem of Chinese "left" revisionism and the role of the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung". The true role and character of the reactionary social and class forces whose fundamental interests are represented by this metaphysical ideology - an ideology having as its basic method "the resolution of contradictions" - has suffered increasing exposure over the past 3 years or more as a consequence of the emergence into the full daylight of historical clarity of the previously carefully disguised alliance between the Chinese Party and state and US imperialism. This major strategic cornerstone of US imperialist policy was provided initially by Mao Tse-tung and his faction in 1966 when they succeeded in their aim of smashing the Communist Party of China and the working class and progressive movement and replacing them by political instruments more directly amenable to control by the Chinese national capitalist class.

At that time, these counter-revolutionary aims could only be carried through under cover of the most shameless and rabid pseudo-revolutionary, pseudo-Marxist demagogy. But today, under the less colourful but more programmatically down-to-earth leadership of Hua Kuo-feng, the strategic, long-term interests of US imperialism are pursued with scant regard for the niceties of tactical concealment - presumably in the, in our view mistaken, belief that the appeal of the metaphysical "Thought of Mao Tse-tung" retains today its demagogic power to bewitch and to cloud the intellectual judgment of the working people of the world to as great a degree as at any time in the past.

Since Marxist-Leninist truth and the objective and subjective needs of the struggle to establish a true Marxist-Leninist vanguard nucleus in Britain, as throughout the world, have as one of their indispensable preconditions the clearest possible exposure of the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung", we have decided to issue this reply in the form of an Open Letter. We hope that you, comrades in the CWLB(ML), will have the basic theoretical honesty and conviction to reply to this Open Letter and in this way join in the inception of the serious and far-reaching debate on the problem of Chinese "left" revisionism and the "Thought of Mao Tse-tung" which has become so chronically overdue and which is now vitally necessary if one of the most disruptive and ideologically mystifying of all the many barriers standing in the way of the achievement of principled unity between Marxist-Leninists is to be removed; but, frankly, we doubt that our hopes in this regard will be fulfilled.

Since one of the most characteristic features in the development of the capitalist world system since the end of World War Two has been the unprecedented growth on a world-wide scale of national-democratic revolutionary movements in the colonial-type countries aimed at achieving the liberation of the developing nation from the yoke of imperialism and the securing of basic national and democratic rights and liberties, it is fitting that an outline of the salient theoretical questions which must underline any attempt at a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the contemporary stage of development of the capitalist world system should begin with :-

- 1) an elementary outline of the mode of development of capitalism and capitalist relations, of classes and the class struggle and the formation of political parties and mass movements representing the interests of these classes in the concrete conditions of colonialism;

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- 2) an elementary exposition of the basic political and strategic principles developed by Marxism-Leninism for the carrying through to victory of the socialist revolution in a colonial-type country;
- 3) a critique of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" as the most influential and pervasive of the various nationalist ideologies developed by the national capitalist class of a colonial-type country for the purpose of holding the revolutionary process at the stage of completion of the national-democratic revolution and preventing its uninterrupted transition to the socialist revolution;
- 4) a critique of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" as a variant of modern revisionism which seeks to harness a suitably vulgarised and falsified "Marxism-Leninism" to the revolutionary tasks and class aspirations of a national capitalist class of a colonial-type country.

The National-Democratic Revolutionary Process in a Colonial Country

In relation to a colonial-type country, whereas the economic foundations of capitalism will have been laid and a proletariat of varying size will have been brought into being as a consequence of the penetration of foreign imperialist capital into the country, the political superstructure needs to catch up with this development of the economic base before capitalism can begin to develop organically and spontaneously to produce, in the end, a viable, integrated and self-expanding capitalist system.

Before the superstructure can catch up with the base in this way, however, the main obstacle to the development of an organic, spontaneous capitalist society must be removed, and that obstacle is colonialism - i.e., the domination of the given area by a more developed and hence economically and militarily more powerful imperialist power, and the reduction of the given area to the status of producer of cheap raw materials, labour power and source of super-profits. (Incidentally, when Lenin coined the term "super-profit", he did not mean that such profits were "super" in the sense of being bigger, larger than profits obtained from metropolitan sources; he merely meant that they were in addition to, over and above, profits from indigenous sources).

As imperialist investment proceeds, a point is reached at which this externally implanted and nourished capitalism takes root in the new colonial soil, so to speak, and begins to spawn in its own right, spontaneously and organically. Thus there spring up both a proletariat in the cities - the result initially of colonial-type investment in such essential installations as means of transport and communication (harbours, railways, roads etc.), power (electricity generation) and so on; and a national capitalist class, which develops on the basis of the urban petty bourgeoisie and which gains strength to the extent that the imperialist overlord is compelled to permit small-scale capitalist development in those subsidiary branches of the economy (small-scale manufacture, petty trading and so on) which it is not worth its while to exploit itself, but which are still necessary to the development of the economy as a whole.

This national bourgeoisie, however, has to struggle for every inch of ground it can gain in the economy and society at large, because the imperialist overlord naturally sucks the lions share of the wealth accruing from exploitation out of the country, leaving very little for the small national capitalists. Thus the national capitalist class encounters at this stage serious difficulties in carrying through the primitive accumulation of capital, since it has to compete with the infinitely more powerful imperialists in order to win any surplus value for itself. This, in its turn, provides the incentive for the development of a revolutionary movement of national liberation and national independence. In that revolution, the natural ally of the national bourgeoisie is the working class - the class which also stands to gain from the elimination of the foreign imperialists. Such an alliance of class forces - it also includes the petty bourgeoisie of town and country - is termed by Marxist-Leninists an Anti-Imperialist United Front.

Now a further important aspect of these anti-imperialist struggles and anti-imperialist united fronts is that, in the period following after World War One, they were taking place and being formed in the general context of a world-wide crisis of capitalism, in which the conditions for successful proletarian-socialist revolutions were maturing. The victory of the proletarian forces in the largest single country in the world, Russia, and the subsequent establishment of vanguard proletarian parties based on scientific theory, Marxism-Leninism, meant that the proletarian socialist revolution could begin to expand on a world-wide scale, whilst the existence of the Soviet Union, the bastion of socialism, meant that a central, world-unifying and clarifying centre had come into being which could then function as the solid rock of support for the struggles and aspirations of toiling and oppressed working people everywhere.

In their international, world-wide significance, therefore, the content of the national democratic movements and revolutions was such that they formed a potential detachment of the forces of the world proletarian socialist revolution, since their struggle was directed against the main enemy, world imperialism. This status was revealed in the fact that an important element in the totality of forces participating in these national-democratic revolutions was the working class led by a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party. If that working class, in a given colonial-type country and in a given national-democratic struggle, could succeed in winning the leading role in that struggle from the national bourgeoisie, then the objective preconditions would be created for the transition from a merely national (or bourgeois)- democratic to a socialist revolution.

Now, of course, it is in the nature of things that the national bourgeoisie and its representatives will also come up against this fundamental clash of interest and begin to prepare for it. Thus a struggle develops within the anti-imperialist united front, a struggle between its two main class constituents, the proletariat and the national bourgeoisie - a struggle the aim of which is to determine which of these two classes is to lead the revolution and is to entrain the intermediate class, the petty bourgeoisie (in an under-developed colonial-type country always the largest and most numerous single class) behind it in the fulfilment of its particular class aim. Should the working class win that struggle, the subjective as well as the objective conditions for the uninterrupted transition of the national democratic into the socialist revolution will be created. Otherwise, and should the national bourgeoisie succeed in retaining the leading role, the revolutionary process will remain at the stage of completion of the national democratic revolution, and a form of national capitalist society will be formed, will consolidate itself and begin to develop.

However, the national bourgeoisie cannot carry the national democratic revolution through unaided, by means solely of its own numerically rather small class forces. It needs the working class as the source from which to draw the "NCOs" and "officers" of its anti-imperialist peasant army. Above all, it needs the mobilising power, the force of conviction and enlightenment, the analytical and persuasive power, the sheer charismatic force of Marxism if it is to succeed in winning over the working class to its side. But, of course, such "Marxism" will need to be expunged of any genuine scientific content, will need to be suitably vulgarised and adulterated through the addition of nationalist and crude national irridentist ideas and slogans, and in this way made to serve the class interests, not of the working class, but of the national bourgeoisie. The national democratic revolution can in this way be won in the name of the urban proletariat (which is falsely portrayed as having held the leading position in the anti-imperialist united front) and a social perspective embarked on in the name of socialism, whereas what is really being built is a state capitalist system.

Maoism as the Blueprint for the Concealed Rule of the National Capitalist Class

Just such an in reality nationalist and falsely Marxist ideology is that of Mao Tse-tung, and with its help it is possible for the national bourgeoisie

to hold the revolutionary process at the stage of completion of the national democratic revolution and prevent - in the name of proletarian revolution, in the name of the democratic dictatorship of the workers and poor peasants - the uninterrupted transition of the national-democratic revolution to the socialist revolution.

However, it is precisely this transition that the science of Marxism-Leninism is all about. It is not a theory for the winning of the bourgeois democratic revolution in underdeveloped countries, but for leading the proletariat to win the socialist revolution (after, of course, and as the uninterrupted sequel to, the winning of the national democratic revolution).

It was an aspect of this fundamental question of the strategy and tactics of the proletarian-socialist revolution in a large but socially backward and underdeveloped country that formed the precise cause of the difference between Lenin and the Bolsheviks on the one hand and the Mensheviks on the other in the period of the preparation for the socialist revolution in Tsarist Russia. It was also the cause of the differences between Stalin and Bukharin 20 years later.

So let us now summarise, as briefly and as clearly as we can, just what the main strategic elements in the revolutionary process laid down by Mao are. They are as follows:-

- 1) an anti-imperialist united front is formed, consisting of
 - a) the working class;
 - b) the urban petty bourgeoisie;
 - c) the rural petty bourgeoisie (peasantry);
 - d) the national bourgeoisie (national capitalist class).
- 2) this "block of four classes" pursues and finally wins the national democratic revolution - not the socialist revolution.
- 3) as a consequence of the victory of the national democratic revolution, foreign imperialism is ousted from the country and the comprador bourgeoisie, the representative of foreign imperialism (Chiang Kai-shek) is deprived of all power, its holdings being nationalised. These holdings are mainly in heavy industry (engineering, steel, shipyards, power generation, railways, shipping) and include banking - in other words, the so-called "commanding heights of the economy". In the China of 1949, heavy industry accounted for some 38 per cent of the total value of all industrial undertakings.
- 4) the holdings of the national bourgeoisie - some 62 per cent of all industrial enterprises - were reorganised under joint state-private boards, in which ownership of 50 per cent of the shares was vested in the state, whilst 50 per cent remained in the hands of the private capitalist group concerned. A guaranteed 5 per cent per annum interest is paid to the private capitalist on his 50 per cent of the shares, but it has never been stated officially whether this 5 per cent interest operates on the value of the shares at the time of the takeover by the joint state-private boards, or whether the interest is paid on the market value of shares at any given time. The significance of this will be made clear later.
- 5) the period then ensuing after the victory of the national democratic revolution is designated by maoist revisionism as a period of socialist construction, and the perspective put forward for this transformation is

the adoption of a political constitution which guarantees full democratic rights and liberties, not only to the working class and the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie, but also - as one of the four classes making up the "block of four" - to the national bourgeoisie, which is allowed to publish its own newspapers and other media, to organise its own political parties and other organisations (three of these have functioned since 1949 and still function today in spite of - more accurately because of - the "cultural revolution"), and to have deputies representing them on the National People's Consultative Conference. With this political constitution,

the perspective is put forward and applied of "socialist transformation" through the "gradual remoulding of the national bourgeoisie to accept socialism", and the "construction of socialism" proceeds peacefully and harmoniously through cooperation between the two polar classes which, in reality, are in conflict with one another in a capitalist society, the working class and the national capitalist class.

