

ONLY HE IS A MARXIST who extends the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is the touchstone on which the real understanding and recognition of Marxism is to be tested.
V.I.Lenin

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For open Leninist discussion of imperialism's fascist slump crisis and drive to war, the significance of the Soviet historical achievement, the world proletarian dictatorship future, and the bankruptcy of Third Internationalism

Five polemics concerning the Indian Workers Association (IWA) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M), originally published in the weekly paper of the International Leninist Workers Party* between 1991 and 1993 [*Now EPSR]

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Polemic 1, from Bulletin 599, 29th May 1991.

Fight for revolutionary theory holds key to developments in India.

The humiliating farce of trying to patch together a tottering family dynasty in order to preserve the traditional influence of bourgeois 'democracy' over the most populous capitalist state on earth is another sure sign of the inevitability of communist revolution there before long.

Sonia Gandhi may well possess all kinds of interesting talents but Congress Party leadership is ultimately doomed to total political disaster whoever takes over.

The 'unity' and 'independence' flag-waving which, after the national-liberation struggle, has just kept India afloat in the postwar inflationary world-imperialist boom, - is on its last legs alongside that boom.

Moscow revisionism may have opened the floodgates to Western anti-socialist propaganda wider than ever before with the opportunist Gorbachev's insane defeatist wish to liquidate everything that the Soviet Union has ever stood for in the anti-fascist and anti-imperialist struggle in order to strain for his delusion of 'economic paradise' via Western financial imperialism's investment/exploitation of the Soviet market.

But the Third World has already suffered tragically enough from such 'integration into the world economy'; and the poverty, famines, lopsided development, and

the sense of injustice burn more fiercely now than at the height of the movement for colonial freedom.

It is precisely socialism, and the expropriation of the domineering Western investments, which is now more insistently on the Third World agenda than ever before.

The extreme philosophical disorientation of Soviet petty-bourgeois anti-communists may well crave to be ordered around by the pompous half-wits who dominate British and American monopoly capitalism and its major political parties, for example, (the likes of Thatcher, Bush, Reagan, Quayle, Major, Kinnock, Hattersley, Trump, Bond, Murdoch, Maxwell, etc.)

But the more advanced political movements of the Third World just cannot wait to get rid of such domination and exploitation, -

as is obvious from present and recent revolutionary liberation struggles fighting to the death for years to achieve the real independence of publicly-owned planned socialist economies, - such as the El Salvador FMLN, the Sandinistas, the Cuban revolution, the New Peoples Army in the Philippines, SWAPO in Namibia, the ANC, ZANU in Zimbabwe, the Afghan revolution, the whole of Indo-China, the revolution in Guatemala, the civil war in Sri Lanka, the armed struggle in Chile, the Polisario independence movement in Western Sahara, the MPLA in Angola, FRELIMO in Mozambique, the revolutions against feudalism in Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, etc, all leading towards the termination of pro-Western stooges and their neo-colonial economies. The entire Middle East is in an almost permanent state of



Beirut barracks of occupying US forces reduced to rubble in 1983



Armed demonstrators in Gaza responding to the destruction of Palestinian homes by the Zionist occupying forces

war because of these same burning anti-imperialist ambitions among the masses.

The CIA-organised and Saudi-financed dismemberment of the Ethiopian revolution notwithstanding, it is the imperialist system which is in crisis. Imperialist stooge influences dominated Ethiopia before the 1974 revolution and their overthrow was irresistible, despite all the CIAs efforts. Somalia, Sudan, etc, were similarly dominated by imperialist-stooge interests, but the regimes there have likewise proved unstable. Now US domination is going to have another try at stabilising pro-Western rule in Ethiopia. It will be another disaster.

And the costs of these calamitous US-imperialist world-rule policies are mo-

unting inexorably, - helping to bankrupt the American domestic and foreign-exchange budgets. But capitalist exploitation alone can remain the driving force of imperialist intervention; and neo-colonialism has already abundantly proved incapable of concealing the humiliating reality of this Western monopoly-bourgeois domination.

Serious anti-ruling-class sentiment is growing everywhere, completely at variance with the illusions of popular television and advertising propaganda implying that the whole world is heading towards a contented classless enjoyment of arrogant opulence and upper-class twittedness without a hint of envy or rancour. The Haile Selasse, Anwar Sadat, and Rajiv Gandhi dynasties

of this world know different, and it was a close call for the Jaber-Sabah and Saud gangsters in Kuwait and the Arabian peninsula recently.

The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, like that of his mother before him, indicates that anarchical paralysis and balkanising nationalist civil war are likely to develop before revolutionary war; but the process is a relentless one of growing disillusionment with the insulting endless posturing by bourgeois 'democracy'.

Rajiv Gandhi's last election campaign has been all stress on 'stability', 'continuity', 'patriotism', etc, and with far less detail on what course next for India. The desperate wish by Congress leaders for his widow Sonia to carry on the symbolism of the Nehru family (which has led India for 40 of its 44 years of independence) even though only known so far for being an Italian-born housewife, - shows the manic determination to keep stressing this bland abstract nonsense at the expense of any policy, - this time adding in the 'sympathy' vote.

These are signs of a very sick political system. The possibility that BJP hindu fundamentalism threatens to become the main 'opposition' or even to win the coming election is a further indication of how unstable the Indian capitalist state has become.

Religious hysteria of every kind is real enough in the continuing neo-colonial backwardness of Indian capitalist society, & does not equate to revolutionary spontaneity, - and would leave some difficult problems for a communist government to deal with in India. But simultaneously there have continued, little commented on, some amazingly abiding depths and strengths of widespread militant Communist Party support in India, as in West Bengal and Kerala for example.

And while this is not the same thing as widespread backing for communist revolution in practice, this is a problem first and foremost, of course, of uncertain leadership, (and only secondarily a question of all-powerful Western bourgeois propaganda making such a 'triumph' of its international anti-communist

proletarian Indian masses 'would now never follow a Bolshevik lead', and that it would be the 'death' of any party trying to give such a lead, etc.)

The reality is that the leading 'socialist' influences such as the CPIM (Communist Party of India (Marxist)), very powerfully organised among the proletariat of Calcutta and West Bengal, for example, - (potential huge leadership strengths in India for the entire proletariat), - are still struggling unconvincingly to 'explain' the historical problems the international communist movement has run into.

It is impossible to know what a revolutionary struggle for socialism would achieve in India until all this old complacent revisionist confusion is cleared out of the way.

As the CPIM itself declared in the course of one of its latest attempts to analyse the international balance of class forces and the way forward for India:

"While the objective factors for the intensification of class struggle existed, the subjective factor, - i.e. the degree of organisation and socialist class consciousness of the working class on a world scale, - was lagging.

"It must be clearly noted that without the subjective factor, -(the Party of the working class, guided by revolutionary ideology of Marxism-Leninism, with live contact with the aspirations of the people, organising and leading their struggles, and raising the collective consciousness of the people), - no revolutionary advance is possible."

The essence of Marxist-Leninist revolutionary ideology is to give a correct lead to the masses on interpreting world developments, - thus establishing the scientific necessity of communist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This pamphlet on why East Europe's workers states collapsed ("On certain political-ideological issues related to developments in some socialist countries") is still so marked with unexamined old Third International revisionist complacencies and only half-corrected mistakes, that revolutionary inspiration by the CPIM is unlikely immediately. It leaves the door open, however, for

new Leninist leadership to burst upon the scene.

The tragedy is that some of the CPIMs propaganda against Gorbachevism is excellent, including touching upon the heart of the whole historic problem of bureaucratic revisionism, which is the defeatist retreat from Lenin's world revolutionary perspectives.

But this analysis wrongly describes the retreat from proletarian internationalism as a subsidiary effect of anti-Marxist theoretical confusion in Moscow on broader philosophical questions. The historical reality was that this steady deterioration in CPSU understanding, which has now become a complete liquidationist anti-communist collapse under Gorbachev, - arose as a rationalising, justifying cover-up for longstanding Soviet class-collaborationist defeatism about the prospects and necessary co-

urse for completing the world revolution, - wretched failings which go all the way back to the Stalin leadership for their beginnings.

Because the CPIM has skeletons in its own cupboards over the terrible mistakes committed during the period of the Third International's history, their analysis of Gorbachev's liquidationism now still holds back from getting to the historical root of things; and there was also a tell-tale significant delay of several years' hesitancy before this partial blitz of Gorbachevism was delivered, - reminiscent of the bad old days when the entire Third International treated all Moscow pronouncements as gospel until finally forced, or told, to admit their incorrectness.

But the perceptive bits of the anti-Gorbachevism critique are encouraging (traces of pacifist illusion aside):

UNIVERSAL HUMAN VALUES AND CLASS VALUES

One of the important components of the "New Thinking" is the assertion in Soviet writings of the "priority of universal human values over class values" Universal human values are supposed to have precedence over class interests due to the threat of nuclear war, the consequent annihilation of the human race and the ecological disaster which would destroy the entire planet.

Due importance has to be accorded to finding common ground to avert the threat of nuclear war, for elimination of nuclear weapons and to preserve ecology. There are increasing possibilities to jointly act, in the interests of humanity, on these vital matters. But it will be wrong to deduce from this common universal human values attributable to imperialism. The Marxist world view holds that the class struggle to eliminate exploitation of man by man and for the abolition of classes in society is an inseparable and integral part of the realisation of universal human values. It sees both human values and proletarian class interests as an integral whole. Therefore, it is misleading and incorrect to counterpose universal human values to class values. Only by abolishing classes in society can the fulfilment of human values on a universal scale be ensured. By elevating universal human values over class values on the basis of a so-called law of an "integral world", the role of class struggle, the class-based view of human society — historical materialism, is being given the go-by. This leads to spreading illusions about the nature of present day imperialism and the world capitalist system.

One of the key quotations used to substantiate New Thinking and the priority of universal human values over class interests is cited from Lenin. He is quoted to state: "From the standpoint of the basic ideas of Marxism, the interests of social development are higher than the interests of the proletariat". This sentence taken out of context is from Lenin's Draft Programme written in 1889.

Lenin's article must be seen in the historical background it was written in and the full quotation must be studied. Lenin wrote this article while in exile about the draft programme of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party and what it should contain. The article deals with the specific situation in Russia

which must be addressed to by the programme of the Party. The full extract reads as follows:

"It is especially necessary to recognise the struggle for political liberties against the autocracy as the first political task of the working class party; this task should in our opinion be explained by an exposition of the class nature of the present day Russian autocracy and the need to overthrow it, not only in the interests of the working class, but also in the interests of social development, as a whole. Such a description is essential in regard to both theory and practice, in theory because from the standpoint of the basic ideas of Marxism, the interests of social development are higher than the interests of the proletariat — the interests of the working class movement as a whole are higher than the interests of a separate section of the workers or of separate phases of the movement; and in practice, this elucidation is essential because of the need to characterize the focal point to which the whole variety of Social Democratic activity — propaganda, agitation, and organisation — must be directed, and round which it must be concentrated."

From this extract, the point Lenin is driving at becomes clear. In the struggle to overthrow the Tsarist autocracy, the entire social forces oppressed by this system have to be mobilised. At this stage of Russia's revolutionary movement, the struggle to overthrow autocracy is to be identified with the interests of the entire Russian society necessary for its future social development. The interests of the Russian proletariat in this task is subsumed by the overall interests of Russian social development. The working class as the advanced class in Russian society should take the lead in championing the demand for the overthrow of autocracy and wresting political liberty — a goal in the interests of the "social development" of Russia. The interests of the working class as the vanguard in enabling social advance and emancipation embodies the true relationship between general human values and class interests. Abstracted from this context, the sentence quoted to substantiate the concept of universal human values having priority over class values applied to today's world leads to undermining the role of class struggle in the social transformation of society.

The Draft Platform states: "While adhering to the positions of the working class and the working people, we abandon the simplified class approach which opposed national and universal human values." It is on the plea of abandoning a simplistic approach that the class approach is sought to be abandoned.

This is an outlook which undermines the proletarian internationalistic viewpoint and leads to expressing no concern for the worldwide struggle of the working class. Soviet writings are virtually silent on the vital battles for democracy, social emancipation and against imperialism and neo-colonialism going on in different parts of the world. As Lenin had repeatedly stated, proletarian internationalism means extending solidarity with the working class of all countries, the people fighting for national liberation and struggles against imperialism. This internationalist task gets sidelined by an erroneous outlook which counterposes universal human values and class values.

DEIDEOLOGISATION : NEGATES ANTI-IMPERIALISM

Further in Soviet writings, there is constant talk of "deideologisation of state to state relations". Improving state to state relations between countries with different social systems to meet the vital tasks commonly facing all humanity such as the nuclear war danger is one thing. This is in the perspective based on Lenin's concept of peaceful co-existence. But to speak of deideologising relations between states is to disarm the socialist state and the international working class movement of its ideological basis which guides the very principle of state to state relations. It means negating the anti-imperialist standpoint.

The Draft Platform does not recognise the existence of world 3

imperialism and its menace today. The foreign policy section talks of the efforts to "build a safe and civilised world order" and advocates the "principle of balanced interests" with the imperialist countries. It talks of settlement of regional conflicts, states defending their independence from outside interference, and demilitarisation, and halting the profound disparities developing in different parts of the world, all without a reference to the existence of imperialism and its machinations.

CLASS CHARACTER OF THE STATE UNDER SOCIALISM

The dictatorship of the proletariat in the period of transition from socialism to communism, as Lenin pointed out, can "yield great abundance and variety of political forms". The forms of proletarian statehood will vary and pass through various phases from defending and consolidating the socialist revolution to the complicated process of building socialism. It is essential to remember that the State under socialism whatever its form has as its essence proletarian class character. In the name of correcting the distortions of the past, the class character of the state is being abandoned. Giving up the class nature of the State means giving up the revolution itself. The Draft Platform declares: "The rule-of-law State of the whole people has no room for dictatorship by any class and even less so for the power of a management bureaucracy". It is misleadingly portrayed as if the dictatorship of the proletariat under socialism represents dictatorship of the working class over the other sections of the people. Whereas the proletarian state power is meant to represent the overwhelming majority of the people against the class enemies both internal and external. In the Critique of the Gotha Programme, Marx had said that the State in the entire period from socialism to communism can only be the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin, further elaborating this said that the dictatorship of the proletariat embodies the leading role of the proletariat in building socialism, so long as there are sections among people with different levels of consciousness born out of socialist property.

