

# HOW MAO CONQUERED CHINA



The Chinese "communists" take power, October 1949

## Writings from the US Trotskyist movement, 1948-9

"The Chinese Communist Revolution was the greatest event of the 20th century after the October 1917 Russian Revolution."

Statements like that were for decades common on the Trotskyist left. Even among those of us who believed that a new working-class "political revolution" was necessary against the Stalinist regime established over all of mainland China in 1949.

The Chinese revolution was seen as a giant step forward, albeit in a twisted and deformed way, in an ongoing world revolution against capitalism. With China, fully one third of the land mass of the globe

was under Stalinist control — and outside capitalist and imperialist control. The countries of the Stalinist bloc were deformed and degenerated workers' states, the left said.

How do such judgements look now, on the 60th anniversary of Mao's revolution? It is 30 years since the ruling Chinese Communist Party made its turn towards red-in-tooth-and-claw market capitalism combined with continuing rigid Stalinist political control of the people; 20 years since the Tiananmen Square massacre allowed the watching world to see a small glimpse of the horrors of Chinese Stalinist rule. The judgements look nonsensical now, and they always were.

On the left at the time, in 1949, only the Workers' Party and Independent Socialist League of the USA said plainly that the Maoist revolution was a reactionary and historically regressive phenomenon. This selection of the contemporary coverage published in the weekly *Labor Action* was made by Hal Draper, who had edited *Labor Action* at the time, in 1970. It is a necessary antidote to the nonsense that even now, in the era of Stalinist-state-licensed Chinese capitalism, still washes around the Chinese Revolution on its 60th anniversary.

Sean Matgamma

# 1. The symbiosis of reaction

Founding ceremony of the “communist” state

## Making sense of the facts

ORIGINAL INTRODUCTION BY HAL DRAPER

**T**he articles that follow were written and published while the events themselves were still unfolding, during the crucial 1948–9 period when the Maoist party was still conquering China, without benefit of 20–20 hindsight. Without benefit of documents and research that became available only afterward, Jack Brad called all the shots.

Their contemporaneity gives these articles a sense of immediacy and vividness which historical contemplation cannot provide. But that alone would not be enough reason to publish them in 1970. The point is that, after two decades, they still provide a unique analysis of the meaning of the events and, above all, of the social nature of the Communist party and state power. The fullest discussion of this central question is in Chapter 11, “What Is Chinese Stalinism?”, but we have brought together, usually in abridged form, other articles by Brad which contributed to the total picture. We have omitted purely reportorial material, in order to concentrate on the analytical; but of course, in such explain-as-you-go articles the two aspects are often well-mixed.

All of these articles originally appeared in the independent socialist weekly *Labor Action*, with the exception of the above-mentioned Chapter 11, which was published in the *New Internationalist*; and they appeared between September 1948 and October 1949, except for the last one (included here as a kind of appendix) which came in 1950.

There are two distinctive aspects of the point of view which Brad develops, both characteristic of the independent socialist approach. One is its opposition to both the old oppressing power (Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang) and the new oppressing power (Mao and his national-Stalinist machine). There was no chance of Brad’s falling for the then common belief that the Chinese Communists were at bottom simply “agrarian reformers” a belief fostered by the Communist propaganda mill of course, but earnestly accepted by all kinds of well-intentioned liberals and leftists who needed to believe that they were a beneficent alternative to the regime of the warlords and Kuomintang butchers, whom Washington supported. Nor did he fall backward into the camp of establishment anti-Communism — that is, of support, for the “nationalist” Chiang out of fear and hatred of Stalinism. The programme of proletarian revolution in China meant revolutionary opposition to both of these rival oppressors — that is, the programme of building a Third Camp alternative.

The second aspect is the analysis of Chinese Communism (Maoism) not simply as a sinister or devilish bogey but as the carrier of a social system of its own, the social order of bureaucratic collectivism — the rule of a new exploiting class. Without such an analysis, Maoism is a mystery. With this analysis, it was possible for Brad to explain clearly, immediately, what it has taken years for some to grasp only dimly. Precisely because it is a question of a social system, and not of political figures, there was no difficulty in understanding the existence of national antagonisms within this social system (Chinese national interests vs. Russian national interests within the context of bureaucratic collectivism). National antagonisms exist not only under capitalism; they spring inevitably to birth under any exploitive social system, including the new type of social system ruled by a new class.