Now, firstly, as regards the economic foundations of this system. If the 5 per cent interest accruing to private capitalist groups is paid on the value of shares at the time of takeover by the joint state private board, then, as the total value of the enterprises increases as a result of investment and development, the yield accruing to the national capitalist group concerned would have remained stationary. This would have resulted in the complete withering away of the national capitalist class within a period, at the very most, of ten years. Since, however, we are told today that the national capitalist class still exists - indeed, that it is flourishing along with and alongside the other three classes, one of the accusations levelled against the Liu Shao-chi leadership having been that it had attempted to "change the production relations" by getting rid of the national capitalist class and their 5 per cent interest payments - we can only assume that the 5 per cent interest is paid on the market value of shares at any given moment. This, in its turn, means that the 50 per cent share by the state is nothing more nor less than a state-administered redevelopment and reinvestment fund, compulsory for all capitalists - in other words, state capitalism.

The fact is that, in an economically backward, former colonial-type country like China, the only way in which a viable capitalist economy can be built under the prevailing conditions of intense competition and struggle with the developed imperialist powers, particularly the US, is by means of the most thorough and rigid state control, in which the state enforces investment and development upon each individual capitalist in the name of - and in the interests of - the national capitalist class as a whole. The political superstructure best suited to this state capitalist base is, of course, that in which a false perspective of "socialism" is presented as pie in the sky in order to delude the workers and peasants, who have a long and glorious history of revolutionary struggle for their freedom behind them, into believing that these state capitalist relations are the "socialism" for the construction of which it is right and proper that they should make sacrifices and work hard. In this way the stage is set for entraining the masses of workers and peasants into accepting the leading role of the national bourgeoisie (whose representatives dominate the party and state apparatus in just the same way as they do in the Soviet Union) into working hard to carry through primitive accumulation for the national capitalist class, and so, on that basis, to build a new state capitalist system in China. This kind of ideological deception is not substantially different in character from the deceptive perspectives of "socialism" achieved through a never-ending perspective of illusory reformism by means of which the reformist labour leaders in Britain deceive the British working class.

As for the political superstructure of China, Mao's much-vaunted "New Democracy", this, as we have seen, is based on the illusory concept of the "gradual, peaceful remoulding of the Chinese national capitalist class to accept and work for socialism". But this, of course, is both objectively impossible (otherwise one of the great socialist leaders of this century would have been Lord Nuffield) and in direct, flat contradiction with the most fundamental tenets of Marxism-Leninism. Marxism-Leninism does not have to be reduced to the level of a sterile dogma for it to have certain fundamental principles, which are true throughout the period of the revolutionary transition from capitalism to communism. If one agrees that it is possible for the capitalist class of any country voluntarily to accept and work for socialism, then one's place is in the labour-reformist or social-democratic party, not in the Communist Party - and, indeed, this formula of Mao's flatly contradicts the very clear

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statements on this most fundamental of questions made by all the great pioneers of scientific socialism, by Marx, by Engels, by Lenin and by Stalin. A party calling itself a communist party which adopts such a programme can be considered only as a revisionist party. To be quite logical about the matter, what is the use of waxing indignant over the obvious and open revisionism and opportunism of the CPSU leaders, whilst helping to maintain the myth that Mao - who was putting forward and had already won the CPC to a revisionist position 16 years before the 20th Congress of the CPSU, is a great Marxist-Leninist? Obviously, there must be some explanation for the fact that numbers of honest comrades, anxious to work for a socialist future and sincere in their belief that the Mao leadership represents the same steadfast, incorruptible Marxist-Leninist centre that Lenin's or Stalin's leadership once did, can be misled in this way. So we will now attempt an examination of the role played by the CPC and its leadership in the struggle against Soviet modern revisionism in the light of developments within the CPC leadership itself.

Maoism and the Great Debate in the International Communist Movement

Firstly, it must be remembered that the CPC began to emerge as taking - alongside the Albanian Party of Labour under Enver Hoxha - a leading international role in exposing the revisionism of the Khrushchev leadership of the CPSU during 1960, it having been in that year that the International Department of the CPC brought out its now famous pamphlet "Long Live Leninism". In that pamphlet, which is quite excellent from almost every point of view - the Soviet revisionists are not named as such, the formula having been adopted of referring to them in a veiled way as "a certain party", "certain people in the leadership of a certain party", and so on. Nevertheless, the pamphlet began to win for the CPC and its leadership as a whole the growing enthusiasm and loyalty of an increasing minority of comrades in the communist parties of the western countries, as well as the undying hatred of the revisionist leaderships of the CPSU (the Khrushchevites) as well as of other revisionist parties. Yet others, like the North Korean, North Vietnamese and the Japanese, took up a centrist position somewhere between the CPC and the CPSU, but on the whole stood more towards the former than the latter. In the course of the next three years up to July 1963, the dispute between the two parties came out more and more into the open and finally took the form of a fully undisguised, name-calling polemic. When the CPC published its open letter of June 1963 - the "Proposal Concerning the International Line of the Communist Movement" - and followed this up with a series of nine editorials in the CPC's theoretical journal "Honqui", the reputation of the CPC as the international leading centre of the struggle against modern revisionism was firmly established and anti-revisionist groups and organisations in agreement with the CPC's position began to spring up in every country - among them the "Committee to Defeat Revisionism, for Communist Unity" (the forerunner of the MLOB in Britain).

What was not immediately recognised amidst all the euphoria and enthusiasm of those early battles, however, was that prior to 1959 (the very first anti-revisionist pamphlets had been published by the CPC in that year) the international line of the CPC had been in full support of the positions developed by Khrushchev and his leadership at and after the 20th Congress of the CPSU. This support was expressed above all in two statements issued by the CPC: "On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" (1956) and "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" (1957). In a number of subsidiary statements and articles, the CPC reiterated its support for the Khrushchev line right up to as late as November 1958. What explains the volte-face from support for Soviet modern revisionism to an insightful, theoretically developed, hard-hitting and, from the scientific point of view, basically correct, exposure of it and inception of a devastating critical polemic against it just a few months later, in April 1959?

The answer lies in the events which had taken place inside the CPC leadership between 1957 and 1959 - events which amounted to a struggle between the forces of Marxism-Leninism and the forces of modern revisionism.

In October 1956, the counter-revolution had taken place in Hungary. This had been the direct sequel to and result of Khrushchev's attacks on Stalin and on Marxism-Leninism at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, which had taken place just a month or so earlier. This had the effect, in China, of encouraging the national bourgeoisie into the belief that, in the event of similar outbreaks and uprisings occurring in China, US imperialism - probably acting, as they thought, through the medium of the United Nations, its international agency - would intervene clandestinely in China in the same way as it had organised, financed and otherwise encouraged the counter-revolutionary forces under Nagy in Hungary - in which event it would be able to dispense with the "socialist" disguise afforded by maoist revisionism and come out as openly supporting "the free world" under US imperialism.

As for Mao, true to his role as the representative of the national bourgeoisie in China, he responded to these counter-revolutionary events by giving every encouragement to the national bourgeoisie in its new advantageous position and hampering the CPC as much as possible in its work of combating the growth of counter-revolutionary incidents in the countryside and in the country at large. To begin with, he delivered his well-known speech "Let a Hundred Flowers Blossom, a Hundred Schools of Thought Contend", as part of the wider defence of the national bourgeoisie contained in the document "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People". This document was nothing more nor less than the green light to the national bourgeoisie to intensify its propaganda against socialism and the CPC, since it placed the blame for the counter-revolutionary events and incidents not on the shoulders of the national bourgeoisie, where it rightly belonged, but, taking his cue from Khrushchev and his attacks on Stalin, Mao blamed "excessive harshness and a bureaucratic style of work" on the part of the CPC rank and file and cadres. On this basis he was able to obtain the adoption of a policy of "liberal reforms" for the national bourgeoisie as a result of which it was given even further liberties and freedoms in Chinese society, an increased representation in the National People's Consultative Conference for the deputies of its three parties and enhanced rights to propagate its class cause in society at large. At the same time as these measures to strengthen its role and position were taken in relation to the national bourgeoisie, measures were adopted simultaneously to weaken the role and position of the CPC and the working class. To begin with, no less than 300,000 rank and file activists and party functionaries at all levels were removed from their positions and prevented from doing any mass work whatsoever. Those who protested against this were simply expelled from the party. This resulted in the Party's cadre force in the countryside amongst the still backward and private enterprise-orientated peasantry being crippled to the point of complete extinction, thus giving the reactionary propaganda of the national bourgeois parties, the "Kuomintang Democratic Committee" and other organisations, virtually a free hand in the countryside.

In fact, the whole episode of the 300,000 cadres and "Let a Hundred Flowers Blossom, etc.", reminds one irresistibly of the position adopted by Bukharin in the Soviet Union after 1935 - that of relaxing the dictatorship of the proletariat, granting an enlarged measure of freedom to the peasants and the remnants of the kulak class and generally permitting a greater leeway for spontaneous development which, in the conditions of a backward, mainly agricultural country like China or the Soviet Union, in which the largest single class is the peasantry, means inevitably capitalist development. At that time, Bukharin was opposed and halted in his tracks by Stalin. In China, that role was fulfilled by others, who will shortly be named.

Thus Maoism had come to mean, as an unashamed philosophy for the development of capitalism in China:

- a) the nationalisation of all industrial and commercial holdings owned and controlled by the comprador bourgeoisie - some 38 per cent of all industry in China (1949 figures);

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- b) the reorganisation of the remainder of industrial and commercial holdings, those held by the national bourgeoisie, into joint state-private boards, under which the national capitalist class retains direct control over 50% of its shares, the other 50% being held by the state, which pays a fixed (but also guaranteed) 5% interest on them.

In this was set up what amounts to a central, state-controlled fund for reinvestment, re-financing and development - a state investment and development bank, in fact, to which each capitalist enterprise was compelled to contribute 50% of its holdings. Such an institution formed, and still acts today as, an indispensable economic tool promoting the process of capital accumulation in the teeth of the tremendous difficulties posed by the attempt to industrialise a vast and economically backward rural hinterland. Indeed, the only viable alternative would be common ownership of industry by the state (i.e., socialism) and the establishment of machinery for implementing centralised state control and planning of all economic indices - i.e. a Gosplan. But the instrument chosen by the Mao programme was an instrument for capitalist, not socialist development.