The leading role of the Party cannot be negated in this process. A multi-party system in this context cannot be unrelated to the role of different classes in the process of revolution. Historically in certain countries, the Party of the working class emerged as the vanguard of the revolution. While other classes and the parties connected with them betrayed the revolution, the Communist Party led the revolution to success. The leading role emerged out of its vanguard role in the revolution. In some countries, certain parties which supported the revolution found a place in the new set up, as in the People's Republic of China. The concept of a 'multi-party system' which would undermine the leading role of the Party of the working class and throw up forces which challenge the basic foundations of the socialist system would be detrimental to the development of socialist democracy.

The CPIM admit that they supported Gorbachevism until the 1989/90 platform for the 28th CPSU Congress which "makes a departure in relation to certain fundamental Marxist-Leninist propositions. The impact of perestroika and the CPSU's new thinking in international relations is not limited to the Soviet Union, therefore (!) it is necessary to opine on them. The correction of distortions in the building of socialism are essential for the steady advance of socialism on the world scale. Here a balanc-

ed approach is required to the historical experience of building socialism and ensuring the continuity of the revolutionary process. But now (!) in the name of correcting past distortions, a departure is sought to be made from the basic ideology of Marxism-Leninism.

"The goal of perestroika is stated to be a 'humane and democratic' socialism. This is posed as a qualitatively new concept of socialism which renounces the achievements of the socialist past...", etc, etc, (added emphases).

These words adopted for publication by the CPIM central committee only at the end of May 1990 are too little, too late, and lack urgency as well as still missing the main point (which is Gorbachev's screaming flight from any further thought of international class struggle, covering this up with endless extensions of the idiot revisionist notion that world wars need never occur again and can be 'outlawed' by 'peaceful coexistence' agreements.)

What's worse, the CPIM in effect try to deny the origins of Gorbachevism in Stalinist revisionism, and also undermine the impact of their own earliest anti-Kruschev criticisms (which led to the 1964 CPIM split from the CPI) by their remarks, quoted at length above, which still talk of imperialist nuclear war danger being overcome, not by socialist revolution (the only possibility), but by revisionism's longstanding lunatic misapplication of Lenin's (mere temporary diplomatic) tactic of 'peaceful coexistence'.

The CPIM's correct analysis of Krushchev's "distortion of the Leninist concept of peaceful coexistence" should

expose not just the terrible diversion of the communist movement towards a non-existent 'peaceful road to socialism' and away from revolutionary class war, but also the equally disastrous diversion into permanent 'peaceful coexistence' illusions for the whole world and away from the revolutionary anti-imperialist struggle which is the only way in reality to end imperialist warmongering.

The only answer to the BJP's open advocacy of nuclear weapons for India is to stress not the daft neo-colonial humiliation of the 'non-proliferation treaty' (which leaves Western monopoly imperialism contentedly dominating the world still), nor the even more dangerously disarming nonsense about the pacifist-idealist 'peaceful coexistence' struggle being the answer to imperialist warmongering, - - - but to stress that the world cannot even begin to become a remotely safe place, free from devastating war, until the international monopoly-imperialist bourgeoisie has been completely overthrown everywhere. That means world communism in other words.

Correctly, the CPIM declare:

The contradiction continues to intensify despite the emergence of the USA as the dominant industrial and military power after World War II. It finds expression in the economic battles between the imperialist giants, for the recarving of their respective spheres of influence. The rivalry between the USA, EEC (and within the EEC between West Germany and others) and Japan is expressing itself in constant currency and trade wars. With the forthcoming 1992 Integrated Europe these contradictions are bound to further intensify. The fact that the rates of economic growth in the 80s are less than those in the sixties and seventies in the capitalist countries will also find expression in the intensification of this contradiction.

The contradiction between the third world countries and imperialism need no longer necessarily lead to the process of direct colonisation as in the pre-war period. New neo-colonial methods of exploitation, exploitation through multi-national corporations, unfair terms of trade and brandishment continue as methods of imperialist exploitation. But in certain cases it does not hesitate to embark on naked armed intervention as in the case of Panama recently. The extent of misery in the developing countries can be understood by the fact that in the eighties (data provided by the World Bank till 1987) the average annual rate of growth for all developing countries has been minus 2.6 per cent. Compare this to the period 1965-1980 when this figure was plus 8.1 per cent. Such an intensification of contradiction is pregnant with the possibilities of fierce peoples struggles against imperialism.

The deepening crisis of the world capitalist order and the resultant cuts in the social security measures and rising unemployment creates circumstances for the intensification of the class struggle in the developed capitalist countries. The inten-

of this contradiction, however it should be blunted through the spread of reformist illusions. Capitalism has tremendous capacity to bribe sizeable sections of the working class in different developed capitalist countries. It shares a small part of its profit to keep the rule of capital thriving.

The CPI(M) Central Committee Resolution of May 1988 and the XIII Congress Political Resolution have reiterated our assessment that notwithstanding the changes in the international situation, the fundamental contradictions of our epoch continue to intensify.

But deludedly, they still weaken the impact of this understanding by introducing it in their May 1990 pamphlet with the words:

"The sheer existence and strength of socialism and the possession of nuclear weapons by different countries deter the resolution of the inter-imperialist contradiction through war." This is daft idealistic wishful thinking (and not just with the benefit of hindsight following imperialisms monstrous Gulf blitzkrieg earlier this year - See Bulletin articles on World War III from 1986 onwards (ILWP Books vol 11)).

This confusion over the extent of the damage all originating from the Stalinist Third International's longstanding retreat from Leninist world-revolutionary understanding (see ILWP Books vols 3,4,5, & 6) is further seen in the CPIM continually limiting the problems faced by the USSR and the East European workers states to one of needing to "overcome the distortions and deviations" in the building of socialism as if the paralysis of revisionist bureaucracy just grew, - or, even worse, is ascribed to "the concept of proletarian dictatorship being reduced to the dictatorship of the party, and this at times to the dictatorship of the leading coterie of the party", etc.

Only the objective scientific discipline of accepting the necessary dictates of furthering the world socialist revolution along the fully polemically debated lines of Marxist-Leninist understanding could ever keep any leadership up to the mark of "avoiding distortions in the implementation of the principle of democratic centralism within the party", - not mere self-exhortation by party leaders to keep to such principles in the abstract.

When the philistine 'cult of the individual' opportunism and arbitrary bullying were pushing through decisions without serious

polemical debate, it was being done on real issues. It is the class content of the issues involved which dictated the anti-communist anti-Leninist attitude adopted by the bureaucratic revisionist mentality, not some abstract psychological yearning in itself to be 'anti-democratic'.

Because of the revisionist retreat from revolutionary perspectives for world socialism, the problems of successfully continuing to lead and inspire the world communist movement could only become relentlessly more difficult, requiring ever greater recourse to cultism and other opportunist methods of arbitrary control.

It is doubly unfortunate to pursue this red herring (of abstract formal 'explanations' for all the 'distortions and deviations') as far as imposing a lifeless undialectical character onto an understanding so crucial to Marxist-Leninist revolutionary science as the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin said more than once that the dictatorship of the proletariat was, to all intents and purposes, the dictatorship of the party, - as it clearly had to be at decisive moments in the long and hazardous revolutionary and civil war struggles when crucial and painful decisions had to be made for the very survival of the revolution itself which might well have been rejected had the Bolshevik leadership shirked its vanguard role and tried anything so defeatist and idealist as a referendum. The dissolution of the Constituent Assembly could not provide a better example, - where nothing like a majority of the proletarians and semi-proletarians had voted for the Bolsheviks.

And far more than the Dictatorship of the Proletariat at times being reduced to just a dictatorship by a leading 'coterie' of the party, it is a matter of historical record that Le-

nin was prepared on more than one occasion to go outside the Central Committee to try to get his way - and succeeded, - thus 'reducing' the dictatorship of the proletariat to a dictatorship of one man on occasions.

How else can the dialectics of leadership be expected to work from time to time? A leader like Lenin can only operate on what he personally is scientifically convinced of, - not on the abstract nonsense of 'majority committee decisions' which are meaningless if they are not correct.

Usually, Lenin could wait to try to let further experience win a central committee majority round to his way of thinking. This would always be the sensible way of trying to keep together a developing leadership understanding.

Sometimes, however, this patience would not be possible, - as over the very timing of the armed seizure of revolutionary power in the first place, about which Lenin was prepared to quit the central committee and virtually split the party by appealing directly to sections of the mass membership where he knew he would get instant (but hardly democratic) support.

The entire conduct of the revolution and the civil war, as of the revolutionary war against German imperialism between 1941-45, - the most crucial years in the entire history of the Soviet Revolution, - could not have been managed without an automatic acceptance of the need for tightly centralised control, - of course overseen and approved of by as many committees as practicable and possible, - but essentially frequently the vital resolve or decisions of just one powerful commander or group of leaders.

The faulty understanding by the CPIM of the dictatorship of the proletariat is further evident in the false contradiction made between 'exercising proletarian dictatorship to crush counter-revolution' and a supposed "opening up of opportunities for widening democracy and individual initiative and liberties after this phase is over", etc.

This is nonsense. The class rule of the proletariat (its dictatorship) continues to strengthen, not to be 'over', as socialist society consolidates. The growing flourishing of prolet-

arian democracy (which can only be socialist, and nothing else) is only possible because the class power and philosophy (Marxism-Leninism) of the proletariat gains an ever less challengeable hold over society, - a dictatorship just like that which the bourgeoisie unerringly maintains under Western 'parliamentary democracy'.

The CPIM speaks very cautiously (and wisely) about limiting 'pluralism' to a variety of opinions about the building of socialism, and in any case never to challenge the leading role of the revolutionary party thereby.

But not cautiously enough. The CPIM again quotes Lenin:

"The socialist revolution can only be lasting when this new class learns.... from the political work of government. Only when it enlists the vast mass of working people for this work, when it elaborates forms which will enable all working people to adapt themselves easily to the work of governing the state and establishing law and order, - only on this condition is the socialist revolution bound to be lasting."

And then they comment baldly: "Necessary steps to deepen socialist democracy would open further possibilities for the citizens' exercise of democratic rights and safeguarding the right of criticism."

But Lenin is clearly talking only about greater involvement in management of the socialist state, no other. These are not 'democratic' rights so much as proletarian-dictatorship rights, to be specific, - just as 'democratic rights' under capitalism, for what they are worth, are really bourgeois-dictatorship rights.

The CPIM themselves warily add later: "Surely the leading role of the Party does not mean only ensuring freedom of expression for all, but also the intervention by the Party to defend scientific socialism and its propagation among the people," - referring to how Gorbachevism has in practice completely abandoned the ideological field to Western-inspired (and frequently Western-financed) bourgeois counter-revolutionary ideology. Some deepening of 'socialist democracy' that turned out to be! (from a 'glasnost and perestroika' gimmick which the CPIM spent

four years and more ardently supporting, it seems.)

Another small point about the last Lenin quote is that it would be fatal to misread this as meaning that only if mass involvement in running the socialist state is not expanded will socialist revolution fail. Lenin is merely saying that mass state management is one vital ingredient for success. But many things other than its absence could be responsible for making the socialist revolution fail, - a revisionist retreat from Lenin's world revolutionary perspectives for one.

On the issue which was raised in Lenin's quote, the CPIM would be better to comment that what is crucial is not any abstract 'right to criticise' but a concrete plan to make possible better discussion and criticism of how to further improve the strengthening of the socialist state and the anti-imperialist struggle, etc. It is also feeble to merely urge a ruling revolutionary party not to forget to fight for scientific socialism against all the anti-communist counter-revolutionary crap unleashed by idiotic bourgeois-idealist notions of 'freedom of expression' and 'democratic rights', etc. Why not fight to wipe out this anti-communist backwardness completely?

Equally naively and formalistically, the CPIM point out that a communist party's vanguard role is impossible when it has abandoned internal centralist discipline.

But the real problem is clearly the abandonment by a party of the correct world-revolutionary outlook.

And this is the CPIM's weakness too. They regurgitate appalling Popular Front nonsense about "social democratic forces having an important role in the struggle for world peace and the prevention of nuclear war...and a strong influence within the working class in capitalist countries. Communists therefore actively seek their cooperation and united efforts in the fight for world peace and for common issues of the working people," etc.

But it is to prevent the appalling Third International defeatist retreats into class collaborationism with social democracy (and worse) in Spain in the 1930s, in Chile in the 1970s, in West Europe after World War II, in Nicaragua and Grenada more recently, etc, etc,



Chile: parliamentary road to... army terror



'There can be no peaceful transition to socialism', the military coup in Chile in 1973 was a forceful reminder

that the fight for Leninism against revisionist liquidationism and opportunism is being waged. The CPIM agree that Gorbachevism's call to "end the historic split in the socialist movement" is a piece of treacherous class-collaborationist nonsense. But they fail miserably to explain that the entire history of Marxist-Leninist united-front struggles was so that revolutionary communism could all the more effectively expose

the counter-revolutionary essence of social-democracy to the working class and wipe out its influence over workers once and for all.

One rotten revisionist hangover from the Third International's past is a view that this kind of ILWP argumentation is 'unnecessarily combative'. But the real aggressiveness in life is in the class struggle itself, in the bitter humiliating torture and suffering and devastation which capital-

ist crisis periodically inflicts on workers, individually or en masse. In the murderous volatile society which is collapsing Indian capitalism, it would not pay the communist revolutionary movement to sit around expecting too genteel a struggle.

Every aspect of Third International revisionist hangover is a threat to the working class. Build Leninism. Spread the ILWP Bulletin. Jack Bradshaw



Why not fight to wipe out this anti-communist backwardness completely?

claims to this effect.

Despite all the admissions of past errors needing to be corrected, there is still a marked lack of revolutionary conviction about much of what the CPI (M) says about the world, plus a continuing feeling of Third Internationalism instead of Leninist inspiration.

There are still great gaps and contradictions in the explanation for what exactly went wrong under Stalinism (as well as much excellent understanding of the important anti-imperialist triumphs of the Stalin era).

For example, Khrushchev's 1960 world CP conference is derided for its empty claims that "the world socialism system is becoming the decisive factor in the development of society... Capitalism impedes more and more the use of the achievements of modern science and technology in the interests of social progress. The time is not far off when socialism's share of world production will be greater than that of capitalism.... Capitalism will be defeated in the decisive sphere of human endeavour, the sphere of material production.... Today the restoration of capitalism has been made impossible not only in the Soviet Union, but in the other socialist countries as well", etc.