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- c) the adoption of an ideological-political programme for "remoulding the ideology and outlook of the national bourgeoisie to accept socialism". It was here that the false dialectics of "unity-criticism-unity" were brought to bear - this high-flown principle which sounds as if it were intended to relate to the raising of the level of revolutionary praxis of a scientific revolutionary party and movement of the proletariat, but which in reality was applied as a pseudo-theoretical "Marxist" disguise concealing the permanent incorporation of the national capitalist class into the structure of classes and political system in China. In fact, as the subsequent development so clearly shows, far from being a "weak, indecisive remnant of a class", as the Mao-inspired legend would have had us all believe, the national bourgeoisie held and exercised actual hegemony in the PRC from its very foundation in 1949 through its control of the CPC, the commanding position which it held in the state apparatus (which, it must be remembered, also gave it effective control of the nationalised sector of industry) and its direct control of the joint state-private boards. No wonder it proved relatively easy to "remould the ideology" of a capitalist class to accept a "socialism" which, far from progressively cutting down and whittling away its power, actually consolidates, extends and entrenches that power!
- d) the adoption of a political constitution which accords to the national bourgeoisie the freedom to promote its class interest and propagate its cause through
- i) the right to organise and maintain its own political parties, of which three have existed in the PRG since its foundation and continue to function actively to this day;
 - ii) the right to organise and maintain its own newspapers, journals, publishing houses, and other media of information and propaganda.

Thus it was not only Khrushchev, the architect of Soviet revisionism of the right, but Mao Tse-tung, the architect of Chinese revisionism of the "left", who was first and foremost an exponent of

- i) a peaceful transition to socialism;
- ii) a state of the whole people.

The illusion that, in the struggle against Khrushchevite revisionism and its advocacy of a "peaceful transition to socialism" it was the Mao doctrine of "armed struggle" and "armed insurrection" which provided the most persuasive and definitive example of the alternative revolutionary transition to socialism is shattered when it is seen that, in fact, the advocacy of "armed struggle" applied, in the Mao perspective, firmly to the national democratic revolution and not to the socialist revolution. For the transition to the socialist revolution - which Leninist strategy and tactics, conforming with materialist

dialectics, envisages as following uninterruptedly from the bourgeois democratic or national democratic revolution - is in the Mao prescription the liberal perspective of the "gradual remoulding of the national bourgeoisie to accept socialism". These are the manipulative and deeply demagogic techniques by means of which Maoist "left" revisionism forged for itself the theoretical tools it needed for holding the revolutionary process at the stage of completion of the national democratic revolution and preventing its uninterrupted transition to the - in class terms, necessarily violent - socialist revolution.

As for the "state of the whole people", we need only to quote from any basic text of Mao not only to find a crystal clear and categorical statement that the new democratic state is precisely such a "state of the whole people", but also the even more controversial, if hardly so clearly expressed, view that the national bourgeoisie can play a revolutionary role in the socialist revolution:

"Ours is a people's democratic dictatorship. ...

Who is to exercise this dictatorship? Naturally, it must be the working class and the entire people led by it. Dictatorship does not apply in the ranks of the people. The people cannot possibly exercise dictatorship over themselves; nor must one section of them oppress another section." (Mao Tse-tung: "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People"; Peking; 1964; p. 4,5)

"It is the desire of the Communist Party, also its policy, to exist side by side with the democratic parties for a long time to come. ...

Mutual supervision among the various parties has also been a long-established fact. ... Mutual supervision, which is obviously not a one-sided matter, means that the Communist Party should exercise supervision over the democratic parties, and that the democratic parties should exercise supervision over the Communist Party." (ibid.; p.44)

"Why should the democratic parties of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie be allowed to exist side by side with the party of the working class over a long period of time? Because we have no reason not to adopt the policy of long-term coexistence with all the democratic parties which are truly devoted to the task of uniting the people for the cause of socialism. .. (ibid.; p.43,44)

Thus Mao hopes to pull the wool over the eyes of less experienced comrades who might be unable to tell the difference between materialist dialectics and an eclectic pottage which seeks to equate "the rule of the whole people" with socialism, and which suggests that an imaginary "dictatorship" exercised by "the whole people" - a contradiction in terms - is new democratic China's equivalent of and substitute for the dictatorship of the proletariat affected by those crude and inelegant Russians under J.V. Stalin.

The text of "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" is based on a speech delivered by Mao in 1957, at a time when the People's Republic of China was being shaken by counterrevolutionary disturbances organised by the national bourgeoisie (which is so weak, so vacillating, so unorganised) in a bid - in the event a successful one, thanks largely to those self-same proposals for "peacefully resolving contradictions amongst the people" contained in that speech - to obtain for itself a wider measure of political representation in the National People's Consultative Congress (a short while later this was actually acceded to in the form of "mutual supervision") and enlarged economic freedoms. To have referred to the national bourgeoisie as "weak, vacillating and incapable of acting decisively in its own class interest" when it had acted, not merely decisively but with unprovoked violence in a number of major cities of China would therefore have been impolitic and tactless, to say the least.

Mao therefore dishonestly suppressed that characterisation in the text of "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People", and this could have been one of the factors responsible for the delay of 12 months which

elapsed between the delivery of the speech and its publication. There is, indeed, no doubt that publication of the official text had been held up in order that the more blatantly revisionist and anti-Marxist-Leninist statements could be covered over and disguised as much as possible.

By April 1957, a change was beginning to take place in the class alignments in China. In particular, a section of the national bourgeoisie began to have doubts about the longer-term suitability of Mao's foreign policy of co-operation with the Khrushchev leadership in the Soviet Union. They recognised, correctly, that Khrushchev was acting completely in line with the interests of US imperialism, and decided that the Mao policy, if persisted in, would culminate in the alignment of China behind US imperialism - a policy which in very fact China has come to adopt today, since Nixon's pioneering visit to Peking and the subsequent ousting of Lin Piao. By the spring of 1959, this section of the national bourgeoisie had gained the majority within its class, and it consequently began to look around for forces within the CPC with which it could ally itself.

The Struggle Between Marxism-Leninism and Revisionism Sharpens

Now it so happened that there had begun to develop inside the top leadership of the CPC, and in particular in the International Department of the Central Committee, a group on whom the role of Khrushchev revisionism since the 20th Congress had had an extremely illuminating and educative effect. This group had come out of the infant Chinese working class movement. One of them, Liu Shao-chi, had been a miners' leader organising trade unions during the dark days of Chiang Kai-shek's blueshirts. He was very soon joined by a few others, more particularly the leading theoretician and Secretary of the Peking District of the Party and member of the International Department, Peng Chen. Others who joined them were the able propagandist An Wen and the philosopher and theoretician, Chou Yang. They began to make a study of Marxism-Leninism, to apply that study to the history of the Chinese revolution in general and to the role of Mao Tse-tung in particular. By the spring of 1959, they had come to the conclusion that Mao's doctrine and perspectives of "new democracy" were revisionist in content and designed to provide the framework for the construction of a state capitalist society rather than a socialist one in China.

Thus there arose a new class alliance, more progressive than the old one, because for the first time since 1933-34 the small industrial working class of China was taking an active initiative to make itself once again, for the first time since 1926 (when the first phase of the national democratic revolution, when it was led by the working class, was drowned in blood by Chiang Kai-shek's thugs on behalf of the comprador bourgeoisie and foreign imperialism), the leading force in the completion of the national-democratic revolution and its successful transformation into a socialist revolution. This alliance was between the working class, the urban petty-bourgeoisie and peasantry and a narrower section of the national bourgeoisie which was opposed to the alliance with US imperialism to which the Mao policy had led, just as previously it had led to a subjective alignment with Soviet revisionism (rapidly becoming Soviet neo-imperialism). We now know that this wider stratum of the national bourgeoisie whose interests Mao had represented had stood in a relationship of alliance with a section of the comprador bourgeoisie whose holdings Mao had protected from nationalisation between 1949 and 1953 (the period during which nationalisation of other comprador holdings was carried through and the joint state-private boards were set up). As for that different section of the national bourgeoisie which formed the other wing in the Mao alliance, this was comprised of that section whose interests were in general dependent upon and subordinate to US imperialism.

The first fruit of the growing awareness on the part of those elements in the leadership of the CPC (mainly concentrated in the International Department of the Central Committee and in the Peking Party Committee) who had begun to

unquestioning support now came over to the side of the developing Marxist-Leninists headed by Comrades Liu Shao-chi and Peng Chen. In May of that year, the position was considered to be sufficiently serious as to warrant an extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee, which was held in the provincial town of Lushan. At that meeting, Mao was removed from his position as President of the Republic, this being taken over by Liu Shao-chi. In fact, Mao was effectively banished at this meeting from all further participation in the political life and activities of the CPC and the Republic - and, indeed, nothing more was to issue either from his pen or his mouth from that day onwards. The official ground given at that time for his "relinquishing" the post of President was that he "wished to devote himself to theoretical work". If there had been any truth in this, one could anticipate with some degree of certainty that some published work would have resulted from that retirement, the announcement of which was blazoned forth with all the weight of the Republic's publicity media behind it. But, in fact, from that day forth Mao was silent - proving thereby that the grounds officially stated for his "retirement" were not the real ones.

The inescapable conclusion to which the above is leading, with unanswerable and relentless logic is, surely, quite clear. What was the date at which Mao was removed from his official position as President of the Republic, and from what date was he forced to give up all his party posts and all participation in public life, to retire to his private villa in the suburbs of Shanghai? It was in May, 1959, at that Extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee held in Lushan. And when, from what date, did the CPC begin to fulfil its magnificent role in the analysis and exposure of modern revisionism? From approximately August of the same year, i.e. from the moment that Mao was out of the way. Prior to May 1959, the international line of the CPC had been one of unconditional support for the Khrushchev revisionists and for the revisionist programme put forward at the 20th Congress of the CPSU. Furthermore, it is patently obvious that Mao had absolutely nothing to do with the drafting of the famous nine editorials published in Hongqi (Red Flag) and Renmin Ribao (People's Daily). In fact, they were drafted in the main by Peng Chen, the Secretary of the Peking Party Committee and Head of the International Department of the CPC.

After the removal of Mao, the Marxist-Leninists in the leadership of the CPC did not restrict their activity to the vigorous prosecution of the struggle against modern revisionism. They also began to prepare at long last for the long-delayed carrying through of the socialist revolution - a delay which had been brought about primarily through Mao's "left" revisionist theory of "new democracy" and "steady progress towards socialism" through "peaceful remoulding of the national bourgeoisie to accept socialism".

Mao launches one of history's greatest frauds

Towards this end, the new leadership of the CPC, in which the core of principled comrades developing towards Marxism-Leninism led by Liu Shao-chi and Peng Chen were playing the principal role, decided in the early Summer of 1965 to initiate the first preparatory steps towards the mounting of a socialist revolution. These first steps took - quite correctly - the form of a theoretical and philosophical mobilisation of the more advanced cadres and militants in the CPC and in other working class organisations (the trade unions and urban co-operatives), with the aim of inculcating in the masses of working people a clear and ineradicable understanding of the fundamental character of revisionist (i.e., reconciliationist or reformist, class-collaborationist) thought and practice. The leading comrade representing the Marxist-Leninists in this all-important field of dialectical materialist philosophy was Chou Yang, who published two works in 1965 which, in our opinion, are destined to become classics of Marxist-Leninist literature. The first of these was entitled "Fighting Tasks in the Field of Philosophy and the Social Sciences"; and the second (and perhaps the more important of the two) bore the starkly prosaic title: "One Divides into Two, Two never Combines into One".

We will not attempt to summarise these insightful and profoundly scientific

works here. Suffice it to say that they made new contributions of fundamental significance to the scientific philosophy of dialectical materialism, and were intended to mobilise party members for fulfilling their Leninist task of leading the proletariat and poor peasantry in the carrying through of the socialist revolution.

Having taken steps to mobilise the highest levels of understanding and consciousness in the working masses of China, as represented by the Party cadres and activists of the CPC (those same cadres and activists 300,000 of whom the Mao faction had attempted to remove from the political stage in late 1957, so as the better to initiate the bourgeois-democratic perspectives of "New Democracy"), the new leadership of the CPC which was developing towards Marxism-Leninism decided further to take timely and well-considered measures to mobilise the next tier down in the structure of proletarian and petty bourgeois consciousness - i.e. the broad masses in sympathy with the CPC but not actually members of it for the broad tasks of preparation for the ousting of the representatives of the national bourgeoisie from the state apparatus and the carrying through of the socialist revolution.

It was in this way that the cultural revolution was born. For it should never be forgotten that the principle of utilising a cultural revolution as a theoretical lever for mobilising the masses in preparation for transforming a national-democratic revolution uninterruptedly into a socialist revolution was first worked out theoretically and first applied in practice, not by the Mao faction in the Spring of 1966, but by the Marxist-Leninists a whole year earlier in May 1965. They termed their cultural revolution the "Socialist Cultural Revolution", and its aim was clearly to prepare and mobilise the masses for the expulsion of the representatives of the national bourgeoisie, firstly from the National People's Consultative Conference, and then from all branches of the state apparatus. Thus "New Democracy" (the alliance of the working class and the petty bourgeoisie, urban and rural, with the national bourgeoisie) would have been brought to an end and replaced by a new, narrower alliance of the working class and the petty bourgeoisie (urban and rural) alone. This would have been the basis for the establishment of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry as it had been in the Soviet Union under Lenin and Stalin. As the final stage, the three political parties of the national bourgeoisie would have been disbanded, thus depriving the national capitalist class of all political representation; the joint state-private boards dissolved; and all industry nationalised and so transformed into the property of the entire working class and working people through the state, which would then have become a socialist state resting on the foundation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But by tactics of unbridled, pseudo-revolutionary, pseudo-Marxist demagogy, the Mao faction successfully turned the Socialist Cultural Revolution into its opposite, into a counter-revolutionary movement aimed at the destruction of the Communist Party of China, at the dissolution of the trade unions and all genuine organisations of the working class and working people, at the smashing of the new democratic state in order to replace it, not by a socialist state, the instrument of power of the working class and working people, but by a reactionary dictatorship exercised by a rump of revisionist hacks and sychophants who are utterly subservient to the interests of the developing Chinese national capitalist class. During this bitter class battle, like tens of thousands of lesser-known but equally heroic cadres and fighters in the CPC, Peng Chen was murdered by the "Red Guards", the lumpen and petty bourgeois elements unleashed by the Mao faction and its controlling armed forces in a reign of terror to smash up every stick and stone of the indigenous working class base in China. I will not go into details of this unprecedentedly reactionary tidal wave of destruction - they are known through the details already outlined in the MLOB's Report on the Situation in the People's Republic of China.

Alignment with US Imperialism

After the elimination of the Liu Shao-chi - Peng Chen leadership, the road lay clear for the manoeuvring of China back onto the path of integration with

the imperialist countries of the capitalist world system. As Soviet neo-imperialism began increasingly, after 1966, to look eastwards in order to find a solution to its growing internal contradictions and need for overseas spheres of influence, and the threat to China's security from this source became more and more pronounced, a section of the national bourgeoisie began to emerge which favoured the policy of developing an alliance with US imperialism as the best means of offsetting to some degree the threats from Soviet neo-imperialism. However, before any political steps to bring about such a violent change in the foreign policy of China could be encompassed, it was first of all necessary to discredit, isolate and finally destroy altogether the faction of "left" demagogy headed by Lin Piao and Chiang Ching, the activities and propagandistic excesses of which had been so essential a means of covering up the elimination of the Liu Shao-chi - Peng Chen leadership in 1966-67, and which objectively was opposed to US imperialism. Accordingly, Lin Piao, who had been hailed in the most effusive terms as Mao's successor, was encouraged under pressure of framed-up charges to flee the country in a military aircraft, and then shot down and killed over the Gobi Desert. With his removal the right revisionist faction in the leadership of the CPC felt their position to be sufficiently strengthened and that of the "left" sufficiently weakened, as to enable them to take the first steps towards the conclusion of a viable working alliance with US imperialism.

Thus, from the death of Lin Piao in 1971, up to the death of Mao and the exposure of the "Gang of Four", an uneasy interregnum set in; the main content of which, however, was the putting in motion of policy measures to make effective the Sino-US alliance. With Mao's death, the need to maintain the cover of "anti-imperialism", was felt to have passed, and the occasion was thus taken as an opportunity to take further massive steps towards an openly right-revisionist policy serving directly the interests of Chinese state capitalism.

So today, after the "Cultural Revolution", the demise of the "heir apparent, Lin Piao", and the unmasking of the "Gang of Four", all power has been concentrated in the hands of the army, who rule on behalf of the national capitalist class - an armed force which has occupied every important factory or enterprise in order to ensure, at virtual gunpoint, that the tempo of labour is drastically - indeed murderously - speeded up and hours of work lengthened almost to the limits of human endurance. This, of course, is not in order to serve "socialist construction", as the Maoist propaganda machine states, but in order to facilitate and promote the primitive accumulation of Chinese national capital which, in the arduous and disadvantageous international conditions imposed by a world market dominated by infinitely more powerful and developed imperialist powers, particularly the US, can only fulfil capitalist accumulation and reproduction through the most ruthless centralised state planning and control. As for the joint state-private boards, these have, of course, been retained in the now "socialist" post-cultural revolution China - they also are necessary as an economic instrument for promoting primitive accumulation. In short, China is a state-capitalist country, basically of the same type as that of the Soviet Union, but with a very different class structure and state apparatus.

Conclusion

The entire development of the international relationships and foreign policy of the People's Republic of China since the "triumph" of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" shows that a typical inter-capitalist struggle for supremacy has developed, and is still developing, between Soviet neo-imperialism and Chinese state-capitalism (which has not yet reached an imperialist stage in its development, but which will do so within 10-12 years at the present rate of economic development if the working class and working people of China do not intervene to bring this development to an end through a successful socialist revolution - an unlikely eventuality indeed, in the absence of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party to lead them). In a capitalist world market which is completely dominated by the long-established and entrenched imperialist powers (the US and the West European powers), there are only two directions in which Soviet neo-imperialism can expand - and, having reached, since approximately 1968, its imperialist stage of development (viz. the invasion of Czechoslovakia) it must

expand or suffer a chaotic intensification of its social and class antagonisms, in the same way as this is already happening, at a higher and later stage of development, in the case of the established imperialist powers. These two avenues of expansion are:

- a) by successfully taking over and absorbing into its (qualitatively different) framework of neo-colonial domination and exploitation the colonial holdings of the long-established imperialist powers, as and when these neo-colonies and semi-colonies successfully cast off the yoke of colonial subservience to these powers - in particular, US imperialism - through the carrying through of victorious national-democratic revolutions. It was in this way that Cuba, for instance, was absorbed into the neo-colonial framework of Soviet neo-imperialism. The Soviet neo-imperialists entertained the same hope vis-a-vis Chile, and have long attempted to lure the national bourgeoisie of Egypt into such a relationship and away from subservience to US imperialism.
- b) by means of a war against China and the ensuing subjugation of the People's Republic of China and its incorporation into the Soviet neo-colonial system.

Of these two, it is the latter which increasingly promises both the quicker and the larger imperialist booty. To win, one by one, from the developed, established imperialist countries the colonial holdings which they already possess, through the expedient of rendering support to a national liberation movement in order to place the new independent state, set up after the victory of the national democratic revolution, in a position of indebtedness to the Soviet Union - the method applied in relation to Cuba and Vietnam - may be very astute, but it is a process which is both protracted, costly and dangerous, the latter on account of the risk of provoking a world war with US imperialism. Consequently, a growing lobby of opinion amongst the neo-imperialist ruling class of the Soviet Union favours a war solution, to be engineered on some suitable pretext, as a quick way out for Soviet neo-imperialism's market problems.

As for the Chinese side in this developing inter-capitalist (and increasingly inter-imperialist) contradiction, it is precisely because of the threat it faces from Soviet neo-imperialism that Chinese state capitalism decided in 1972 to enter into and to promote an active alliance with US imperialism. Have you ever wondered why Lin Piao, who had been widely and clamorously publicised as the successor of the great Chairman himself, his "most trusted comrade-in-arms", was finally compelled, along with his supporters, to flee the country? The reason was that Lin Piao had, since the murder of Peng Chen and the incarceration of Liu Shao-chi, come to represent that section of the national capitalist class whose interests were opposed to US imperialism. He and his faction accordingly attempted to carry through a coup d'etat and to oust the Mao faction from power - unsuccessfully, as it turned out. What more striking truth could one require of the state-capitalist nature of People's China or of the revisionist - one might almost say social-fascist - character of its ruling party, the "Communist Party of China", and of the inter-imperialist character of its foreign relations?

These are the milestones marking the road to the consolidation of the power of the national bourgeoisie and the elimination of the last vestiges of the power of the working class and poor peasantry in China. They are also the events and policy measures which have proved up to the hilt the fundamental correctness of the analysis made in the MLOB Report. Gone now is every shred of justification for maintaining the myth of "Mao Tse-tung Thought", the "Lenin of our Era"; gone is every remaining shred of evidence that China is a "socialist country"; gone is every remaining shred of evidence that the reconstituted rump of the CPC is a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party of the Chinese working class and poor peasantry. Yet not a single one of the groups and organisations calling themselves Marxist-Leninist has been able to summon that modicum of respect for

scientific truth as to face up to these developments or to exercise even the most elementary self-criticism in seeking to evaluate critically their past errors: their craven opportunism, their grovelling at the feet of the most corrupt demagoguery ever perpetrated in the name of "socialism"; their abject, disgusting fear of losing a seemingly powerful ally. Most of all they fear being faced with the need to continue the "fight against modern revisionism" alone and without the support, "moral" or financial, of a powerful "socialist" base. Marxism-Leninism has, indeed, scant need of such "fighters for principle" as these!