Honestly and correctly, the CPI(M) adds the comments:

"Self-critically, it must be noted that the CPI(M), as a contingent of the world communist movement, was influenced by this understanding. It is therefore necessary to evaluate and re-examine the basis for such an assessment.

"In retrospect, it can be said that the general crisis of capitalism was simplistically understood. The historical inevitability of capitalism's collapse was advanced as a possibility round the corner. This was a serious error that prevented a concrete scientific study of the changes that were taking place in the capitalist countries and the manner in which it was adapting to meet the challenges arising from socialism....

"The inevitability of capitalism's collapse is not an automatic process. Capitalism has to be overthrown. An erroneous understanding only blunts the need to

strengthen the revolutionary ideological struggle of the working class and its decisive intervention under the leadership of a party wedded to Marxism-Leninism, - the subjective factor without which no revolutionary transformation is possible.

"Further, the 1957 and 1960 documents not only underestimated the potential of world capitalism to further develop productive forces but also its capacity to influence the course of economic development of the socialist countries....

"Apart from these objective conditions, the subjective nature of overestimation of the forces of socialism in the 1957 and 1960 documents must be noted....

"The CPI(M) on a number of occasions in the past, dealt with how an erroneous understanding of a change in the correlation of class forces, following the defeat of fascism, resulted in some parties changing the political-tactical line and forms of struggle.

"The advocacy of peaceful coexistence, peaceful competition, and peaceful transition by the CPSU leadership under Khrushchev threw the door open for revisionism and class collaboration of the worst kind.."

But elsewhere, the CPI(M) gives a completely opposite picture of Third International failure to develop better communist cadres, - - too little confidence in the success of socialism.

"The CPI(M) had also occasion to point out as to how peacetime successful capitalist economic growth, accompanied by stagnation in some socialist countries, succeeded in spreading right-revisionist illusions undermining the class content and revolutionary essence of Marxism. One such manifestation was Eurocommunism." And from earlier: "When the socialist system and the state consolidated, and the correlation of class forces changed in its favour, opportunities for widening democracy and new initiatives opened up. Unfortunately, incorrect assessments of the reality led to the earlier methods of running the state machinery being carried over into the subsequent period. This led not only to the failure to realise the full potential of widening and deepening socialist democracy and popular peoples participation but also to dis-

tortions such as growing bureaucratism...."

Applied to different periods of CPSU history, these conflicting analyses are not necessarily contradictory, provided the analysis is completed by getting to the deeper causes behind both these shallow extremes, - namely the theoretical retreat from Leninist world revolutionary perspectives lying at the heart of the entire record of revisionist mistakes in the USSR.

Under Stalin, the Soviet and international working class could not be trusted and inspired to create an ever-wider and richer anti-imperialist struggle because the bureaucracy was terrified of getting into international developments beyond its capacity to analyse and lead correctly, which could "destroy the revolution", etc.

Arbitrary tyranny, idealist cultism, and cheap Soviet nationalism were imposed instead.

This was the tragic legacy of disastrous mistakes and failures of Third International policy in China, Britain, Germany, Spain, etc, in the 1920s and 1930s.

Under Khrushchev, the problems of deceiving the Soviet and international working class about "leading the world socialist revolution" were got round more through empty triumphalist boasting.

But under every variety of Soviet revisionist problem and weakness, the one constant theme running through it is the retreat from serious Leninist perspectives of completing the world socialist revolution.

Sadly, the CPI(M) continues to ignore this central question of the history of revisionism, - namely the defeatist retreat by the CPSU under Stalin away from confident Marxist-Leninist management of the world socialist revolution into the class-collaborating confusion of Popular Frontism, peaceful coexistence, the peaceful road to socialism, and the like, - - all of which were well established under Stalin and which owe nothing at all to Khrushchev's leadership.

The CPI(M) ideological review ends up still offering no class-forces explanation as to why the Third International's history finally went so badly wrong.

The reason looks suspiciously like a continuing revisionist class weakness

Polemic 2, from Bulletin 631, 14th January 1992.

Only the firmest belief in proletarian dictatorship will halt the world rule by imperialist crisis.

An important struggle inside the Communist Party of India (Marxist) to cure its revisionist hangover from the days of Stalinist delusions in the Third International, has revealed more confusion about proletarian dictatorship and world perspectives.

Still the Indian comrades insist on tracing the blame to Khrushchev for the ultimate Soviet liquidation instead of to Stalin's own class-collaborationist mistakes.

And still the CPI(M) cannot overcome its own defeatist confusion over questions of proletarian dictatorship.

The result is that the very many courageous and correct revolutionary anti-imperialist positions adopted for the party's 14th congress are blunted in their impact by a nagging sense that past mistakes have not really been faced up to, despite all the bold

the CPI(M)'s own analysis of the world.

For example, mention is made, albeit slightly, to "the arms cut and the recent advances in the sphere of nuclear disarmament talks", notwithstanding which the CPI(M) correctly insists that "imperialism is still seeking to retain relative advantage in order to attain the necessary leverage to consolidate its hegemonistic designs. The present conditions create scope for greater threats of nuclear blackmail by US imperialism.

"These developments warrant the urgent need to unite the anti-imperialist forces, particularly in the developing world, and forge the unity in action with the working class in the capitalist countries and to strengthen their resistance against this renewed offensive."

These observations are soundly contrasted with the "incorrect estimation of the international correlation of class forces drawn by the 20th congress of the CPSU when it advanced its revisionist concepts. Internally, within the Soviet Union, the impact of this revisionism led to a steady erosion of the class consciousness and vigilance both amongst the people and the party rank and file. The extent to which this fell is evident from the fact that the process of undermining of socialism is succeeding with minimum resistance,"

But what "advances" are being made in the sphere of nuclear disarmament talks?? And what "arms cut" has been presented to mankind?? What serious disarmament of any kind would the imperialist bourgeoisie ever agree to??

This apparently minor slip of the pen in fact betrays an appallingly corrupted class outlook - a typical legacy of Third International revisionism.

There is no disarmament of any kind under imperialism, never has been, nor ever will be. There is only a permanent arms race (with occasional periods of ostentatious 'dismantling' of certain types of outdated arms to impress the peace lobby with, or periods of intensified advanced-weapons research instead of frantic immediate arms output when there is a lull in the never-ending inter-imperialist conflict).

And there can never be

anything else, - the very fundamental nature of the monopoly-imperialist 'free world' economy of cut-throat competition and ruthless exploitation.

To even imagine for just one second that any sector of the international imperialist bourgeoisie is ever planning anything other than world domination is to fundamentally misunderstand the very essence of capitalist motivation and rivalry - for all time.

And this delusion raises questions about another aspect of CPI(M) policy concerning its Indian perspectives.

These continue to call for, in effect, a Popular Front anti-monopoly democracy as the way forward for India - a notorious class-collaborating relic of the Third International's past which helped pave the way for the eventual liquidation of most of the West European communist parties, for example.

The resolutions urge the formation of a "Peoples Democratic Front to fulfil the task of completing the democratic revolution. Based firmly on the worker-peasant alliance, this front will have the agricultural labour and poor peasant as the basic allies of the working class. This front will include the middle peasant and the rich peasant. The urban as well as other middle classes and broad sections of the national bourgeoisie will also be allies of this front."

The CPI(M)'s role is defined as one "of uniting with all the patriotic forces of the nation, i.e. those who are interested in sweeping away all the remnants of pre-capitalist society; in carrying out the agrarian revolution in a thorough manner and in the interests of the peasantry; in eliminating all traces of foreign capital; and in removing all obstacles in the path of a radical reconstruction of India's economy, social life and culture".

"It is only after the establishment of Peoples Democracy and completing the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, anti-monopoly-capital tasks, can the Indian people advance towards socialism."

Such a programme makes an assumption that a quite astonishing level of social stability and civilised behaviour will last throughout the international impe-

rialist crisis (which alone will open up serious socialist perspectives, - in India or anywhere else). This seems a very inadequate way to prepare the Indian masses for what lies ahead.

It specifically assumes that a Popular Front 'class' appeal will be always sufficient to bar the way to fascist reaction. But when has a Popular Front coalition appeal ever been able to prevent fascism? Surely the whole point of Third International revisionism's history, - in the 1930s in Spain for example, or the 1970s in Chile, or the 1960s in Indonesia, - is that such modest CP tactics of urging workers to put their faith in a Popular Front coalition with all shades of petty-bourgeois 'democracy' is a total disaster for the proletariat faced with fascism.

The basic lessons of Bolshevism are still misunderstood. The Leninists led the only ultimately successful opposition to imperialist world war precisely by denouncing all 'broad movements for peace' as a total fraud on the proletariat, and attacking even more vehemently such 'revolutionists' as Plekhanov and Trotsky who advocated united fronts with such coalitions or refused to reject cooperation with those who did advocate united front tactics.

The Leninists led the pressure on the 'revolutionary anti-war' coalition (which took power in February 1917) to get out of the war completely by refusing any notion of support to Kerensky & Co heading the Soviet representatives.

And the Kornilov fascist rebellion against Kerensky's Popular-Front regime was fought most effectively by the Bolsheviks not by joining the Popular Front but by precisely the opposite tactics, - by telling the masses that only the proletarian revolutionary programme could ever really guarantee their safety from war and fascism.

These CPI(M) 'stable Popular Front' delusions then raise other questions about exactly how accurately the future outcome of the international balance of class forces is foreseen, or the essence of class and international conflict understood.

For example, while the dictatorship of the proletariat is confirmed as the initial state structure for the socialist future, it is also declared that "the his-

torical evolution of some of the East European countries had already established the bourgeois parliamentary system with its corresponding rights to the people. The form of the proletarian state in these countries naturally should have been to consolidate the gains already achieved by the people."

At best, such a 'liberal-minded' approach stupidly makes a future rod for the proletariat's back. What if, as in Germany in the 1930s, fascism comes to power precisely through the petty-bourgeois masses exercising their 'right to vote' and their 'right to parliamentary procedures', etc.??

Or what if, as in Spain in the 1930s and Chile in the 1970s, fascism comes to power because of the treacherous uselessness of parliamentary petty-bourgeois 'democracy'? How long does the CPI(M) intend the proletariat's hands to be tied? Why should they be tied at all to such treacherousness uselessness as petty-bourgeois parliamentary 'democracy'??

At worst, such an approach is sheer counter-revolutionary confusion-mongering, a million times more damaging even than giving hostages to fortune in support of the dubious value of bourgeois parliamentary-democracy 'rights'.

Again, Leninist science has apparently been developed in vain. The essence of democracy is firm class power in order to advance the real interests of the masses. The dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin repeatedly declared, is the highest possible form of democracy (see ILWP Books vols 3,4, and 5 for lengthy detailed quotations from Lenin on this subject).

And the development of proletarian dictatorship is dialectical. The firmer the working-class power is established, the more truly democratic life becomes for the mass of the people. (The current breakdown of normal everyday economic and social security in the USSR and East Europe (Yugoslavia Georgia, Albania, etc) now that 'full' or 'pure' so-called 'democracy' has returned, demonstrates this point spectacularly. Ruthless mafia arbitrary tyranny now rules the Soviet economy. Unemployment is approaching 40% in parts of East Europe, etc,etc).

There is a hint of sus-

...pious confusion in the earlier-quoted CPI(M) statement that once the proletarian-dictatorship state had become "consolidated, and the correlation of class forces changed in its favour, opportunities for widening democracy and new initiatives opened up."

This sounds like the CPI(M) imagine there is a contradiction between proletarian dictatorship and democracy. Exactly the opposite. Only through an ever strengthening proletarian dictatorship can the fullest flowering ever of mass democracy be approached.

In "'Left-wing' communism an infantile disorder", Lenin highlighted the ludicrous essence of petty-bourgeois 'revolutionism':

"The mere presentation of the question - 'dictatorship of the Party or dictatorship of the class; dictatorship party of the leaders or dictatorship party of the masses' - testifies to the most incredible and hopeless confusion of mind.... Classes are led by political parties...directed by more or less stable groups...composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members who are elected to the most responsible positions and are called leaders. All this is elementary...Why replace this by some rigmorole?"

And here is the CPI(M), 72 years later, ludicrously pontificating:

"Another major distortion that needs to be noted, concerns the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of the class as a whole...As has been revealed in the recent developments, this dictatorship of the class was replaced by that of the vanguard, the party, and more often than not, by the leadership of the party".

These are fatuous observations. The fact that the Stalinist bureaucracy would not place revolutionary trust in the Soviet and international proletariat was, of course, the whole root of revisionism's treachery and ultimately fatal weakness.

But that is precisely the point which the CPI(M) is NOT making. Their comment is a piece of cringing face-saving propaganda in the challenge from petty-bourgeois democracy, e.g. "This dictatorship of the proletariat was naughty. It was led by leaders instead of by the masses", - the ex-

act ludicrous trap Lenin ridiculed the middle class for. It misses the point entirely about what rotten leadership there has been to the state of proletarian dictatorship. It makes an entirely unscientific 'point' vainly wishing that the entire process of revolutionary proletarian-dictatorship leadership could be done without leadership.

These CPI(M) confusions raise doubts about how alertly the party's long-established leadership in reasonably stable 'democratic' India can envisage a revolutionary situation.

On what basis, for instance, could the Chinese communist party leadership under Mao Tse-Tung, -(having fought one of the most heroic revolutionary struggles of all history from surviving the Kuomintang massacres of 1927; to establishing the Soviet guerrilla areas in Kiangsi in the early 1930s; to making the incredible Long March running battle for over a year all round China taking the Red Army to a safer base in Shensi in the far north west; to effectively fighting the Japanese imperialist invasion where no others had had success including the might of US imperialism, British imperialism and French imperialism, all routed in weeks; to the final triumphant march on Peking in 1949, providing coherent stable government and rapid progress to China's huge masses and vast expanses for the first time ever), - on what basis could such an unprecedented, history-making, heroic, self-contained, underground, revolutionary leadership-struggle lasting 25 years or more, - taking fateful decision after fateful decision for the whole future of China, - suddenly then turn round and do nothing until 1,000 million illiterate peasants told that revolutionary leadership what to do? It is an entirely ludicrous fantasy.

The same picture could be drawn of Bolshevism's history. The essence of the revolution is to lead. The difficulties which have subsequently arisen with the history of the world socialist revolution are all to do with what wrong leadership was given, and why. This crucial question the CPI(M) still fails to address.

The somewhat academic nature of much of the CPI

(M)'s philosophy is in evidence elsewhere too. For example, it is still somewhat puzzling that the CPI(M) is still admitting that it only got onto the revisionist/liquidationist disaster of Gorbachevism somewhat belatedly in 1988, - but still has not thought to ask itself why it took it so long (three years) to grasp what obvious appalling dangers were now pouring out of Moscow, - a serious questioning of the CPI(M)'s grasp of Marxist-Leninist understanding, and a serious matter for the world proletariat to ponder when a party of the size and international influence of the CPI(M) fails to give a lead which might have helped effectively combat the ravages of Gorbachevism.

There is also a tinge of academicism about the CPI(M)'s analysis of the basic social contradictions now facing the planet, - listed in order of importance as being "between world socialism and imperialism; between imperialism and the Third World; between imperialist countries themselves; and between capital and labour in the capitalist countries".

The only context in which this description is set notes the setbacks in East Europe and declares:

"The intensification of the central contradiction is manifested in the current reverses for the forces of world socialism. These reverses have shifted the balance of class forces, on the international plane, in favour of imperialism", adding the words "albeit temporarily, in the historical perspective".

From the recent actual collapse of workers-state regimes, there is a sense in which this judgment is obviously true. Compared with things previously, the socialist camp is now weaker, and therefore the imperialist camp commensurately stronger.

But once again, it must be pointed out that history works dialectically, not in simple straight-line accumulations.

Surely the only realistic point from which to start an analysis of world contradictions is with the crisis of the imperialist system.

Without imperialist crisis, there would be no struggle for socialism at all, and therefore no need for all this polemicising and

analysing, - and no need for Marxism-Leninism itself.

Given the death of bourgeois-imperialism worldwide, the construction of a planned socialist planet would become a leisurely non-antagonistic delight, contentedly absorbing and puzzling mankind for centuries to come.

The undoubted key to completing the world socialist revolution lies in correctly understanding imperialist crisis.

The stimulus which will undoubtedly ensure that the scientific Marxist-Leninist quest for rational revolutionary enlightenment will take off again before long is the explosively lethal and fiendishly complex imperialist crisis.

It is only the existence of continuing world-dominating imperialist crisis which can possibly explain the 'failures' of socialism so far.

And it is the complexities of fighting imperialist crisis which have supplied 99.9% of the content of Marxist-Leninist science hitherto, - the greatest achievement in all human history.

The world is truly a world of imperialist crisis. It is noticeable that the CPI(M) makes no such statement, - content to make vague academic references from time to time to 'the general crisis of capitalism', but being much more impressed, - and writing at much greater length, - about the 'new aggressiveness' and 'intensified exploitation of the Third World' by imperialism etc, - adding just three paragraphs further down the statement to describe sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry and class conflicts within capitalism.

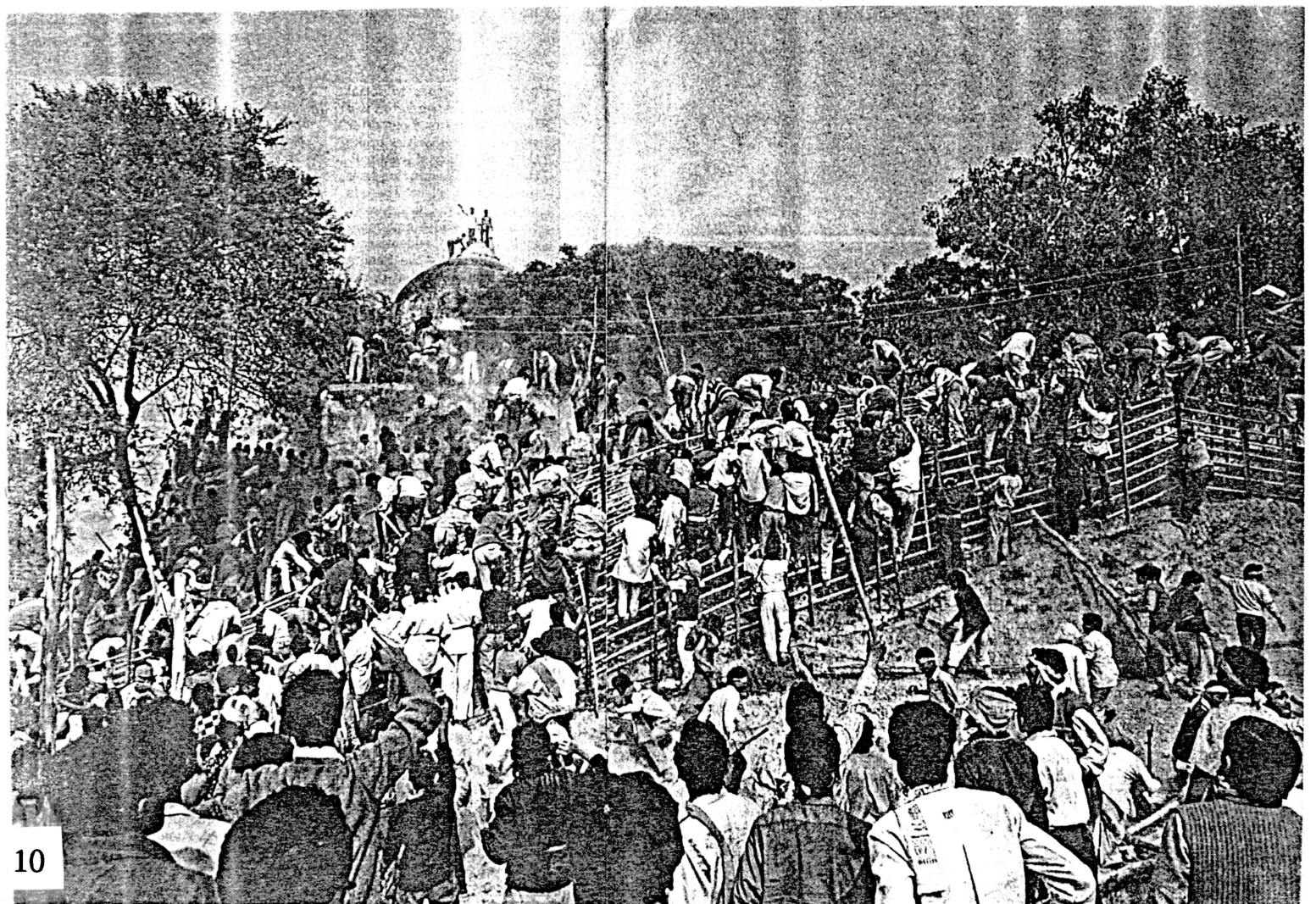
But it is the explosive and insoluble contradictions of the incurable imperialist crisis which now produce the decisive world developments.

Proletarian revolution, when it happens; or the consolidation of workers-state power and planned socialist economic strength when it happens; or an important extension of Marxist Leninist scientific theory, when it happens; - - all these, and more, stand higher in the scales of human achievement and lasting impact on world history than do the mere sordid details of imperialist crisis.

But it is imperialist crisis which still domina-

tes the planet. And because of revisionist retreats which had their beginnings in the 1920s and 1930s, - undermining the possibility of subsequent completion of the world socialist revolution on the basis of its →

Imperialist crisis drives bourgeois society back from its 'democratic' posturing and back into fascist warmongering slump. Naked chauvinist aggression in Bayreuth and Ayodha alike reveals the despairing vicious weakness of imperialism, not its strength.



→ original USSR/Third International foundations, - - - it is imperialist crisis which has in reality been the dominant question facing mankind for many decades.

Revisionism having doomed the world socialist revolution to incompleteness since some while ago, all emphasis must then swing back on the imperialist crisis.

It is the imperialist crisis, and that alone, which will now create the possibilities of new advances in Marxist-Leninist understanding and new revolutionary breakthroughs which will carry human society's historic destiny forward again towards planned world harmony based on international proletarian dictatorship and the reorganisation of the planet along the lines of communist philosophy...

Polemic 3, from Bulletin 641, 24th March 1992.

Deepening crisis stirs left but chaos over history will blunt the revolution.

The anti-imperialist movement is coming to life as the West's economic gloom gets steadily worse, but progress towards a successful overthrow of the monopoly bourgeoisie will be held back years unless the failures of the past record of international communism are put straight.

The organ of the Indian Workers Association in Great Britain, for example, has just published a blisteringly accurate Marxist analysis of the capitalist system's worldwide problems which are unavoidably leading towards the greatest slump in history and towards inter-imperialist World War III.

Economic crisis, which started hitting the world's weakest economies as far back as the mid-70's, has now got a firm grip on the economies of all the imperialist superpowers, including Japan, the United States and the EEC. The short-term effect is the rapid impoverishment of the working class in the imperialist countries in a manner that would have been totally unforeseeable even 5 years ago to all but those with a good understanding of Marxism. The long-term effect will sooner or later be war

Most bourgeois economists are not allowing themselves to contemplate the possibility of a 1930s-type depression being almost upon us. They believe that in

spite of difficulties, the clouds will soon roll by, with an adoption of the right policies by various governments; but somehow neither 'right-wing' nor 'left-wing' governments seem to have any solution. They totally reject the Marxist these of the inevitability of economic collapses under capitalism. These they believe to be a thing of the past, having been caused by wrong 'policies' that have since been discarded. Marxism, however, holds that there is no policy that can prevent capitalist crisis. There are policies which can make crisis better or worse in some countries in relation to other countries of equivalent economic strength, but no policies which can avert crisis in any significant way.

Engels explains the periodic market collapses of capitalism by the fact that *"The extension of the markets cannot keep pace with the extension of production"* (*Anti-Duhring*, FLPH Moscow, Second edition, 1959, p 379). In other words, there comes a time when capitalists cannot sell all that they are producing - there is a crisis of overproduction. Their profits therefore fall. It ceases to be worth the capitalists' while to invest in production, and production therefore grinds to a halt. Workers are thrown out of work by the million, left bereft of the necessities of life because they have produced too many of them.

This begs the question: why do capitalists expand production in the first place, and why can the market not keep pace with that expansion?

Were it not for competition of other capitalists, then no doubt there would not be the same pressure to expand production at quite such a break neck speed. But competition makes expansion imperative, as the alternative is to be forced out of business altogether and to lose completely the ability to exploit the working class. In order to sell his products a capitalist must ensure that they are "competitive", i.e., that in relation to their quality they are both acceptable as use values (i.e., they are things that people want to buy) as well as being as cheap or cheaper than rival products. If a competitor is producing more cheaply, he will undercut the prices of the more expensive producer and sooner or later make it impossible for him to sell his goods, thereby taking away not only his profit, but even his ability to recommence the production process - to pay the wages and buy the raw materials necessary for the purpose. In short he is driven out of business. A typical example of this is the recent retrenchment by General Motors in the USA. In the 1950s the company was so large and so critical a part of the US economy that it used to be said that what was good for General Motors was good for the US of A. But today General Motors has been brought to its knees by competition from Japan. The Japanese, being able to produce more cars more cheaply with the aid of the most advanced technology in the world and by far the largest investment in machinery per worker, have decimated both the American and the European car makers. These now have the choice of either investing in even more advanced technology in order to overtake the Japanese or of closing up shop. In the short term, the latter is more likely, with a reduced operation being maintained to provide equipment for captive markets of indebted slaves. Even that is now being threatened, as the Japanese are beginning to penetrate the car market in Latin America that was formerly closed to them: they have recently reached agreement with Argentina to be allowed to sell cars there, which will damage an EEC client market, however, rather than an American one.

Even paying lower wages the capitalists cannot maintain profit levels, and business after business closes down for lack of profitability, throwing more and more people on to the heaps of unemployed and undermining the market of those producers able to remain in business. Engels could have the situation in the world today in mind when he described capitalist crisis in the following terms:

"Commerce is at a standstill, the markets are glutted, products accumulate, as multitudinous as they are unsaleable, hard cash disappears, credit vanishes, factories are closed, the mass of the workers are in want of the means of subsistence, because they have produced too much of the means of subsistence, bankruptcy follows upon bankruptcy, execution upon execution. The stagnation lasts for years; productive forces and products are wasted and destroyed wholesale ..." (*Anti-Duhring*, pp 379-80).

Such is the scenario we are facing today, as will be demonstrated below by gathering together the facts that are to be found reported in the more obscure corners of the press where it is hoped that only responsible bourgeois will find them, and not the masses who need to be kept in ignorance of such things.

When rich-world economies started to stagnate in the early 1980s, mainly as a result of the failure of third-world markets which had become too overburdened with debt to continue buying, even on credit (especially after the US raised interest rates sky high and struck a death blow to their solvency - literally ruined them), the world's financiers turned to the proletariat of the rich countries for their salvation. They pressed loans on people, especially through credit cards which, besides 'earning' the bankers spectacular rates of interest - much higher returns than were available investing in industry - also gave a boost to consumer demand and thus gave some short term relief to industrial producers. Other capital which a decade earlier might have been lent out to a third-world country at an equally spectacular rate of interest was 'invested' in land - in other words there began an orgy of property speculation (as to which more anon). The consequent rise in house prices encouraged homeowners to borrow freely in the belief that they were merely liquidating some of the thousands of pounds that they were 'earning' as house prices rose.

The effect on public indebtedness was catastrophic.

The position when housing loans are added was described in the *Economist* of 7 December 1991, which says that: *"In 1980 the debt of private individuals was equivalent to 60% of their disposable incomes; today it amounts to around 112%".* If one bears in mind that about 40% of homes are not mortgaged at all, one can imagine that where householders are in debt, their average indebtedness is well over 112% of income. In fact a building society may well lend a purchaser up to 300% of income. If this purchaser also borrows 60% of income in card debts and bank loans, it can readily be seen that it will not be long before virtually all his income is going in interest repayments and capital repayments become impossible.

Hence the huge increase in mortgage foreclosures and in bankruptcies.

Indebtedness is also high in Japan, according to an article in the *Economist* of 31 August 1991 entitled *Pop, Thud*:

"Japanese are now bigger borrowers than even the Americans with personal debt at more than 20% of disposable income compared with 19% in America. And that excludes housing loans which would make the difference still larger. Bankruptcies among family firms and individuals, which are not picked up in the monthly surveys, are proliferating".

In the US, according to the *Financial Times* of 23 December 1991, *"household liabilities as a percentage of income (disposable personal) have risen from under 40% in 1952, under 60% in 1960, under 70% in 1970, 75% in 1980 to 100% in 1990.*

In other words, all over the rich world increasing numbers of proletarians, having been milked dry by capitals of their hard-won earnings, are now being ruined, just as third world countries were more than a decade ago.