In sending you this letter, we are only too well aware of the powerful motives which compel you to retain your allegiance to the facile emotive appeal exerted by "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung". For so long as there remains a single shred of false Marxism adhering to it, for so long as its shallow abuse of dialectical-materialist phraseology may succeed in lending to the essentially mechanical-determinist ideology of the national capitalist class of China the false aura of scientific objectivity, for so long will the metaphysical character of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" link up with your own emotively based ideological needs and, in providing that heaven-sent manna of "For the people, with the people, by the people", ensure that the national bourgeoisies of the developing and emerging countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America succeed in entraining an as yet but immature and inexperienced proletariat and left forces behind them in their struggle to halt the uninterrupted transition to socialist revolution. For so long as there remains, as an inevitable outcome of this, the sanction to strut and posture in the motley plumage of the false Marxism and real nationalist demagoguery of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" as a means of avoiding in practice the responsibility - one which any genuine Marxist-Leninist would strive to discharge as his most elementary duty - of making a profound analysis, on the basis of scientific theory, of the new features in the development of capitalism which have emerged since the end of World War Two and on this basis of building a genuine Marxist-Leninist vanguard party of the working class and a genuine revolutionary mass front, a Red Front - for just so long will you continue to place the unearned kudos of "international support" before real cadre work to build the Marxist-Leninist vanguard on the foundation of scientific enlightenment, conviction and truth.

Imperialism's crisis of absolute retraction is already well advanced. The dangers this poses for the British working class, as for the workers of other developed countries in Europe and throughout the world, are immense. For at least 30 years, the British working class has been leaderless, at the mercy of the long-range strategic plans of its irreconcilable enemy, monopoly capital. The eleventh hour for the forging of Marxist-Leninist unity on the basis of a scientific analysis of the contemporary capitalist reality is soon to strike. If these fundamental theoretical and programmatic tasks are not solved, and solved soon, monopoly capital will find no barrier standing between it and a solution to the crisis of absolute retraction in the imposition of a fully-developed corporate state, and this in its turn would be but the antechamber to a terrorist fascist dictatorship. Whilst these portentous and fundamental issues are nearing their objective maturity, you, through your craven opportunism and philistine, egotistical concern to prove that you know the letter, but nothing of the method, of Marxism-Leninism, are objectively assisting in the disruption of the work to forge real Marxist-Leninist unity based on scientific principle and the founding of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party based on a scientific programme of advance.

We hope you will rein in at the brink and join with us in these fundamental theoretical and strategic tasks. That is why we have taken the trouble to address this Open Letter to you. But, honestly, we doubt that you will.

MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANISATION
OF BRITAIN

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national features and conditions" which has been used as a pretext and a cover for the abandonment of Marxist-Leninist principle by modern revisionists of every hue ever since.

If, then, we discard as a mere pretext or tactical cover the vague and unsubstantiated plea of the alleged "concrete conditions existing in China" - and we may rest assured that, if they did possess any real or objective validity or were in any way objectively germane to the issue of the alleged "dual character" of the national capitalist class, Mao would have spelt out with his usual crispness and clarity just what those special conditions were - what objectively based materiality does in fact remain with which to substantiate Mao's claim that the national capitalist class possesses a "dual character"? None at all! Not a tittle of objective evidence is provided to back up this contention, just as no objective evidence is provided to substantiate the related claim that the "revolutionary side" to the character of the national bourgeoisie at the time of the national-democratic revolution - which, as Marxism-Leninism teaches, undoubtedly corresponded to its objective class interest - was "in the concrete conditions existing in China" actually backed up by any active revolutionary role fulfilled by that class in the national-democratic revolutionary war, and that it did not, whilst supporting the revolution in words, prefer - in the best traditions of the London merchants and bankers who backed Cromwell in 1642, of Robespierre and the upholders of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" who screamed their shrill exhortations from well behind the barricades of 1789 and, indeed, of the bourgeoisies of all lands ever since - to depend on the working people and poor peasantry - particularly, thanks to "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", the latter - to perform the actual deeds of revolutionary struggle on its behalf. This point has some importance, because it is on the claim that the national bourgeoisie did in fact possess a "revolutionary" side in its "dual" character that Mao bases his related contention that that same "dual character", at the later stage of the "socialist" revolution, then expressed itself in the form of "willingness to accept and work for socialism" - i.e., that its alleged valiant deeds in the national democratic revolution prepared it for support for the socialist revolution.

As the Report of the MLOB on the Situation in the People's Republic of China made clear, it is on this figment, this contrived construction, that Mao erects his now notorious argument that the national capitalist class in a colonial-type country such as China can and does play a revolutionary role, not merely in the national-democratic, but also in the socialist revolution:

"Mao begins by saying:

'We are confronted by two types of social contradictions - contradictions between ourselves and the enemy and contradictions among the people. These two types of contradictions are totally different in nature.' (Mao Tse-tung: "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People"; Peking; 1964; p.1-2)

In this respect, he says, what constitutes "the people" varies in different countries, and also in different historical periods within the same country:

'The term 'the people' has different meanings in different countries, and in different historical periods in each country.' (Mao Tse-tung: *ibid.*; p.2).

He proceeds to analyse what constitutes "the people" during the period of the construction of socialism in China:

'At this stage of building socialism, all classes, strata and social groups which approve, support and work for the cause of socialist construction belong to the category of the people.' (Mao Tse-tung: *ibid.*; p.2).

Then, in opposition to the Marxist-Leninist thesis that the capitalist class represents a social force fundamentally and violently opposed to the building of socialism, he puts forward the revisionist thesis that "in the conditions existing in China" the capitalist class forms, during the period of the construction of socialism, a part of "the people", that is, one of the "classes, strata and social groups which approve, support and work for the cause of

socialist construction."

'During the building of socialism in the conditions existing in China today what we call contradictions among the people include the following: .. contradictions between the working class and other sections of the working people on the one hand and the national bourgeoisie on the other. ...

In our country, the contradiction between the working class and the national bourgeoisie is a contradiction among the people.' (Mao Tse-tung: *ibid.*; p.3).⁹ (Report of the CC of the MLOB on the Situation in the People's Republic of China, Red Front, January 1968).

Once unravelled, the involved and devious inversions and convolutions through which this argument passes are powerless to conceal, as Mao hoped, its true content. On the other hand, they give an indication of the great caution with which the Great Puppetmaster grasps the nettle of this, the most revealing of all the "ultimate truths" of modern revisionism. After all, not even the founding father of Soviet modern revisionism - the most important revisionist school, not of the "left" but of the right - Nikita Khrushchev, ever dared go so far as this!

On reading these passages, it is almost as if the supreme engineer in political intrigue and the opportunist manipulation of ideas had ended up by being himself unwittingly caught up in the toils of the very revisionist distortions and misrepresentations that he had hoped would, at one and the same time, serve both the interests of the national capitalist class and his own reputation as "the Lenin of our Era". For, behind the twists and evasions of the argument, the words seem to be driven by an inexorable logic of their own, against which Mao himself is wrestling in vain to restrain them from revealing the truth about his "Thought" too precipitately and in too open a form. For it is indeed here, in this passage, that the life-cycle of revisionist thought and practice, which, as always, begins with a spontaneous retreat before and accommodation to the pressure of capitalist ideas, turns full circle and ends, not only in directly and consciously serving the interests of the capitalist class itself, but by being unable to prevent the truth of this, its true and most fundamental nature, from emerging into the open. It is only just and fitting that it should be through the pen of Mao Tse-tung that the foul gorgon's head of modern revisionism should finally reveal itself in its true colours, for was he not an astute and relatively experienced "theorist" and practitioner of modern revisionist ideology and politics at a time when Nikita Khrushchev was still serving his apprenticeship in treachery and concealment under J.V. Stalin?

So we are left with our virgin birth, the "dual character" of the Chinese national capitalist class, one side of which enables it to "accept and work for socialism". It follows that, if Mao can feel free of any responsibility for providing a verifiable parentage for these immaculate Siamese twins, he can also feel free to choose which of the two "sides" in this duality (that of "exploiting the working class to make profits" on the one hand, and of "support for the Constitution and willingness to accept socialism" on the other) he shall elevate to become the one which is the primary "aspect" - i.e., that on which the policy of the revisionist CPC leadership headed by Mao Tse-tung is to be based and which it will pursue in practice, in the real world of class conflict between the workers and peasants of China, in their struggle to bring about the transformation of the national-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution; and the national capitalist class of China, in its struggle to halt and prevent that transformation and to consolidate permanently its rule and its concealed dictatorship over the working class, working people and poor peasantry within the deceptive framework of "new democracy".

THE NEW METAPHYSICS OF HARMONIOUS CONTRADICTIONS AND THEIR NON-ANTAGONISTIC RESOLUTION

So here we come to the philosophical crux of the matter. Mao postulates two "sides" or "aspects" to the character of the national-capitalist class of China. Of these two, one is objectively based and has a materiality in the real world (the "side" of "exploiting the working class to make profits"); the other is subjective and has no such objectively based materiality in the real world (the "side" of "supporting the Constitution" and being willing "to accept and work for socialism"). Of these two, however, it is the latter, the purely subjective evaluation, which is stated by Mao to be the dominant or primary "aspect" or "side", and hence the one which should and

will be taken as the foundation of policy by the revisionist leadership of the CPC then under his command.

What we are left with in the above passage, therefore, after we have boiled off all the bogus Marxism and "dialectics" is an idealist postulate in the form of the subjectively chosen "aspect" in the "dual character" of the national capitalist class - an "aspect" which, as we have seen, rests on the basis of a false premise and which, unlike its "opposite" characteristic, resides in a purely subjective quality. In the course of our examination, it has become crystal clear that this alleged "characteristic" of being "willing to accept and work for socialism" is not a real characteristic at all, but a false and fabricated one which has been juxtaposed side by side with the real one - that of "exploiting the working class to make profits" - in order to lend it an air of false dialectical contradictoriness, and so to conjure up a false "unity of opposites".

More significant, however, even than this is the fact that the "aspect" of the "dual character" of the national capitalist class chosen by Mao Tse-tung to be the dominant one is an aspect not of the contradiction as such between the national capitalist class and the working class, but of only one pole in that contradiction, namely, of the national capitalist class itself. As such, it is seen to be not a profound dialectical pole of force in a profound dialectical contradiction which can be equally profoundly resolved in a non-antagonistic and peaceful way so that "socialism" can be achieved in China without the mess and inconvenience of a proletarian-socialist revolution, but an a priori idealist postulate which derives from and resides in a purely subjective idea existing in the realm of thought or mind - namely, that the national capitalist class of China "willingly accepts and works for the cause of socialism".