In the meantime the debt situation of third-world countries gets worse rather than better. Robert Chote reported in the *Independent* of 16 December, 1991, that *"severely indebted, low-income countries are using a higher proportion of their export earnings to service their debts than at any time during the 1980s, according to a World Bank report published today..*

"The debt servicing costs of these countries, most of which are in Africa, are expected to amount to 31.3% of their exports this year compared with 23.8% in 1990. They have suffered as world trade has slowed, the prices of the commodities they export have fallen and the costs of manufactured imports, like machinery and fertilizer, have risen". (It should be noted that prices of machinery and fertilizer should fall during a recession, but the monopolies that supply them secure high prices either by ceasing production in order to avoid flooding the market, as described above, or by withholding supplies, as to which see further below. Thus the monopolist tries to protect his position but in fact harms his own interests in the long run by all the sooner bankrupting his market. Hence the law of value asserts itself even on the monopolies).

Japan's situation is particularly notable in that Japan has the world's strongest economy: its trade surplus with the rest of the world has risen from \$20 billion in 1981 to \$100 billion in 1991. Each year that wealth has been adding up, and in the past six years has contributed to Japan investing \$3 trillion in new plant and equipment - \$4,800 per worker, compared with \$2,300 per worker additional investment in the US during that period. Yet Japan too, notwithstanding its brilliant export record, is nevertheless suffering a stagnating market through having overburdened its people with debt and - though paying them highly by UK standards - paying them very low wages in relation to their productivity.

Yet Mr Bush is, according to the *Financial Times* of 24 December 1991, proposing to try and ameliorate the United States' rapidly deteriorating economic situation by *"a 'relentless mission' to prise open markets in Japan and other East Asian countries. Presumably he has economic advisers to tell him he should be so lucky if Japanese capitalists themselves are having problems in prising open their own home market. What one suspects, therefore, that Mr Bush is doing is paving the way for raising trade barriers against the import of Japanese goods into the US, in which he might well get the opportunist support of Europe in view of their own battering at the hands of Japanese competition. These are trade barriers, however, that Japan would be forced by the very logic of its own overproduction, to find ways of destroying, by force if necessary. For the moment Japan would be in no position to wage war against the United States and Europe, but they say necessity is the mother of invention, and no doubt Japan will find ways of gathering together a group of powerful allies and of building up military strength should no other way out present itself. This may seem unlikely today, but inter-imperialist war is sooner or later inevitable. Remember that the 1914-18 war too was to be the war to end wars!*

As noted above, when profits available to producers fall this leaves capitalists with a problem as to how to invest their money. Industrial production may not be profitable, but if they do nothing with their money, they will not make any profit at all. So they often end up investing money in land or in stocks and shares. These investments do not involve the exploitation of labour power and they are, therefore, purely speculative. They give rise to no new values. There is no sound basis for any profits to be made. The only 'profit' there are arise purely from the willingness of other capitalists to compete to purchase the assets in question. Both property and shares appear to be good investments for capital, insofar as their price has been rising steadily for so many years that people cease to believe that the prices can ever fall. New 'laws' of capitalism are dis-

covered to the effect that land cannot go down in price because of its limited supply, and other items in limited supply, such as Old Masters, fine musical instruments, and, in Tokyo, believe it or not, even old denim jeans bearing the trade marks of the 1950s or earlier, become objects of speculation too and rise magically in price.

It turns out, however, that the shortage of land depends on effective demand from people able and willing to pay to use it. With the collapse of many businesses and the reduced profits of others, their ability to buy and rent commercial property at sky-high prices declines. Nobody can afford it any more and prices collapse. The impoverished workers struggling to pay their debts can no longer afford to buy houses at the prices they have reached, and the repossessions are flooding the market. Inevitably prices fall heavily. As they fall, all those people, bourgeois and proletarian alike, who invested in property when its price was at its height see their investments wiped out. Even a wage worker who bought a small house to live in two years ago for £50,000 is likely to have lost up to £10,000 on this, and his loss probably takes the form today of a debt he will be trying to repay for the rest of his life. Capitalists, having infinitely more wealth to lose in speculation, lose millions, thereby destroying their own capital for which they had been unable to find productive use anyway.

Property prices have crashed all over the world - not just in the UK. Worst hit, for the moment, has been the US, with commercial property falling between 10% and 40% (depending on which city) and likely to fall a great deal further.

As regards stocks and shares, we have been witnessing the wildest stock market oscillations. Stock markets reach all-time highs one month only to discover all-time lows not so long afterwards. Over Christmas 1991 stock exchanges picked up again to sycophantic applause from media hacks who at last appeared to have some basis for official optimism about the economy. Now at last they had some confidence when promising 'recovery just round the corner'. Since most of the press supports the Conservative government, which is facing elections in 1992, the need for belief in this recovery is born of a most pathetic desperation. The rise in share prices is supposed to herald an increase at last in investor confidence in the economy. But as can be seen, there is nothing in the economy for investors to have confidence in and nowhere much for the capitalists to invest their money. Stocks and share speculation is but a last refuge. These prices, however, cannot be sustained against negative performance by the companies whose stocks they are. And as we have seen the 1992 outlook for all types of company is bleak because of the impoverishment of the ultimate consumers. Hence it is only a matter of time before stock market prices plunge again and stay down. All that we are seeing now is desperate gambling on exactly when the plunge will start.

But sadly, Lalkar's work, brilliant here, also still reflects the revisionist paralysis which the Bulletin has already taken up many times before, - in particular recently in Bulletin 631 in analysing the mistaken positions adopted at the latest congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

In this same issue of Lalkar's confident denunciation of capitalism's economic crisis is found a hopelessly muddled and defeatist piece about the failures of the Soviet workers state.

This repeats the old CPI(M) confusion that ev-

everything was fine with the leadership of the world socialist revolution up to Stalin's death but then all went wrong with the arrival of Khrushchev in power:

Once again, to borrow the words of the CPC:

"In completely negating Stalin at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, Khrushchev in effect negated the dictatorship of the proletariat and the fundamental theories of Marxism-Leninism which Stalin defended and developed. It was at that Congress that Khrushchev, in his report, began the repudiation of Marxism-Leninism on a number of questions of principle." (The Origin and Development of the Differences Between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves, 6 September 1963).

Khrushchev's attack on Stalin served the dual purpose of negating the achievements of socialism and at the same time distracting attention from the revisionist distortion of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism on a number of cardinal questions. For it was at this Congress that Khrushchev began the revision of Leninism on such important questions as the road to socialism and the attitude towards imperialism. Flying in the face of reality, he counterposed his "peaceful transition" and "parliamentary road to socialism" to the road of the October Revolution, asserting that in the light of the "radical changes" that had taken place in the world, the latter was no longer of universal significance. By way of complete revision of Lenin's teachings on imperialism and war, Khrushchev painted a picture of the US government and its chief as resisting the forces of war, and not as representatives of the imperialist forces of war.

The period between the 20th and the 22nd Congresses of the CPSU saw the emergence, formation, growth and systematisation of Khrushchevite revisionism on a number of very important questions. The teachings of Marxism-Leninism were subjected to downright distortion and wholesale revision. At the 22nd Congress, a new programme of the CPSU was adopted, which declared that the dictatorship of the proletariat "has ceased to be indispensable in the USSR" and that "the state, which arose as a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, has, in the new, contemporary stage, become a state of the entire people." Likewise the party of the proletariat was replaced by a "party of the entire people."

Our purpose is to explain how revisionism, since its triumph in 1956 at the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU, has been restoring capitalism in the USSR; the methods and the means, both political and economic, adopted by it to this end; and why it found it advisable to attack and malign Stalin under the pretext of defending Leninism by criticising Stalin's alleged departures from Leninism.

At the beginning the revisionists were not strong enough, such was the strength of the socialist system, openly to attack Leninism or socialism. They had to do their dirty work by distorting the teachings of Marxism-Leninism and putting into effect bourgeois economic measures, but always taking care to act in the name of Leninism and under the guise of combating Stalin's "personality cult", his "errors", and his "departures" from Leninism. Only with the accession of Gorbachev did the counter-revolutionary restorationists feel strong enough openly to question fundamental teachings of Marxism-Leninism.

This is a correct exposure of class-collaborating revisionist degeneracy but a laughably biased misrepresentation of when, how, and why it progressed historically in the Soviet

workers state.

This is a catastrophic blindspot typical of many of the remnants of the old Third International. But it is crucial for workers parties the world over to get these question of revolutionary degeneration absolutely clear.

If the confusion continues about why the Bolshevik revolution eventually went wrong, then nothing will have been confirmed or corrected about Leninist science, and priceless lessons of history will have been wasted.

Lalkar tries, in this latest effort, to get round a longstanding difficulty with their 'explanation' of Soviet decay, - namely that by blaming only the work of Stalin's successors for being a class-collaborating retreat from Leninism, it left unsolved the huge mystery of why this supposed 'Marxist genius' Stalin was so dumb as to surround himself with total counter-revolutionary arseholes in the leadership of the Soviet party and state.

The new line is to pretend that Stalin was fighting hard against revisionism inside the CPSU to his dying day, aware that it was all around him, - a legacy of long-established international 'Marxism' around the Third International in the 1930s led by an obscure Pole called Prof. Oscar Lange (who apparently had some role in the Polish workers state after World War II.)

To stand up this barny

But at the same time China and other, European, people's democracies broke away from the capitalist system and, together with the Soviet Union, formed a united and powerful socialist camp confronting the camp of capitalism. The economic consequence of the existence of two opposite camps was that the single all-embracing world market disintegrated, so that now we have two parallel world markets, also confronting one another.

It should be observed that the U.S.A., and Great Britain and France, themselves contributed - without themselves desiring it, of course - to the formation and consolidation of the new, parallel world market. They imposed an economic blockade on the U.S.S.R., China and the European people's democracies, which did not join the "Marshall plan" system, thinking thereby to strangle them. The effect, however, was not to strangle, but to strengthen the new world market.

.....since the war these countries have joined together economically and established economic cooperation and mutual assistance. The experience of this cooperation shows that not a single capitalist country could have rendered such effective and technically competent assistance to the people's democracies as the Soviet Union is rendering them. The point is not only that this assistance

theory of a beleaguered 'Marxist genius' Stalin doing his best but failing to rout rampant revisionism in the Third International, Lalkar goes nap on Stalin's last published work "The economic problems of socialism in the USSR" completed in September 1952.

Calling it "a work of genius", Lalkar highlights criticisms which Stalin levelled against some academics called Yaroshenko, Notkin, Sanina, and Venzher.

But reading lectures to bureaucrats about the importance to communism of transforming human relations rather than just raising levels of production, still does not address the problem of the quality of Politburo leadership which Stalin had built up around himself.

And as perceptive and stimulating as are Stalin's analyses in "Economic problems" of the ultimate fate of commodity production under socialism, and of collective-farm property, etc, the Lalkar concentration completely ignores far more relevant quotes from the pamphlet which throw light on the political direction Stalin was giving to the entire world revolutionary movement at this time, - the CPSU included, - and the economic problems resulting from crassly incorrect general political philosophy.

What sort of 'genius' was it which reached the following conclusion in "Economic problems" (1952):

the cheapest possible and technically superb. The chief point is that at the bottom of this cooperation lies a sincere desire to help one another and to promote the economic progress of all. The result is a fast pace of industrial development in these countries. It may be confidently said that, with this pace of industrial development, it will soon come to pass that these countries will not only be in no need of imports from capitalist countries, but will themselves feel the necessity of finding an outside market for their surplus products.

But it follows from this that the sphere of exploitation of the world's resources by the major capitalist countries (U.S.A., Britain, France) will not expand, but contract; that their opportunities for sale in the world market will deteriorate, and that their industries will be operating more and more below capacity. That, in fact, is what is meant by the deepening of the general crisis of the world capitalist system in connection with the disintegration of the world market.

This is felt by the capitalists themselves, for it would be difficult for them not to feel the loss of such markets as the U.S.S.R. and China. They are trying to offset these difficulties with the "Marshall plan," the war in Korea, frantic rearmament, and industrial militarization. But that is very much like a drowning man clutching at a straw.

This state of affairs has confronted the economists with two questions:

a) Can it be affirmed that the thesis expounded by Stalin before the Second World War regarding the relative stability of markets in the period of the general crisis of capitalism is still valid?

b) Can it be affirmed that the thesis expounded by Lenin in the spring of 1916 — namely, that, in spite of the decay of capitalism, "on the whole, capitalism is growing far more rapidly than before"⁵ — is still valid?

I think that it cannot. In view of the new conditions to which the Second World War has given rise, both these theses must be regarded as having lost their validity.

The conceited third-person comparison between Lenin and Stalin is laughably pompous, but much worse is the fact that Stalin's trivial proposition on the 'relative stability of capitalist markets' was always wrong, even before World War II, — and damagingly wrong because it was part of the 'justification' for the disastrously incorrect policy of class-collaborating 'Popular Frontism'.

This revisionist retreat from the Leninist science of proletarian revolutionary leadership of the anti-imperialist struggle was always an infinitely greater catastrophe for the ultimate fate of the Soviet workers state than any amount of minor bureaucratic confusion among lesser Soviet academics about economic theory in the transition from socialism to communism.

Stalin was correct to accuse this Yaroshenko non-entity of overlooking the need to keep class perspectives in sight in his proposals for a draft text-

book on political economy.

But Stalin's pamphlet grotesquely ignores far more important class perspectives itself.

There has been no "relative stability of markets" in the period of the general crisis of capitalism. What there has been was the Stalinist revisionist defeatism, pre-war, which deliberately misled the Third International into retreating into Popular Frontism (out of the myopic panic that proletarian revolution could not halt warmongering fascist reaction, and that Soviet international influence should best be seen as conservatively 'democratic' and non-revolutionary, in the face of imperialism's arms-race threats to the Soviet Union.)

This fear-filled imaginary nonsense about "relatively stable markets" under pre-war capitalism finds its alternative expression in equally do-nothing shallow optimism about the capitalist systems alleged postwar inability to expand again.

This was just wishful-

thinking idiocy by Stalin to justify his complacency about some of the stagnantly paralysed aspects of Third International development; — and to stand this delusion up, Stalin happily commits a monstrous public revision of Lenin in the "Economic problems" pamphlet, — saying that Lenin's observation about capitalism's ability to expand more rapidly than ever before even in the midst of its decay as a system, was "no longer valid".

Added to this debilitating nonsense which helped to terminally damage the entire Third International, Lalkar itself is guilty of enormous blindness in accusing Kruschchev, and Stalin's successors, of foisting the ludicrous "peaceful transition" and "parliamentary road to socialism" delusions onto the Third International.

The British CP, for one, had already adopted its "British Road to Socialism" fantasies of a parliamentary majority for a full anti-capitalist revolution, — and had them approved by Moscow, — before Stalin's death.

And the entire West European CP policy after WWII had been a wretched continuation of class-collaborating Popular Frontism, — with the French CP, for example, joining postwar bourgeois coalitions to revive capitalism and to keep the French empire going in Indo-China and Algeria, for example.

Worse still, it was the Soviet government which insisted that Western imp-

erialism could remain the 'friend' of the Soviet workers state, — (continuing the wartime 'alliance' against German, Japanese and Italian imperialism), — long after the inevitably vicious counter-revolutionary essence of the new US world domination had been made clear to everyone.

In that insane perspective, it was the Soviet Union itself which helped move the United Nations proposal to seize half of Palestine to give to Zionist imperialism in 1947-48; and the USSR which supplied weapons to the Zionists to help break an international arms embargo, thus giving Zionism the opportunity to increase its land grab of Arab Palestine up to 70% of the territory (trampling even on the supposed 'limits' set by the UN's evil partition)

Through this crass notion that socialism would outperform the cost-cutting savagery of capitalist exploitation in production for world markets, Stalinist revisionism was simply deliberately trying to bury all idea of the international socialist revolution actually taking on the imperialist powers in class war again in order to complete the worldwide overthrow of warmongering monopoly-capitalist reaction.

In words, admittedly, Stalin still correctly explained that monopoly-bourgeois warmongering was inevitable, and that imperialism would have to be "abolished" in order to remove the scourge of war from human affairs once and for all:

Some comrades hold that, owing to the development of new international conditions since the Second World War, wars between capitalist countries have ceased to be inevitable. They consider that the contradictions between the socialist camp and the capitalist camp are more acute than the contradictions among the capitalist countries; that the U.S.A. has brought the other capitalist countries sufficiently under its sway to be able to prevent them going to war among themselves and weakening one another; that the foremost capitalist minds have been sufficiently taught by the two world wars and the severe damage they caused to the whole capitalist world not to venture to involve the capitalist countries in war with one another again — and that, because of all this, wars between capitalist countries are no longer inevitable.

These comrades are mistaken. They see the outward phenomena that come and go on the surface, but they do not see those profound forces which, although they are so far operating imperceptibly, will nevertheless determine the course of developments.

Outwardly, everything would seem to be "going well": the U.S.A. has put Western Europe, Japan and other capital-

ist countries on rations; Germany (Western), Britain, France, Italy and Japan have fallen into the clutches of the U.S.A. and are meekly obeying its commands. But it would be mistaken to think that things can continue to "go well" for "all eternity," that these countries will tolerate the domination and oppression of the United States endlessly, that they will not endeavour to tear loose from American bondage and take the path of independent development.

Take, first of all, Britain and France. Undoubtedly, they are imperialist countries. Undoubtedly, cheap raw materials and secure markets are of paramount importance to them. Can it be assumed that they will endlessly tolerate the present situation, in which, under the guise of "Marshall plan aid," Americans are penetrating into the economies of Britain and France and trying to convert them into adjuncts of the United States economy, and American capital is seizing raw materials and markets in the British and French colonies and thereby plotting disaster for the high profits of the British and French capitalists? Would it not be truer to say that capitalist Britain, and, after her, capitalist France, will be compelled in the end to break from the embrace of the U.S.A. and enter into conflict with it in order to secure an independent position and, of course, high profits?

Let us pass to the major vanquished countries, Germany (Western) and Japan. These countries are now languishing in misery under the jackboot of American imperialism. Their industry and agriculture, their trade, their foreign and home policies, and their whole life are fettered by the American occupation "regime." Yet only yesterday these countries were great imperialist powers and were shaking the foundations of the domination of Britain, the U.S.A. and France in Europe and Asia. To think that these countries will not try to get on their feet again, will not try to smash the U.S. "regime," and force their way to independent development, is to believe in miracles.

It is said that the contradictions between capitalism and socialism are stronger than the contradictions among the capitalist countries. Theoretically, of course, that is true. It is not only true now, today; it was true before the Second World War. And it was more or less realized by the leaders of the capitalist countries. Yet the Second World War began not as a war with the U.S.S.R., but as a war between capitalist countries. Why? Firstly, because war with the U.S.S.R., as a socialist land, is more dangerous to capitalism than war between capitalist countries; for whereas war between capitalist countries puts in question only the supremacy of certain capitalist countries over others, war with the U.S.S.R. must certainly put in question the existence of capitalism itself. Secondly, because the capitalists, although they clamour, for "propaganda" purposes, about the aggressiveness of the Soviet Union, do not themselves believe that it is aggressive, because they are aware of the Soviet Union's peaceful policy and know that it will not itself attack capitalist countries.

After the First World War it was similarly believed that Germany had been definitely put out of action, just as certain comrades now believe that Japan and Germany have been definitely put out of action. Then, too, it was said and clamoured in the press that the United States had put Europe on rations; that Germany would never rise to her feet again, and that there would be no more wars between capitalist countries. In spite of this, Germany rose to her feet again as a great power within the space of some fifteen or twenty years after her defeat, having broken out of bondage and taken the path of independent development. And it is significant that it was none other than Britain and the United States that helped Germany to recover economically and to enhance her economic war potential. Of course, when the United States and Britain assisted Germany's economic recovery, they did so with a view to setting a recovered Ger-

Problems with Stalin's own mastery of Marxist-Leninist world analysis.



many against the Soviet Union, to utilizing her against the land of socialism. But Germany directed her forces in the first place against the Anglo-French-American bloc. And when Hitler Germany declared war on the Soviet Union, the Anglo-French-American bloc, far from joining with Hitler Germany, was compelled to enter into a coalition with the U.S.S.R. against Hitler Germany.

Consequently, the struggle of the capitalist countries for markets and their desire to crush their competitors proved in practice to be stronger than the contradictions between the capitalist camp and the socialist camp.

What guarantee is there, then, that Germany and Japan will not rise to their feet again, will not attempt to break out of American bondage and live their own independent lives? I think there is no such guarantee.

But it follows from this that the inevitability of wars between capitalist countries remains in force.

It is said that Lenin's thesis that imperialism inevitably generates war must now be regarded as obsolete, since powerful popular forces have come forward today in defence of peace and against another world war. That is not true.

The object of the present-day peace movement is to rouse the masses of the people to fight for the preservation of peace and for the prevention of another world war. Consequently, the aim of this movement is not to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism — it confines itself to the democratic aim of preserving peace. In this respect, the present-day peace movement differs from the movement of the time of the First World War for the conversion of the imperialist war into civil war, since the latter movement went farther and pursued socialist aims.

It is possible that in a definite conjuncture of circumstances the fight for peace will develop here or there into a fight for socialism. But then it will no longer be the present-day peace movement; it will be a movement for the overthrow of capitalism.

What is most likely is that the present-day peace movement, as a movement for the preservation of peace, will, if it succeeds, result in preventing a particular war, in its temporary postponement, in the temporary preservation of a particular peace, in the resignation of a bellicose government and its supersession by another that is prepared temporarily to keep the peace. That, of course, will be good. Even very good. But, all the same, it will not be enough to eliminate the inevitability of wars between capitalist countries generally. It will not be enough, because, for all the successes of the peace movement, imperialism will remain, continue in force — and, consequently, the inevitability of wars will also continue in force.

To eliminate the inevitability of war, it is necessary to abolish imperialism.

But because of the long revisionist decay in the Third International (from many decades of Popular Front tailending of petty-bourgeois democracy in the fight against imperialism, 'justified' by delusions that socialism would overtake and undermine capitalism anyway by outperforming it on the international market-place), — the deeds of the world communist movement under Stalin's colossal influence were ultimately a total self-liquidating disaster, with only either partial or temporary exceptions in China, Vietnam, Cuba, East Europe,

Korea, etc., where local determination or immediate Soviet state interests resulted in deliberate anti-imperialist revolutionary actions.

Elsewhere, the opportunist revisionist philistinism, which finally ended up as the ridiculous self-liquidating CPGB, for example, — was already well in place in Stalin's time.

The Popular-Front class-collaborating tailending of the Labour Party (and TUC) reactionary reformism remains one of the most vivid historical marks of this retreat from Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory; but the most crucial problem was CP revisionism's attitude to the Third International's own development and mistakes, — an attitude which this tragic Lalkar article reminds us is still widespread and uncorrected.

To repeat once again, it is not a matter of speculating about whether or not Stalin "should have known better" about the party and state leadership he built up and left behind him, or speculating about whether or not all of Stalin's supposed 'crimes' were really such (or just a slightly paranoid over-exuberant 'vigilance', or even all justified because the entire state and party in the USSR and all over East Europe really were all swarming with 'counter-revolutionary agents of the West' who all needed exterminating.)

It is a question of Stalin's own mastery of Marxist-Leninist world analysis, — as evidenced in this very book "Economic problems". Contrary to Stalin, the imperialist economies continued rapidly to expand even while on course for their greatest-ever crisis of World War III; and the crucial ingredient for meeting this challenge was the exact opposite of Stalin's defeatist complacency (of encouraging the international movement to quietly class-collaborate with reformism whilst awaiting for socialist-camp economic production to outstrip frenetic and vicious monopoly-imperialist worldwide exploitation, — a crazy perspective, — impossible, and not even wanted at present historic levels of capital investment and productivity of labour. Who wants socialist sweatshops? Who wants grotesque overproduction

and overconsumption on present Western scales in the imperialist metropolises?

Higher labour productivity is a universal worthwhile goal, but the social agenda of planned workers-state economies should not be remotely comparable to the penny-pinching cost-cutting nightmares run by capitalist-class dictatorships the world over. So how could socialist-state output normally undercut imperialist exploitation output on the world's consumer markets?)

What was required was the exact opposite of this "socialism is already winning the peaceful world market competition" complacency. Only a phenomenal deepening of Leninist theory of revolutionary international class war could have provided a suitable education for the communist movement worldwide. But about this there is not one solitary word throughout the entire 100 pages of this "work of genius" published at such a crucial time, 1952, and Stalin's last 'great' contribution to the world revolutionary struggle (and his first for years).

It is legitimate to surmise, even if it is accepted that clear evidence of deliberate "Stalinist crimes" is still lacking, that this unmistakable and crippling revisionist confusion at the heart of the Stalin-era leadership must have resulted in any amount of subsidiary arbitrary and incorrect decisions affecting international communist and Soviet internal policies.

Despite all the glorious achievements of the Bolshevik Revolution and its Third International aftermath, the whole revisionist record must now be carefully examined as a potential stinking time-bomb which ended in the total humiliating catastrophe of Gorbachevism and the collapse of the world communist movement (see ILWP Books vols 3-17).

The heart of the problem is chaotic ignorance over Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory.

The first crucial step back to health for the international workers movement is to develop the priceless Leninist ability to face up to one's own mistakes and to learn how to deal with them and profit from them. This persistent

Lalkar head-in-the-sand dinge that Stalin was all right, and that the revisionist problems began only subsequently, is hopeless nonsense, well overdue for reconsideration.

Meanwhile the anarchic boom/bust imperialist economy continues roaring on like an express train towards a cataclysmic abyss of collapse and World War III...

Polemic 4, from Bulletin 645, 21st April 1992. (Discussion arising from article in 'Lalkar' in April 1992, "Debate in the anti-racist and anti-fascist movement".)

Tactical query.

In the above bold presentation by the IWA (Indian Workers Association), the demand to counter racist immigration discrimination by calling for the right of workers to freely move into this (and any other) country, regardless of whether they are 'genuine political refugees' or 'economic migrants', seems idealist not materialist.

The article correctly quotes Marx describing how the British bourgeoisie deliberately used Irish immigration to subvert the British working class by racist division after using the cheap labour to drive down wages.

The answer, Marx says clearly, is to fight for Irish national liberation, - with the clear implication that this would end the pressure on Irish workers to emigrate to Britain, end the racist division, and allow the British working class to accept a revolutionary Marxist political education, not possible all the time that English workers can be continually convinced of their (imperialist) racial 'superiority' to the immigrants, and of their identification with their 'own' ruling class on this question, - an identification which cannot be changed until Ireland has won its full independence and is no longer repressed by Britain.

Here is Marx's whole argument:

Owing to the constantly increasing concentration of tenant-farming, Ireland steadily supplies its own surplus to the English labour market, and thus forces down wages and lowers the moral and material condition of the English working class.

And most important of all! Every industrial and commercial centre in England now possesses a working class *divided* into two *hostile* camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who lowers his standard of life. In relation to the Irish worker he feels himself a member of the *ruling* nation and so turns himself into a tool of the aristocrats and capitalists of his country *against Ireland*, thus strengthening their domination *over himself*. He cherishes religious, social, and national prejudices against the Irish worker. His attitude towards him is much the same as that of the "poor whites" to the "niggers" in the former slave states of the U.S.A. The Irishman pays him back with interest in his own money. He sees in the English worker at once the accomplice and the stupid tool of the *English rule in Ireland*.

This antagonism is artificially kept alive and intensified by the press, the pulpit, the comic papers, in short, by all the means at the disposal of the ruling classes. This *antagonism* is the *secret of the impotence of the English working class*, despite its organization. It is the secret by which the capitalist class maintains its power. And that class is fully aware of it.

But the evil does not stop here. It continues across the ocean. The antagonism between English and Irish is the hidden basis of the conflict between the United States and England. It makes any honest and serious co-operation between the working classes of the two countries impossible. It enables the governments of both countries, whenever they think fit, to break the edge off the social conflict by their mutual bullying, and, in case of need, by war with one another.

England, being the metropolis of capital, the power which has hitherto ruled the world market, is for the present the most important country for the workers' revolution, and moreover the *only* country in which the material conditions for this revolution have developed up to a certain degree of maturity. Therefore to hasten the social revolution in England is the most important object of the International Workingmen's Association. The sole means of hastening it is to make Ireland independent.

Hence it is the task of the International everywhere to put the conflict between England and Ireland in the foreground, and everywhere to side openly with Ireland. And it is the special task of the Central Council in London to awaken a consciousness in the English workers that *for them* the *national emancipation of Ireland* is no question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment but *the first condition of their own social emancipation*.

Is it not idealist to suggest that English workers can currently be dissuaded from racist division and subversion by simply "concentrating on the main problem (see Lalkar article), - that of official racism" (rather than fascism)?