As we have seen, of course (see page 2) this "socialism" possesses no greater a materiality than does the postulate of the national capitalist class being willing to accept and work for it, since it is in reality a state-capitalist system based on joint-state private boards (i.e., on a 50% share in capital ownership between the state and each individual capitalist) which it is in the interest of the national capitalist class to support. Hence the metaphysical character of the bogus "dominant aspect" in the "dual character" of the national capitalist class forms, and has been projected precisely so that it should serve as, the foundation, in the form of a subjective idealist postulate, for the inverted ideological system in and through which the working class, working people and poor peasantry - the exploited and oppressed classes in "new democratic" China - are to be deceived into accepting the dictatorship of their class enemy, the national capitalist class exercised against themselves within the deceptive framework of "people's democratic dictatorship" as if it were the opposite of this. Conversely, the dictatorship of the working class, working people and poor peasantry which, in a real socialist society, would be exercised against the class enemies of the working class and its allies - i.e., the national capitalist class, the comprador capitalists, the feudal landlord class and the remnant agencies of foreign imperialism - is disguised by the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung" as "The dictatorship of the whole people" and falsely defined by the "theory" of people's democratic dictatorship to include the national capitalist class, the class enemy of the working class and its allies:

"Who is to exercise this dictatorship? (i.e. people's democratic dictatorship - Ed.). Naturally, it must be the working class and the entire people led by it. Dictatorship does not apply in the ranks of the people. The people cannot possibly exercise dictatorship over themselves; nor should one section of them oppress another section." (Mao Tse-tung: *ibid.*; p.5).

It is here, then, that we find the true objective cause underlying the subjective predilection of the Great Puppetmaster and his "Thought" for a vulgarised "dialectics" which replaces the rich and many-sided material process which is the complex, developmental conflict of opposed forces within a real, complex and developing unity of opposites - for instance, the struggle between proletariat and national capitalist class which is the fundamental motive force of Chinese "new democratic" society - by a contradictionless "transformation" of opposites into one another without an intensifying and ultimately - i.e., as the outcome of a process of finite duration - irreconcilable struggle taking place between them and without that struggle reaching its qualitative synthesis in a dialectical leap into a new

quality - a view of development and change which is more reminiscent of a game of tennis than it is of the real processes of birth, growth, decay and death inherent to a real organism. Indeed, such a concept of the relationship between opposed forces and the change to which this gives rise, so ineffably pure and simple as it is, would lead us to believe that it had emerged ready made from the unfathomable Thought of the Godhead himself, were it not that our realisation of its strictly utilitarian value to the long-term strategic interests of the Chinese national capitalist class precludes our believing in its divine origin. For it is, for instance, this "pure" and "simple" concept, after it has been translated into the involved double-talk and prevarication through which the attempt is made to reconcile the "theory" of the harmonious and non-antagonistic resolution of contradictions and the equally harmonious "transformation of opposites into one another" with the principles of dialectical materialism, which enables the Great Puppetmaster to declare that the "antagonistic" contradiction between the working class and the national capitalist class which forms the "negative aspect" of the latter's "dual character" may be "transformed" into a "non-antagonistic" contradiction as the heavenly outcome of being "properly handled", and vice versa.

Thus "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" first of all ideologically inverts the relationship of classes within the framework of "new democracy" so as to present "people's democratic dictatorship" as being exercised against only those class elements amongst the class enemies of the working class, working people and poor peasantry which it is in the interests of the national capitalist class, the active subject, to suppress openly as a foil to offset its disguised suppression of the working class, working people and poor peasantry - i.e., the remnants of the comprador bourgeoisie not already in alliance with it, the landlord class and the remaining agencies of foreign imperialism (the Kuomintang remnant on Taiwan), whilst the fundamental, long-term enemy of the working class, working people and poor peasantry, the indigenous national capitalist class, the class which is no mere superficial excrescence of a powerful imperialist overlord, fattening itself on the blood, sweat and toil of a "labour force" not it, but the foreign imperialist interloper has organised for production and exploitation, but which has developed its profit-making system, carried through primitive accumulation and strengthened its own economic position as an organic part of the developing nation, a nation whose path of social development, like that of any other nation, had of necessity to pass through the jungle of capitalism as the unavoidable prelude to, and training ground for, the victorious carrying through of the proletarian-socialist revolution by the working class, working people and poor peasantry led by their Marxist-Leninist vanguard party - that class is enabled by "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" not only to avoid for a time the revolutionary confrontation with its class enemy, the working class, working people and poor peasantry, which, were it to develop, would throw the entire future of capitalism in that country into the melting pot, but actually to exercise its effective class dictatorship against the proletarian revolutionary alliance within the ideologically deceptive framework of "people's democratic dictatorship".

In this respect, we see that Chinese "left" revisionism, the theoretical foundation for which is provided by "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", fulfils in the differing objective social and class conditions prevailing in a large formerly colonially enslaved country but recently emerged into national independence an exactly analogous role to that fulfilled by social-democracy and reformism in the developed metropolitan lands, the most salient difference between these two being the tactical need, prior to the carrying through of the national-democratic revolution, for a "revolutionary" stance in the perspective presented, not only in respect of the national democratic revolution, but also for the transition to "socialism", as against the openly gradualist and reformist stance adopted by right-wing social democracy and reformism. The former, of course, acquires the material precedent for its "revolutionary" perspective in the transition to "socialism" simply by borrowing from the revolutionary tradition of the bourgeois democratic revolution which has been but recently completed, and which is then interpreted as having created the broad conditions under which "socialist construction" can be carried through "non-antagonistically" through the "co-operation" and "mutual supervision" of "all classes within the camp of the people".

As students of scientific socialism, of the strategy and tactics of the proletarian socialist revolution, we evaluate the national-democratic revolution in China as an

important progressive milestone in the history of world capitalism. Also as Marxist-Leninists, however, we must recognise that our most fundamental duty lies, not towards the national capitalist class of a colonial-type country in its task of achieving the victory of the national-democratic revolution whilst simultaneously holding back the unleashing of the socialist revolution, but in making a thorough-going exposure of the tactics of ideological deception and political manipulation which are so essential a feature of this aim, and which the national capitalist class of a colonial-type country, be its leader Mao Tse-tung, Kwame Nkrumah, or Abdul Nasser, is so skilled in bringing about.

Thus the process through which the working class, working people and poor peasantry of such a colonial-type country as China are mobilised for the carrying through of the national-democratic revolution under the leadership of a developing national capitalist class and by means of ideological precepts and political slogans which reflect the inverted world view of that class constitutes the most essential content of those variants of modern revisionism which serve the interests of the national capitalist classes of the formerly colonially-subjugated countries which have emerged into full nationhood since the end of World War Two. Those variants of modern revisionism to which we refer are Chinese "left" revisionism and small-state "centrist" revisionism such as holds sway in North Vietnam, North Korea and Cuba.

As far as the most formative and influential of those ideologies serving the interests of such national capitalist classes is concerned, however - i.e., Chinese "left" revisionism, the guiding theoretical foundation for which is "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", the idealist postulate to the effect that the national capitalist class "willingly accepts and works for socialism", together with its subjective first cause, the aim and intention of the national capitalist class, the active subject, itself to deceive the working class, working people and poor peasantry into believing that this is so, then together act as the combined determinant of the empirical effect desired to be obtained in the real world of Chinese "new democratic" society: the maintenance of the rule of the national capitalist class, of its state apparatus of force and deception, and the holding back of the proletarian socialist revolution which, by 1959, had begun to mature into its pre-revolutionary stage. The link which enables the above idealist postulate to make its effect thus felt and to fulfil its deceptive and disarming role amongst the exploited and oppressed classes in "new democratic" China is the very real one represented by the whole inverted ideology which is the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung" - its vicariously self-flattering populist demagogy, its moralistic homilising ("...all classes, strata and social groups which approve, support and work for the cause of socialist construction belong to the category of the people"), and so on - together with the political apparatus for disseminating that ideology throughout all classes and strata comprising "new democratic" society present in the revisionist "Communist Party of China" and the mass organisations of "people's democratic dictatorship".

Conclusion

To sum up, then, we see that, as far as its philosophical system is concerned, the "Thought of Mao Tse-tung" is a variant of bourgeois subjective idealism, albeit one which is skilfully disguised behind suitable "dialectical materialist" and "Marxist" phraseology. We see further that, as far as its method is concerned, it is a variant of bourgeois determinism. Its essential components may be summarised as follows:

- 1) an a priori idealist postulate existing in the realm of idea or mind which forms the original source of the power and influence exerted by "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung";
- 2) a subject first cause, deriving from that postulate and residing in the entire inverted ideological system which is "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", a system the objective purpose of which, by inducing amongst the mass of workers, working people and poor peasants of China the belief that the above postulate possesses the force of truth, is to act as the link between the idealist postulate from which it derives and the real world of "new democratic" society and the antagonistic classes it comprises;
- 3) an empirical secondary effect, the physical embodiment of the inceptive primary postulate, which resides in the political apparatus of "new democratic" society, the objective purpose of which is to act as the physical means of disseminating throughout all classes and strata the disarming, class-collab-

3)... orationist ideology of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", as the prime means of safeguarding the dictatorship of the national capitalist class in the specific conditions of a large country but recently emerged from colonial enslavement and oppression, and in which it is the aim of that class to build a viable state-capitalist system in the difficult and highly antagonistic international terrain of advanced imperialism.

It is thus made crystal clear that in "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", we have a typical example of that dichotomy between the world of idea and the world of matter in motion, of real men thinking, moving and acting in a real society, which is so fundamental a feature of all metaphysical systems, whether the emphasis be laid upon the former, the subjective element in idea, or upon the latter, the objective element external to the subject and existing in the material universe. It is also made crystal clear that this metaphysical foundation in the philosophy and world view of a national capitalist class of a former colonial-type country constitutes the basis for, and exerts its influence in the real world of "new democratic" society, through an inverted ideology which acts so as to conceal the rule of the national capitalist class, its exploitation and oppression of the working class, working people and poor peasantry. As such, it represents perhaps the last of the great schools of bourgeois thought to emerge and develop in the service of a bourgeois-democratic revolutionary movement, the last scion of a tradition which began with Martin Luther, Thomas Münzer and the peasant war in Germany, and which has produced such profound thinkers as Immanuel Kant, G.W.F. Hegel and Ludwig Feuerbach. In the present era, however, in the era of capitalism's decline into irrationalism, anti-science and "thought control", bourgeois thought and culture can spell only the death of philosophy as the organically ordered and systematised expression of the world view of a class, and can produce only great ideological manipulators, confidence tricksters and deceivers of the ilk of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharjal Nehru and - for the one country amongst the larger semi-colonial countries of the colonial periphery in which, during the period of classical imperialism between the two world wars, the objective conditions for the successful mounting and carrying through of a proletarian-socialist revolution on the basis of the Leninist strategy of the revolutionary alliance of the working class and the poor peasantry had begun to mature, i.e. China - Mao Tse-tung.

For so long as the historical stage of development awaiting fulfilment in China was that of the national democratic revolution, "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" had an historically limited progressive and revolutionary role to fulfil. But from the moment that the stage of the national-democratic revolution had been carried through, so that the next great task of historical progress became that of carrying through the socialist revolution headed by the proletariat, it turned into its opposite (and here we may use this much-abused phrase in its correct context) and became a reactionary ideology, a reactionary ideological and political force assisting not only the national capitalist class of China, but also the world imperialist system and world reaction to hold back the onset of the proletarian-socialist revolution in China. For all the "progressive" and "revolutionary" charisma attaching falsely to his name, Mao Tse-tung and his "Thought" will most certainly be judged by history as ending its development, not in the camp of social progress, but as a sophisticated, tactically adroit and politically astute system of reactionary ideology, the ideology of a capitalist class which, like any other, can survive only for so long as it can hold back the rising tide of the proletarian-socialist revolution.