"Concentrate fire on British nationalism and state racism", etc?

Certainly the state racism must be constantly denounced, but is not the answer to the working-class division (deliberately constructed around immigration) to demand the revolution-

ionary transformation of Bangla Desh, or Jamaica, or South Africa, or Sri Lanka, etc, as Marx did with the Irish immigration issue?

It seems doubly idealist to simply declare anti-racism to be an obligatory principle for the working-class without which nothing can be achieved for anyone's emancipation.

Sri Lankans will continue to abandon their homeland to live in discriminated-against conditions in imperialist Britain, and British workers will continue to be made reactionary by their own ruling class, -

but only exhorted not to be racist, under this plan, by idealist pleas. The economic conditions of world exploitation providing the material base for the racist slavery of both the nationalists and the immigrants is, it seems, not to be made the priority (which Marx made it when insisting that until Ireland got its anti-imperialist revolution, there was no hope of one for Britain).

Why is not this still the case concerning South African, Pakistani, and Hong Kong immigration into Britain, for example? Is it not just wishful thinking to suggest that British working-class racism will be overcome by asking workers in England to demand the full right of immigration for "all the workers" everywhere, whether as economic migrants or genuine refugees?

The racist discrimination of all existing immigration procedures and provisions is clearly obscene, and a constant source of reactionary influence, to be ferociously denounced. But the idealism of "let British workers agitate for the right of all workers to immigrate into Britain" seems to create an unnecessary obstacle for anti-racist understanding as well as being wishful thinking.

Trying to get round this problem by proposing, as a current demand, that all workers everywhere should be allowed to go anywhere they choose in the world to live and work, seems even more irrelevant idealism.

Immigration and emigration at this moment in world history are part of the problem of imperialism, not part of the solution to imperialism. That lies with winning the true revolutionary independence from imperialist exploitation for Bangla Desh, Jamaica, India, all of Ireland, etc, so that the masses there will at last be truly free to choose where they would like to flourish, and at the same time thereby make it possible for the masses in Britain to at last rid themselves of racist identification with their 'own' imperialist ruling-class and finally be free themselves to choose where they would like to flourish, - all on the basis of world working-class agreements on such matters.

Douglas Bell

Polemic 5, from Bulletin 683, 19th January 1993.

Terror raids on Iraq only add to the West's gloom. Anti-imperialism will prevail. Monopoly-economy sickness rages on. Doubts stir revisionist corpse in Russia. Grasp of Leninist theory more needed than ever.

The confused warmongering aims of Western imperialism in the Middle East are well reflected in the chaotic mishandling of the latest blitzkrieg massacres.

The anti-Iraq 'coalition' which was only got together in the first place because so many greedy fingers did not want to be left out of the possible pie of plundering the remnants of the Iraqi state if the American invasion had gone all the way to the dismemberment of the country, is crumbling because of the indecisiveness of the latest US raids, and the hostility they are rousing everywhere.

And if it emerges that the brutal onslaught on the Al-Rashid hotel in the heart of Baghdad was an intentional piece of nazi intimidation and not just another piece of gross hamfistedness by the bloated US military, then the rats might really start deserting the doomed 'coalition' ship in a hurry.

The fact that no one anywhere has much idea what US policy is really aiming for, not even in Washington, is the best story out of this latest bloodbath, not the clumsy savagery itself or the shifty attempts to justify and explain it.

If the imperialist groups following the US lead were told tomorrow that enough smiting had been done for now, they would all nod wisely in agreement. If they were told on the other hand that a fullscale invasion ought to take place, they would nod equally vigorously.

The real attention of Britain, France, and the USA is much more likely to

be focussed on what is being made of the endless revolutionary-nationalist turmoil in the Middle East by rival bourgeois-idealist and imperialist forces such as Japan, Germany, Islamic fundamentalism, Russian revisionism, etc, rather than on what would be the next 'logical' step to take, if any, against the Saddam regime.

And all of the West's judgments here are clouded by their overriding difficulty of facing the greatest economic crisis in the international capitalist system's entire history but with zero confidence about how they are going to come out of it.

Washington's muddleheaded dither over what it is trying to achieve with its former stooge Saddam, is as much connected with the imminent markets catastrophe likely to be associated with IBM's colossal corporate failure as with the problems of trying to balance different factional interests around the vital Persian Gulf region.

The US monopoly bourgeoisie may still tell itself and the rest of the world in none too subtle terms that American imperialism rules the planet, but the very foundations of that hegemony are now so shaky (collapsing trade dominance, hopeless balance of payments deficits, uncontrollable domestic budget deficits, etc) that the very class-philosophical core giving the American ruling class its 50-year dominance of international affairs is being undermined.

The West's stooge organisation at the United Nations, now back in Washington's favour after having been nearly abandoned as unmalleable during Reagan's reign, could soon lurch out of control again as the worldwide slump starts to bite deeper into the Third World forcing scores of opportunist nationalist-bourgeois regimes to try facing their masses with some new gimmick than just hanging onto the 'new world order' nonsense of US imperialist temporary hegemony and hoping for the best.

The response from the Arab capitals and from other Islamic states to the criminal tormenting of Iraq by US imperialist bullying is not going at all in favour of the much-trumpeted but totally bogus 'UN coalition' of just 18 months ago.

And hardly surprisingly

when the Western economic domination of the planet is further from a solution' to the international crisis than ever, and when a restless bourgeois 'free' press is, even at its most censored and blinkered when defending Western imperialist aggression abroad, unable to conceal some of the reality of the misery of monopoly-capitalist domination and warmongering-exploitation in a period of uncontrollable worldwide slump:

The blast that hit the residential quarter of Karrada on Sunday night also wounded Saheb's two daughters, Leila and Nadia. Their niece, Sara, aged 5, was slightly injured.

Raed Maksoud, Leila's husband, a businessman aged 33, rushed home when anti-aircraft guns opened fire in a deluge of pink tracers over the city. "I was worried, because our house is close to the presidential palace, which could have been targeted. I found no one, just a horrific cloud of smoke and savage destruction," he said. "I told myself: 'My wife is dead'. Imagine thinking that," he said, tears welling in his eyes.

The pale blue venetian blinds of the house next door were heaped in a pile of metal spaghetti. Two cars in the driveway were wrecked. Inside the house, the wedding picture hung askew from its hook.

"We heard a stiff thud," recalled Dr Hussam Mohammed Daouk, an army physician living on the same row of little villas. "Suddenly, the windows and doors fell on top of our heads. I was with my wife, five children, mother-in-law and nephew," he said. Two of the little girls had minor cuts from flying glass.

"If more missiles come, we will say hello and welcome," Dr Daouk said defiantly. "Bush's bombs are not smart, they are dumb bombs. If they were smart, they would not come down on civilians," he added.

His wife was distraught as she stared around the remains of her shattered bedroom.

"There was so much smoke, I couldn't see ahead. We have been patient wit everything, the sanctions, but to see fire come down on our children, what can I say?" she sighed, fighting off tears.

"Will an American woman accept to have her bedroom mangled like this, with rockets coming in instead of flowers, and blood streaming down her children?" a neighbour asked.

"What exactly do they want from us?" asked Abdel Rida al-Quraish. "Where are the sins of the Iraqi people in this affair?" - Washington Post.

Even the dimmest ranks of the Labour Party, of Tory backbenchers, and of Russian revisionist opportunism are beginning to wonder anxiously whether the

Western leaders really know where they are going, and whether any promised 'recovery' for everyone is really in sight (see subsequent articles).

And Western meddling in the remnants of the deliberately NATO-disrupted Yugoslav workers state has brought only similar confusion and misery, again by the capitalist press's own admissions:

"Western diplomats here say that the five-hour meeting in Belgrade laid out an elaborate game plan for the Serbian pitch in Geneva, where Mr Karadzic for three days rejected the terms on offer and then capitulated, allegedly under extreme pressure from Mr Milosevic, who left Geneva with the praise of the international mediators ringing in his ears.

"Everything you saw in Geneva was essentially staged," said a well-placed western diplomat.

Serbian state television similarly underwent a swift conversion when the Geneva deal was accepted, moving overnight to embrace the Geneva deal and talk of peace.

After the Geneva session the co-chairman, Cyrus Vance, told the Guardian that there would have been no agreement without Mr Milosevic's backing, and unreservedly thanked the Serbian leader, whom the US government has called a suspected war criminal, for his role.

"If Vance is sincere, he doesn't understand Milosevic at all," said the diplomat.

Another senior diplomatic source said Mr Milosevic was making fools of the international mediators and the Geneva plan would never be implemented.

"It's a plan that can't work and it's a state that won't function," the source said. The Vance-Owen blueprint divides Bosnia into nine semi-autonomous provinces with a weak central government, leaves the Serbs controlling half of the republic, and requires a huge increase in the UN peacekeeping presence.

Although the Geneva documents acknowledge the primacy of Bosnian sovereignty, few analysts here see it as leading anywhere but to the gradual partition of the republic.

The incoming US administration is said to be incensed with the Vance-Owen package, viewing it as legitimising "war crimes and aggression", in the words of one source.

Diplomats draw an analogy with the Croatian peace plan devised by Mr Vance which was implemented when Mr Milosevic gave it his blessing.

A year on, one third of Croatia is still controlled by gangs of thugs licensed by Belgrade.

The key difference between the Croatian and Bosnian deals is that the Croats accepted theirs in return for securing international recognition.

By contrast, Bosnia is recognised at the onset of the war.

The realities of international capitalist crisis are forcing remnants of the Soviet workers state to try to think a bit deeper about the catastrophic mess which decades of anti-Leninist revisionism in Moscow finally resulted in.

The 'Bolsheviks' emerging around Nina Andreyeva have made a better analysis than most about the international causes and implications of Soviet revisionist opportunism in its retreat from the Marxist perspective for world socialist revolution.

While still pitifully weak on identifying the start of the decline (towards class-collaboration with imperialism) in the wretched defeatist zig-zags of the Stalin leadership in the 1920s and 1930s, lurching philistinely from catastrophic ultra-leftism against German reformism for being 'social fascists' to disastrous right-opportunism in Spain tail-ending the doomed and treacherous bourgeois 'Republican' government, - - the AUCPB is at least still aware of the crisis of imperialism as the fundamental driving force for social, political and economic development on the planet, even if the crucial role for revolutionary Marxist-Leninist theory has not remotely been grasped yet:

"If in the time of Stalin the basic aim of the economy was the reduction of the cost of goods (the main item of the plan of each enterprise) and the production of high-quality goods by making use of scientific achievement and new techniques and economising in the raw materials, power and labour force, then at the time of Khrushchev and Brezhnev the main index of the economic effectiveness of production was the gaining of profit in monetary expression. They started to achieve this through the method of artificially raising prices, that is to say, an utterly unreasonable method which allows the reduction of the amount of the produced goods while increasing the prices. Short-sighted pursuit of profits and other private interests for the enterprise led to the retardation of the rate of the development of the national economy, a decrease of the effectiveness of investment and the gradual lowering of the value of the rouble. Planned reduction of prices was suspended and the increase of the prices of consumer goods started, and cheap goods disappeared. Scientific and technical progress was hindered and labour productivity decreased.

The opportunist economic policy resulted in a great gap between those who received high wages and low wages. The rate exceeded 1 to 30, and it now exceeds 1 to 150. The "black" economy which produces the elements of private enterprises is developing. The unlawful accumulation of capital by the new "Soviet" bourgeoisie began to appear. The new bourgeoisie,

who are getting rich gradually, destroyed everything around them. The "black" economic entrepreneurs and the bribed bureaucrats of the party and government organs are conspiring with each other. The process of class distinctions disappearing is made by social division and the division into the rich and the poor in society. Under these conditions, moral incentives to labour disappeared among the working people, while indifference to everything related to the state appeared. The violation of labour discipline and practices of squandering the people's property are increasing. The Soviet state is losing its class character. The Soviet state is changing from the state of the proletarian dictatorship to an "all-people state".

In this state bureaucracy, bribery and corruption are prevalent. Around the 80s the state structures increased three times, compared with the Stalin period. Efficiency of the state instrument is decreasing. The state is getting away from the working people, as it is said, it is separating from them. As a result, the social basis of the Soviet state has crumbled. The Soviet state lost the support of the working people and the struggle against crimes which were gradually paralysing the function of society weakened. Through the so-called "All-People State" the people became imbued with the idea of the so-called comprehensive equality and "pure" democracy. This bourgeois concept is covering in principle the impossibility of equality between the exploiter and the exploited, between the oppressor and the oppressed.

With the seizure of the leadership by the Gorbachev-Yakovlev-Shevardnadze group, rightist opportunism went over to restoring capitalism on a legal basis. Starting from Khrushchev's concept of "complete and final victory of socialism in the Soviet Union" and through Brezhnev's false propaganda of "developed socialism", the upper stratum of the CPSU has transformed itself completely and finally into a betrayer, a renegade, a cat's paw of US monopoly capital and its criminal bourgeoisie, a devastator of socialism and the multi-national soviet state and a disorganiser of the Party. As a result rightist opportunism has finished its evolution. The opportunists in the party leadership, including Gorbachev, who were singing the *Internationale* in front of the TV cameras some days ago, are clamouring today about "The downfall of socialism", "The Historic dead end", and "A failed experiment". In this way they are revealing their complete political and moral bankruptcy.

Socialism will sweep away Imperialism

In addition we must take three aspects into consideration. It is totally wrong to regard the counter-revolution as having emerged finally and completely victorious. No matter what the machinations of the imperialists and reactionaries may be, the general current of history will inevitably flow through feudalism and capitalism to socialism and sweep away the fortress of imperialism. This current might be checked for a while and face obstacles, but no one can reverse the wheel of history.

Opportunism has suffered defeat in the Soviet Union.

Secondly, strictly speaking, it is not socialism and the communist idea, but insignificant and incompetent opportunism, which had snatched power by hypocritical means, that has suffered defeat in the USSR.

Political double-dealers and careerists devoid of any ideas, who won the people's confidence by fraud and chameleon adap-

tation, have entrenched themselves in the top hierarchy of the CPSU and the Soviet state.

Today, they, in order to remain perched on the people's necks, are ready to depend on whatever scum of the earth - criminals, outcasts and even fascists, the inveterate enemy of mankind. They are behaving diplomatically even towards despicable anti-Soviet exiles, and grovelling at the feet of the racists of South Africa and Israel, and the reactionary Seoul and Taiwan regimes.