With the ever more open adoption of its growing alliance with the greatest reactionary force in the world today, US imperialism - the inevitable self-exposure which has already compelled its former ally, the Albanian Party of Labour, to break with it and to condemn its betrayals in the sharpest, even if theoretically misconceived, terms - the hour of greatest weakness and indecision for "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" and its revisionist political apparatus has struck. Now is the time to mount all-embracing and pitiless criticism of its theoretical and political fallacies and deceptions, so that the prestige and the pernicious influence of this important variant of modern revisionist thought and practice within the developing Marxist-Leninist world movement may be neutralised and destroyed at the earliest possible moment.

STALIN'S "DIALECTICAL AND HISTORICAL MATERIALISM"

Professor George Thompson, the well-known eulogist of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", has put forward what is considered by many to be the orthodox view of Maoism on "The Question of Stalin", namely that Stalin's exposition of dialectical materialism was lacking in subtlety as compared with Mao's treatment, as manifested in the latter's work "On Contradiction". As is well-known, Stalin's treatment makes no reference to the question of "antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions", thereby indicating quite clearly, even if inversely through omission, that he did not consider the distinction to have any validity in scientific dialectical-materialist philosophy. Professor Thompson, on the other hand, rushing in, in his eulogistic zeal, where angels fear to tread, considers that, by omitting this question from his exposition, Stalin revealed his "blindness" towards "an important Marxist concept" from which were later to flow his many "errors":

"It could, I think, be shown, on the one hand, that Stalin's errors were largely due to his failure to deal correctly with antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions, and, on the other, that Mao Tse-tung's development of this aspect of dialectics would not have been possible without the historical experience of the October Revolution." (G. Thompson: "Marxism in China Today"; "The Broadsheet", organ of the China Policy Study Group; March 1965).

He goes on to counterpose Stalin to Mao on the much-vexed question of "the transformation of contradictions into each other".

Stalin says:

"Internal contradictions are inherent in all things and phenomena of nature, for they all have their negative and positive sides, a past and a future, something dying away and something developing; and the struggle between these opposites; the struggle between the old and the new, between that which is dying away and that which is being born, between that which is disappearing and that which is developing, constitutes the internal content of the process of development, the internal content of the transformation of quantitative changes into qualitative changes." (J.V. Stalin: "Dialectical and Historical Materialism"; "Problems of Leninism", FLPH Moscow 1953; p.717).

It should be noted here that Stalin has not referred to "the transformation of opposites into each other". But, for Professor Thompson, this is Stalin's sin. He then proceeds to demonstrate how Mao is "more subtle and more profound":

"Contradiction is present in all processes of objectively existing things and of subjective thought and permeates all these processes from beginning to end; this is the universality and absoluteness of contradiction. Each contradiction and each of its aspects have their respective characteristics; this is the particularity and relativity of contradiction. In given conditions, opposites possess identity, and consequently can co-exist in a single entity and can transform themselves into each other; this again is the particularity and relativity of contradiction. But the struggle of opposites is ceaseless; it goes on both when the opposites are co-existing and when they are transforming themselves into each other; this again is the universality and absoluteness of contradiction." (Mao Tse-tung: cited in George Thompson: "Marxism in China Today"; *ibid.*) (Our emphases - Ed.).

Despite Professor Thompson, however, there are in fact no conditions in which opposites can possess identity - nor can the statement that they do hold even a semantic validity, since, if two opposites are identical, they cannot be opposites; and, conversely, if they are opposites they cannot be identical. The principle of scientific materialist dialectics which Mao is attempting to distort here - whether spontaneously or with conscious intent is, for purposes of theoretical analysis, immaterial - is that which states that opposites comprise a unity as

well as having contradictoriness, being in conflict with one another. Dialectical materialist philosophy states that everything in the material universe, every entity or complex organism, is made up of a structure of spheres of contradiction each one of which comprises two opposite and contradictory poles of force which, in spite of the conflict which exists between them, are held together for a time in a unity of opposites. Only when the intensity of contradiction between the two opposite poles of force mounts to a point at which it becomes irreconcilable is that temporary unity broken, so that a new quality can emerge and a new unity of opposites at a higher level be established. It is this unity of opposites, the opposite characteristic which itself exists and moves in unity with that of the contradictoriness of opposites and the conflict between them, together with the materially based, historically staged process of change of which it forms a part, which Lenin was concerned to characterise when he defined the relationship of contradictoriness and conflict of opposites to their temporary unity as follows:

"The unity of opposites is conditional, temporary, transitory, relative. The struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute, just as development and motion are absolute." (V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works", Vol. 38; FLPH Moscow; p.360).

It is, however, precisely the materially based process of dialectical change which "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" is concerned to deny and to replace by a mechanical, stageless and therefore timeless, undevelopmental and immaterial view of the interrelation and movement of entities and organisms. This is, indeed, of crucial tactical importance to the aim, central to "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", of falsifying dialectical materialism so as to make it serve the interests of the national capitalist class. For the emptying out of materialist dialectics of its materially-based developmental content, its epistemology, effectively prepares the ground for the interpretation of change as a mere reversal of opposites relative to one another without this being the qualitative outcome of a total, law-governed dialectical process of change which passes through defined developmental stages. This, in its turn, enables "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" to project a form of transition from capitalism to socialism in which that transition can be effected peacefully and gradually through the "remoulding of the national capitalist class" on the basis of its "willingness to support the Constitution and work for socialism" - the central, strategic aim behind all the "theoretical" bluff and double-talk.

Thus it emerges that the crucial "theoretical" nub of this aim is the presentation of dialectical change and development in such a way as to suggest that the opposite poles comprising a contradiction can simply be "reversed", can change their positions relative to one another, without otherwise unduly disturbing the unity in which those opposite poles are temporarily contained, and hence without qualitatively overcoming the old total quality or organism at the heart of which they lie. Since the old total quality or organism concerned here is nothing less than Chinese "new democratic" society, we see that a "dialectical" respectability is given, through this falsified presentation of the laws of dialectical change and development and of the entire process through which those laws manifest themselves, to the gradual, peaceful, "non-antagonistic" transition from state capitalism (i.e., "new democratic" bureaucratic state capitalism based on the joint state-private boards) to "socialism" a transition which is effected, not through a socialist revolution, the moment of dialectical leap into a new quality, socialist society, in the real world of classes, class struggle and social change through revolution - but through "socialist construction", central to which is "the peaceful, non-antagonistic remoulding of the national capitalist class" on the basis of its "willingness to accept and work for socialism".

The moment of "theoretical" inception of this falsified dialectics is the concept of the direct reversal of poles of contradiction relative to one another, a concept which enables the position of the national capitalist class relative to that of the working class to be reversed without the intervention of a moment of qualitative leap - i.e., without a socialist revolution led by the working class, working people and poor peasantry having taken place - and without this having formed a stage in an entire, complex process of dialectical change in society - i.e., without the entire and total process of revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism having matured through all its stages: the stage of quantitative accretion of social and class contradiction and struggle; the stage of the transformation of quantitative

class struggle into qualitative revolutionary struggle; the stage of the qualitative negation of the old society and its class dictatorship through the revolutionary birth of the new society, socialism, and its new class dictatorship, the dictatorship of the proletariat; and, finally, the stage of the negation of socialism's earlier negation of capitalist society through the commencement of the stage of transition from socialism to full communist society. This entire, infinitely rich, complex yet law-governed process is replaced in the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung" by a mere mechanical "reversal of poles" designed to lend credibility to the concept of the reversal of the role fulfilled by the national capitalist class from a reactionary to a progressive one within the context of the transition from capitalism to socialism, whereas in fact the development of the socio-political role fulfilled by the national capitalist class in the revolutionary process in a colonial-type country is the exact opposite of this, i.e., from an - however limited - progressive role in the national-democratic revolution to a reactionary one in the socialist revolution.

Thus the final aim behind all this false dialectics and real mechanical determinism emerges as being the provision of a "theoretically principled" justification for the inclusion of the national capitalist class in the bloc of "revolutionary" classes ostensibly engaged in the "construction of socialism" - i.e., in building a bureaucratic state-capitalist China.

In contradistinction to the bogus "dialectics" which constitute the "theoretical" foundation of "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung", the definitive statement by J.V. Stalin of the dialectical process of change is as follows:

"The dialectical method therefore holds that the process of development from the lower to the higher takes place not as a harmonious unfolding of phenomena, but as a disclosure of the contradictions inherent in things and phenomena, as a 'struggle' of opposite tendencies which operate on the basis of these contradictions." (J.V. Stalin: *ibid.*; p.718).

Further, and more specifically in refutation of the concept of "the harmonious unfolding and resolution of contradictions" :

"Further, if development proceeds by way of the disclosure of internal contradictions, by way of collisions between opposite forces on the basis of these contradictions and so as to overcome these contradictions, then it is clear that the class struggle of the proletariat is a quite natural and inevitable phenomenon.

Hence we must not cover up the contradictions of the capitalist system, but disclose and unravel them, we must not try to check the class struggle but carry it to its conclusion.

Hence, in order not to err in policy, one must pursue an uncompromising proletarian class policy, not a reformist policy of the harmony of the interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, not a compromiser's policy of the 'growing of capitalism into socialism'". (J.V. Stalin: *ibid.*; p. 720).

It can, indeed, be readily understood why the eulogisers of and apologists for the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung" are so concerned to deprecate and discredit J.V. Stalin's "Dialectical and Historical Materialism". For Stalin explicitly condemns in that work the idealist categories of thought, the mechanical-determinist perspectives of development, the gradualist illusions and reformist panaceas which form so prominent a part of the system of bogus dialectics projected by Mao Tse-tung, as represented by such concepts as "the correct handling of contradictions", the "transformation of antagonistic contradictions into non-antagonistic ones", the "harmonious resolution of contradictions", and so on. The clear scientific truths concerning the laws of development and change propounded by Stalin - truths which also assist the proletariat in its revolutionary cause, class truths based on the proletariat and its struggle for hegemony - stand as irreconcilably opposed to "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" as capital and labour themselves stand in irreconcilable contradiction to each other.

A CYNICAL CAPITALIST IN CHINA

Edgar Faure was a French statesman who, during his various visits to China in the 1950s, held many conversations with leading members of the "new democratic" government, and especially with Chinese businessmen, on the nature of the economic system in "New China". In his book, "The Serpent and the Tortoise", published in 1958, he describes the system of "mixed enterprises", i.e., the joint state-private boards, in which at that time an estimated 700,000 capitalists were involved. As was quoted in the "Report of the Central Committee of the MLOB on the Situation in the People's Republic of China", the system received the wholehearted support of China's capitalists, since, apart from guaranteeing them a gilt-edged 5 per cent profit, it ensured better conditions in respect both of capital accumulation and conditions for intensifying the exploitation of labour-power (increase of relative surplus value) than had been the case under the old system dominated by bureaucrat-comprador capital.