Therefore, it can be clearly said that it is not the part of communists that has ceased to exist, but its moribund rotten and paralysed structure born of opportunism that has proved incompetent and suffered disaster. The opportunists have long since ceased to embody the Leninist party, but are objectively opposed to it. In this connection, the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks is against the revival of the CPSU which has become a party of right-wing social democrats, for its opportunist leadership to be set up through its revival would restore nothing but opportunism.

Socialism provides the only answer

Thirdly, capitalism, which has now been saved by the renegades and opportunists, can solve no problem of humanity. The collapse of imperialism may be delayed, but cannot be removed from the order of the day. Its present "triumph" is illusory and involves the seeds of a deeper crisis, the aggravation of all world-wide contradictions, and of a sharpening struggle for redivision of the world. And, what is most important, Iraq, Yugoslavia and other projects for a third world war are being taken up and put into effect by the imperialists.

Socialism, therefore, provides the only chance of saving all the people on the earth from military, ecological, economic, demographic and other global crisis. For today, it is not capitalism, but socialism that represents in the fullest scope the interests of all humanity, of which Bush and Gorbachev are fond of talking. The process of reestablishment of capitalism in European socialist countries and in the Soviet Union not only has been contrary to the objective law of historical progress, but also is arresting the struggle for human survival. Therefore, this process of retrogression must be stopped. Counter-revolution is doomed to failure.

These better passages from Nina Andreyeva's address to North Korean teachers and students in Kim Il Sung university last October still fail to grasp the constant requirement for all anti-imperialist struggle to fight for a leadership of the most up-to-date Marxist-Leninist theory on total world class-war and ideological developments.

That means, for example, battling towards a Leninist-level critique of all attempts at communist leadership everywhere, - and at all failings and shortcomings in those attempts, - including the bizarre subjective cultism that goes on around Kim Il Sung.

The impression that the Andreyeva group has merely 17 tried to readapt some of the

forms of remembered Leninist party traditions in the Soviet Union is reinforced by a few of her less perceptive opening remarks, which betray a continuing hopeless theoretical muddle typical of the entire period of degeneration from Stalinist revisionism to Gorbachevite liquidationism.

This confusion is symbolised by repeating the old 'original sin' sophistry that things only "started to go wrong" from "the end of the 1950s when the leadership of the party and state was seized by Krushchev and his associates".

This christmas pantomime version of CPSU decay, in which the wicked Krushchev bounds in and puts everyone under an evil spell, is as pathetically idealist and as far from dialectical materialism as the subjective defeatism which originally began undermining the CPSU leadership in the 1920s and 1930s when the objective difficulties of the international revolution and the complacency of regarding Soviet developments as the be-all and end-all of world transformation started the retreat from Leninism.

What possessed Krushchev to 'suddenly' plunge the CPSU into opportunist degeneration? marked by a 'nasty petty-bourgeois philistine character'?

No explanation is given for such sudden dramatic deterioration, or more importantly for how such a seriously faulted individual could have risen steadily up the ranks of the CPSU over a 30-year period.

The only clue to this behaviour is in giving, as the occasion of Krushchev's alleged attack on previously prevailing 'normality', the question of the mysteriously-described "unlimited prestige of JVStalin" which, it is claimed, "was treacherously proclaimed to the whole world as the 'cult of the personality'".

Everything harmful for the socialist camp then followed on from this "anti-Stalin campaign", it is asserted, such as the split with China, etc.

This still gives no explanation as to why a trained and experienced Stalin-preferred CPSU professional revolutionary would suddenly want to start inflicting "moral

terror" on elements excluded from the CPSU as 'Stalinists'.

And while giving no explanation whatever for the alleged phenomenon of 'Krushevism', this sad article also ridiculously fails to say whether there was a problem of 'Stalinism' or not.

Certainly, limiting the question of flaws in Soviet development to matters of cheap psychiatry such as 'personality cults' is indeed shallow nonsense.

But a serious scientific appraisal of the eventual catastrophic difficulties for the Third International requires a lot more explanation than this even sillier accusation about 'Krushevism' which apparently invented the entire problem of 'Stalinism' but no one quite knows why.

This is just ignorant gibberish, and it is to Lalkar's shame that it has begun to reprint Andreyeva's drivel without any comment at all, as though giving it approval, thus confirming long-established CPI(M) head-in-the-sand attitudes repeatedly criticised in the Bulletin to which Lalkar has never had the gumption to reply.

If people cannot see the problems that the CPSU and the Third International ran into, then there can be no purpose in pointing them out to them. But, of course, one of the signs of this dogmatic sclerosis which, starting in the 1920s and 1930s, eventually destroyed the Third International, was precisely this unwillingness to ever admit that anything was wrong with policy, or that there were any major disagreements, - active disagreements, - on Third International policy.

And least of all was there then any willingness to patiently polemicise about all disagreements until events moved on further and proved one side or the other right or wrong, or until longer-term decisions finally had to be taken to see if practice confirmed the agreed theory wholly, partially, or not at all.

Andreyeva, Lalkar, and others must realise that there remains a huge problem to be explained about the relationship of Stalinist revisionist deviations (which went all the way to the notorious 1952 'Economic Problems of Socialism' nonsense about

Leninism being now out of date on the question of whether, in spite of the decay of capitalism, "on the whole capitalism is growing far more rapidly than ever before", as Lenin wrote in 'Imperialism' in 1916), to now.

This blinkered dogmatism that capitalism had ceased to grow and that "The sphere of the exploitation of the world's resources by the major capitalist countries will not expand but contract that their opportunities for sale in the world market will deteriorate, and that their industries will be operating more and more below capacity" (i.e. on a permanent basis starting from 1952) was against Marxist-Leninist theory and against all the evidence.

Worse still, apart from apparently going unchallenged in spite of obvious first hand knowledge available to many Third International parties that capitalism was still managing to expand in spite of its deepening general crisis, - this frightened dogma then became transformed into the entire basis of all revisionist/liquidationist doomed bankrupt 'theory' - - namely that world socialist revolution was no longer on the agenda because capitalism would be 'peacefully surpassed by socialism' and would succumb quietly.

This catastrophic nonsense wiping out the whole revolutionary essence of Marxism Leninism class-struggle and thereby destroying the very foundations of healthy CPSU relations with the international proletariat and anti-imperialist struggle, - was bound to have condemned the USSR to a lingering death unless reversed.

But such was the anti-Marxist-Leninist and anti-revolutionary spirit that had been grafted onto Third International relations that even sectors of the anti-imperialist struggle such as Cuba and Vietnam which actually lived a revolutionary alternative perspective to Moscow's class-collaborating gibberish, - were unable to grasp that they needed to polemicise openly against the CPSU's abandonment of Leninist theory, and felt they were being 'good communists' in keeping quiet and seeing no contradictions between their own revolutionary defeat of US imperialist hegemony, and Moscow's incipient capitulation to it.

And even if this ILWP analysis is still considered

not to hold water, surely the collapse of the Stalinist party legacy, if not the controversial period of Stalin's personal rule, is cause of sufficient confusion and concern to warrant at least some debate (in open working-class party polemics) on these complex questions, some aspects of which are so new that wide-ranging debate about them is all that has been satisfactorily established about them so far.

But this Third-International-style sclerotic dogmatism that "there are no unanswered questions, and there is nothing to debate", etc, - (which publicly reigned, for example, when behind the scenes, the CPSU and Chinese party leaderships were already at loggerheads, - with the international proletariat only able to dismiss bourgeois-press reports of such splits as 'nonsense'), - is so ingrained that Lalkar & Co are terrified of answering a public polemic on these crucial questions to be worked out by the proletariat.

This fear is the living embodiment of the revisionist theory-deformities which flowed from the deep-down defeatism of the Stalin leadership, which began the retreat from Leninism ideologically in the 1920s and 1930s in a petty-bourgeois opportunism adaptation to the difficulties of continuing with Lenin's world socialist revolutionary perspectives, substituting e.g. such disasters as the Popular Front retreat into tail-ending liberal republicanism in Spain when faced with fascist aggression, resulting not only in no victory against Franco, obviously, but much worse in also leading much later struggles against fascism into a blind alley, such as behind Allende in Chile, and behind the Sandinistas in Nicaragua.

But all we get from Lalkar is faithful reprints of Nina Andreyeva sucking up to "the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung", etc, and blaming the 'anti-Stalin campaign' for the 'impairment of the prestige of socialism', etc, plus such dangerously feeble definitions of 'opportunism' as being merely 'unprincipledness' or the 'short-sighted pursuit of immediate individual interests' whereas the crucial issue is opportunism's deliberate abandonment or distortion or ignorance of correct revolutionary theory.

Build Leninism. JH

EPSR/ILWP Books List

1) Workers' Party manifesto (original version - no longer published*).

2) The Workers Party and the struggle to re establish Bolshevik traditions.

3) For a Leninist Party and world socialist revolution; against Solidarnosc, Trotskyism and bureaucratic centrism.

4) For Lenin's line combining world socialist revolution with peaceful coexistence between camps; against E P Thompson, the Trots, and the reformist/revisionist CPs.

5) Lenin's arguments for a strong socialist state against Trotsky's 'permanent' counter revolution.

6) Moscow should denounce reactionaries in the CP movement, as well as anti-communist Trots.

7) Lenin's proletarian dictatorship versus the CPGB, Trotskyism, 'left' Labourism, Moscow's weaknesses and the Morning Star.

8) Leninist perspective (1979 - 1988) on the triumphant Irish national-liberation struggle Pt 1.

9) The collapse of the 'municipal socialism' fraud is one obstacle removed.

10) Reformist 'socialism' is finished. Down with 'labour movement traditions'.

For class war against anti-communism and against collaboration with imperialism. Proletarian dictatorship is the only worthwhile democracy.

11) On the inevitability of inter-imperialist war:

Inter-imperialist WW3 well already under preparation. Proletarian revolution the only possible way forwards for mankind – led by Bolshevism based on Lenin's complete break from social-democracy's class-collaborating treachery and petty bourgeois opportunism

12) How revisionist retreat from Leninism played into US imperialist hands for subverting the Grenada Revolution and pillorying the NJM majority.

13) Gorbachevism: How step by class-collaborating step the Gorbachev group has pretended to 'remedy' Stalinist

revisionism (on war and revolution, and how to tackle imperialist aggression) with even worse capitulation to defeatism, - further than ever from revolutionary Leninism.

14) To come

15) Leninist perspective (1988 - 1994) on the triumphant Irish national-liberation struggle Pt 2

16) The defeat for Western 'democratic' influence in China is the best possible development for frustrating US imperialism's counter-revolutionary plans and capitalism's arms-race tilt towards World War III.

17) Workers states are the way forwards but minus Moscow weak revisionist leadership chaos [Originally published as *EPSR Future Perspectives* 2001]

18) For open Leninist discussion of imperialism's fascist slump crisis and drive to war, the significance of the Soviet historical achievement, the world proletarian dictatorship future, and the bankruptcy of Third Internationalism:

Five polemics concerning the Indian Workers Association (IWA) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M) published between 1991-1993.

19) Driven by insoluble "over-production" crisis the monopoly imperialist system is gearing up for perpetual inter-imperialist war [originally *EPSR Perspectives* 2002]

20) Occupied Palestine, Nazi-Zionism, imperialist crisis and war. Jewish religious freemasonry and the conspiracy/fraud of "left anti-semitism".

21) Unanswered polemics v *Lalkar/Proletarian* (2003). Against museum-Stalinism:

Re-assessing the giant achievement of the 20th century workers states is crucial in the great debate stirring as revolutionary turmoil erupts against capitalism's world crisis catastrophe. But taking on anti-communist brainwashing (including Trotskyite biliousness) and resolving the great outstanding questions is flawed by blind Stalin worship, denial of errors, cover-up and sectarian paralysis. Leninism needs rebuilding.

22) Leninist perspective (1994 -) on the triumphant Irish national-liberation struggle Pt 3 [in progress]

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Leaving the world to be run by the greed of the capitalist monopolies can never stop resulting in periodic crises where trade-war destruction must rule, and to which the only antidote is Revolution and a strong workers state, --- as these essentials of Marxist-Leninist science explain.

Only the crisis events of collapsing imperialist rule interpreted in this Marxist-Leninist light will educate a mass workers party of leadership to do the necessary tasks.

The Revisionist retreat from the Soviet workers state because of crawling to shallow Western elitist and shame at their own past bureaucratic mistakes has only proved the soundness of Lenin's 'State & Revolution' science about a very long period of proletarian dictatorship being the only way for the world to see-off monopoly imperialist warmongering, now back with a vengeance.

It is often said and written that the main point in Marx's teachings is the class struggle; but this is not true. And from this untruth very often springs the opportunist distortion of Marxism, its falsification in such a way as to make it acceptable to the bourgeoisie. For the doctrine of the class struggle was created not by Marx, but by the bourgeoisie before Marx, and generally speaking it is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. Those who recognise only the class struggle are not yet Marxists; they may be found to be still within the boundaries of bourgeois thinking and bourgeois politics. To confine Marxism to the doctrine of the class struggle means curtailing Marxism, distorting it, reducing it to something which is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is what constitutes the most profound difference between the Marxist and the ordinary petty (as well as big) bourgeois. This is the touchstone on which the real understanding and recognition of Marxism is to be tested. And it is not surprising that when the history of Europe brought the working class face to face with this question as a practical issue, not only all the opportunists and reformists, but all the "Kautskyites" (people who vacillate between reformism and Marxism) proved to be miserable philistines and petty-bourgeois democrats who repudiate the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"The last cause of all real crises always remains the poverty and restricted consumption of the masses as compared to the tendency of capitalist production to develop the productive forces as if only the absolute power of consumption of the entire society would be their limit." (Capital. Vol III. P568.)

"For many a decade past", wrote Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, "the history of industry and commerce is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production, against the property relations that are the conditions for the existence of the bourgeoisie and of its rule. It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put the existence of the entire bourgeois society on its trial, each time more threateningly. In these crises a great part, not only of the existing products,

but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity - the epidemic of overproduction. Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed. And why? Because there is too much civilisation, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property; on the contrary...they have become too powerful for these conditions, by which they are fettered, and so soon as they overcome these fetters, they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endanger the existence of bourgeois property. The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them."

The conditions of bourgeois democracy very often compel us to take a certain stand on a multitude of small and petty reforms, but we must be able, or learn, to take such a position on these reforms. (in such a manner) that - to oversimplify the matter for the sake of clarity - five minutes of every half-hour speech are devoted to reforms and twenty-five minutes to the coming revolution. (Lenin Dec 1916: Principles involved in the war issue.)

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