Considered from the fundamental viewpoint of the historical development of the capitalist mode of production as a whole, the state-capitalist system of joint state-private boards, based on a 50 per cent (in some cases a 35 per cent - 65 per cent) sharing of capital ownership between private capital and the state, rests upon two important needs of a developing capitalist system in a country only recently emerged from colonial enslavement into national independence and requiring to carry through capital accumulation in the conditions of intense restriction of market and investment arenas exercised by the powerful developed imperialist groups. These two basic needs are:

- 1) the need to create a common or co-operative pool of investment capital as a lever compelling the capitalist class as a unified whole to "exercise thrift" and to plough back the bulk of profits realised in any one investment cycle into further investment - i.e., to carry through primitive accumulation. The risks and perils associated with the emergence as an independent capitalist-type nation of a large colonial-type country such as China in the epoch of advanced imperialism are too great and hazardous to permit the question of re-investment and accumulation to be left to the individual "thriftiness" and "conscience" of each individual industrial capitalist, as was the case during the period of "laissez faire" capitalism in Europe in the 19th century. Under "new democracy", wastrels, profligates or even the odd unfortunate capitalist "with no head for business" are not simply frowned upon; the very social and economic conditions for their existence are taken away, and all without exception must participate in that highest of all moral duties in the service of capital: the duty to accumulate;
- 2) the need to dispose of a disciplinary force over labour which is intrinsically more compelling and persuasive than the mere threat of victimisation and unemployment - measures which, apart from being economically wasteful are not, in the era of the October Revolution and the (then valid) construction of socialism in the USSR, acceptable to the working class and working people themselves.

As regards the first of these two needs, the system of 50 per cent capital sharing between the state and private interests, as anchored organisationally in the joint state-private boards, takes the burdensome responsibility for planning future investment and reinvestment policy - i.e., measures to ensure that the reproduction of capital on an extended scale can continue - out of the hands of the individual capitalist and vests it in the state. That is to say, it establishes a joint investment fund.

As regards the question of "labour discipline" and the overall conditions under which exploitation and the production of surplus-value are to take place, the need of the Chinese national capitalist class was for a total system of ideological and political manipulation and control under which the worker can be conditioned into believing that the system of joint state-private boards is socialism based on common ownership by the whole working people of the means of production, distribution and exchange. This bears a certain kinship with the traditional methods of reformist deception in developed capitalist countries such as Britain, where working people

are misled by Labour and Tory parties alike into believing that socialism is commensurate with capitalist nationalisation. In this way, a euphoric smokescreen of "labour enthusiasm" is whipped up, behind which the national capitalist - that mysterious figure who, like those of his class the world over, is so skilled in adopting the most disarming and engaging of disguises: the benign reformer, the "progressive" innovator of "advanced techniques", and so on - anything, in fact, but an exploiter of human brain and tissue - is drowned out and loses his class identity behind the paeans of praise to the glory of "new democratic" China and its Great Architect, Chairman Mao:

"Great is the national bourgeoisie! It has accepted the peaceful reforms offered by the Communist Party and Chairman Mao. Great are the achievements of its reformation! ... To reform industry and commerce peacefully is the creative development of Marxism-Leninism in China." (Kwang Ming Daily, May 9th, 1954).

We see, then, that as far as its place in the overall development of the capitalist system on a world scale at the present historical juncture is concerned, the growth of bureaucratic state-capitalism in China is fully in line with similar developments in the camp of Soviet neo-imperialism and, indeed, with measures taken over recent years in the long-established countries of state monopoly-capitalism towards the development of corporate forms of state control of the economy.

To return, however, to our visiting representative in China of the developed monopoly-capitalist countries, it was in respect of the latter of the two aspects of the Chinese state-capitalist system, that of labour discipline, that Edgar Faure had the most revealing information to impart. He reported on the system of dual directorships, in which an enterprise would be effectively managed by two directors, one a representative of the private capitalist interest, who in practice holds what amounts to a sinecure; the other a nominee of the "new democratic" state. Of these two, it was the latter who was the senior director in the management of the enterprise, and it was under his purview that the all-important sphere of labour relations was planned and controlled.

In short, the state assumes responsibility for labour relations and labour discipline - a task it is better qualified to fulfil since it is allegedly a socialist state in which the workers and poor peasants allegedly hold power.

Miners in Britain will recall the attempt to adopt a similar tactic towards themselves when the mines were nationalised by the first post-war Labour Government in 1947. On that occasion, they were told that there would be no room for industrial disputes in the new "socialist" mining industry which had been set up with a single stroke of the parliamentary pen, since the miners themselves now had a share in the control of that industry through nationalisation. The sound class sense of the miners enabled them to laugh this flight of capitalist fancy out of court. In the social and class conditions of "new democratic" China, however, a younger and less experienced proletariat was, for a time, unable to distinguish between state capitalism and socialism - largely because of its boundless yet immature enthusiasm for the latter. Here is how Edgar Faure describes the way in which the state-capitalist system in "new democratic" China operates as far as that vexed question of "labour relations" is concerned:

"The 'public' director ... can control the owner, but he also controls the work of the workers. He maintains the discipline which, in the previous period, was usually slack. ... He is there to make the workers understand that the enterprise belongs to the state and that they must refrain from sabotage or fancies, which the feeling of working in an insufficiently socialist manner might earlier have excused."

"All the capitalists whom I asked declared themselves satisfied and put such hyperbole into their professions of faith that most people would have seen in them either the effects of constraint or of remarkable irony. ...

It may doubtless seem astonishing that the grace of Marxist ideology has simultaneously descended upon all the dispossessed financial elite.

With the dulled understanding of a bourgeois idealist, I have always hitherto rejected this explanation.

".. the question is no longer: why is the capitalist satisfied? but, why shouldn't the capitalist be relatively satisfied? ...

"The capitalist industrialist or merchant is therefore relatively at an advantage with his 35 per cent, which he is free to deal with as he wishes ...

This same capitalist has, on the other hand, often bitter memories of the pre-communist period, which was accompanied by inflations and difficulties of every kind

Finally, he has already passed through the experience of two successive stages, that of limitation and that of transformation and, in the majority of cases, the more socialist stage has proved the more favourable to him". (Edgar Faure: "The Serpent and the Tortoise"; Macmillan, 1958; pp. 172-174).

He goes on to quote from private capitalist directors themselves:

"Since socialisation, the workers work with enthusiasm In the period before socialisation the workers had become insupportable."

"Since socialism we have had a planned economy. Production is improving". (Ibid.; p. 175).

He concludes:

"We experience a certain surprise in visiting the school for capitalists and noting that, after some months, all the pupils without exception are convinced of the excellence of the regime." (Ibid.; p. 175).

The inescapable conclusion to which we are driven, willy-nilly, by the above observations and reports, is that, in so describing the system of joint ownership between private capital and the state, together with its concomitant, the system of dual directorships, Edgar Faure was right in his cynical suspicion that the system he was observing and describing with such acute perspicacity was not socialism, but a form of capitalism. As we have seen, it is a form imposed by the complex and compelling necessities dictated by the objective conditions attending the construction of a capitalist system in a large, economically underdeveloped country, the growth of which into a viable, organic capitalist whole was, until comparatively recent times, restricted and held back by colonial suppression and super-exploitation. As for the class which exercises real authority and power in "new democratic" China, it - or at least the more independent and spirited of its representatives - have on occasion felt sufficiently emboldened by the liberal freedoms accorded them by "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" as to express their real views on such questions as political economy and the relevance of "Marxism-Leninism" - i.e., "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" - to "the concrete conditions prevailing in China":

"The Communist Party has treated the national bourgeoisie according to the theories of Marxism-Leninism (would that it had! - Ed.). It should be noted that most of the works of Marxist-Leninist theory were written a long time ago. In many cases, application of these theories in China is quite inappropriate."

"For instance, it has been asserted in political economy classes that when an independent worker turns into an exploiter, he will quickly spend all his original capital and depend on the labour of others for his income. This theory does not apply to the Chinese national bourgeoisie. We are diligent workers who spend less than we earn ..." (New China News Agency, June 16th, 1958).

Apart from the obvious nonsense contained in this passage, the first thing to engage the attention of the reader is, not merely the boundless contempt shown for the working class as the producers of all social wealth - this, after all, is a typical characteristic of the class the world over, and should occasion no surprise - but the utter disdain which is so clearly and frankly expressed for "Marxism-Leninism" - which, "in the concrete conditions of China", means the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung". This gives the lie in the most effective and telling way possible to any attempt to ascribe to the working class the "leading role" in the "bloc of revolutionary classes" allegedly exercising "joint dictatorship" within the system of "people's democratic dictatorship". After all, it is not difficult to imagine what the outcome would have been had the boot been on the other foot - i.e., the fate that would have befallen any representative of the advanced strata of the industrial proletariat of China had he dared - except perhaps during the brief period in which the leadership and control of the CPC was in the hands of the developing Marxist-Leninist leadership headed by Liu Shao-chi and

Peng Chen - to have expressed in published form his real class views concerning the entire revisionist ideology of "new democracy" and its perspective of the Chinese national capitalist class growing peacefully, willingly and non-antagonistically into socialism ! Unlike the case quoted above of the published point of view of a representative of his class enemy, the national capitalist class, the full power of the "new democratic" state would, in that eventuality, have been used to prevent those views from ever seeing the light of day in their printed and published form!

For is not the example we have given - an admittedly fictitious one - in fact exactly analogous, even though on a vastly greater scale, with the steps taken after April 1965 by the Liu Shao-chi - Peng Chen leadership, representing China's revolutionary proletariat, to expel the representatives of the national capitalist class from the "new democratic" state and so to carry through at long last the socialist revolution which the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung" had for so long prevented? And, conversely, were not the counter-revolutionary measures adopted by the Mao faction from May 1966 onwards exactly analogous, though again on a far greater scale, with the fate that would have befallen our imaginary representative of the revolutionary proletariat of China had he dared to strike out against the dictatorship of the national capitalist class at the time when that dictatorship was disguised behind the ideological smokescreen of "people's democratic dictatorship" and its theoretical justification, "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung"? As we have seen, those counter-revolutionary measures were concerned precisely with destroying the limited freedoms and socio-political controls available to the working class, working people and poor peasantry under "new democracy", and with vastly extending and deepening those available to the national capitalist class. This is the history of revolution and counter-revolution in China which confirms as correct the initial hazy suspicions of our cynical capitalist in China.

IN PREPARATION :

FROM "ANTI-REVISIONISM"
TO REVOLUTIONARY ROMANTICISM

A Marxist-Leninist analysis of the Editorial "The Theory and Practice of Revolution" published by "Zeri i Popullit", organ of the Central Committee of the Albanian Party of Labour, on July 7th, 1977.

- * The objective roots of modern revisionism
- * Revisionism and Dogmatism - the metaphysical Siamese Twins underlying the falsification of Marxism-Leninism to make it serve the interests of world capitalism
- * Subjective idealism and mechanical materialism as the philosophical progenitors of revisionism and dogmatism
- * Was Leninism the "last word" in scientific socialism?
- * Dialectical materialism as the theoretical guide to the scientific cognition of the laws of motion of the capitalist system in the contemporary era.