But in these articles Brad’s approach is concrete: not the imposition a theory on the facts, but the task of making sense (i.e. theory) out of the facts. This is needed now as it was then.

**T**he governmental crisis is unresolved. The Kuomintang remains the dictatorial ruler of nationalist China. Its armies, its secret police, its bureaucracy, its gangster-run labour front, its economic enterprises are the state structure. It has been unable to spread its support to include other groups. It remains a corrupt police regime, exploiting all classes, employing terror and, vampire-like, sucking the maximum loot out of the people and the economy.

Its base is its military and police power. It does not enjoy the confidence of the banking, industrial, or commercial groups. The Kuomintang has a rapacious relationship toward productive social groupings in the country. It supports the landlord class against the peasantry and that is its primary social connection.

Through its state power the Kuomintang is actively in control of the preponderance of industry and commerce. All the state monopolies and the multitudinous enterprises, which far outweigh private business, are subject to its corruption.

This ruling party and its support do not represent a rising bourgeois class such as organised the nationalist movement in the Twenties. This is not only two decades later, but also 17 years of war later — years in which defeat, Japanese occupation, rise of Stalinist power, shrinkage of the economy and unabated misery of the people have reduced the comprador bourgeoisie to a secondary place and a harassed existence.

The Chinese state is a feudo-bureaucratic bourgeois dictatorial state. This state cannot unify China because it bases itself on the least cohesive element, the landlord class, whose tendency is a centrifugal one. It is alienated from the 400 millions of suffering masses and, therefore, cannot arouse the support necessary to defeat Stalinism.

Its military helplessness is an expression of its inability to introduce even the simplest reforms against landlordism. This ruling class will be forced to put all its hopes in a Third World War, in which, by offering China to the US, it will expect American military power to accomplish the tasks it cannot perform.

The military crisis reflects this situation. The Stalinists now control all of Manchuria except Mukden, the nine most important Northern provinces (which have just been organised into the North China Liberated Area) and areas well below the Yellow River and inside the Great Wall. The Stalinists have proven their ability to penetrate to the Southern Yangtze River as well.

At the National Assembly sessions one delegate stated: “the troops don’t know what they are fighting for — the government carries out no reforms that could gain the support of the people.” The *Herald Tribune’s* excellent correspondent Christopher Rand writes (June 7): “The army’s state of mind is regarded by many as the chief reason for the Communists’ success in China.

“Critics, both foreign and domestic, have said the army’s leadership is confused from top to bottom, that there is little idea of any common purpose and almost no fighting spirit in most units.”

The tendency now is for local landlord defence units to develop since the Kuomintang armies are so undependable. The result is the strengthening of warlordism and disintegration of the national administration.

The economic paralysis is demonstrated by an inflation which makes the German inflation of the early Twenties look like normalcy. Production and normal commerce are

Shanghai, December 1948, after a currency crash

impossible under these conditions and tend to cease. Highest profits are in speculation. And at every stage at every transaction the ubiquitous KMT officialdom gets its huge rake-off in gangster fashion. Compounding the monetary problem is the constant administrative intervention of the state. Taxes are raised, materials and bank withdrawals are controlled and limited.

The result has been the alienation of large sections of the Chinese and even the American bourgeoisie from Chiang Kai-shek. Many of them now talk of the hopelessness of Kuomintang China and are beginning to look to the CP as a possible alternative.

The CP has directed a heavy propaganda barrage to these capitalists, offering all kinds of guarantees of lower taxes, freedom of trade and production, and no expropriation. To the Chinese bourgeoisie the CP offers an all-out fight against competing US and Japanese goods, and to foreign capital it offers welcome and protection.

The Stalinists give as evidence of good faith the policies in their areas. Mao Tse-tung denounces “encroaching on industry and commerce — and hitting at industry and commerce in the field of tax policy” as “leftist tendencies” which must be corrected.

Under these circumstances the US has not found an instrument to effectuate its China policy. The US has poured into China from four to five billions since the end of the war. It has supplied the Kuomintang with several hundred ships and planes and has armed its divisions.

At the war’s end the US navy ferried nine entire Kuomintang armies into Manchuria by ship and plane. Its intervention has been constant. General Marshall directed this intervention for over a year as special envoy. Ambassador Stuart has his fingers deep in Kuomintang politics. The US obtained a treaty from China which gives it free transport and practical control of inland navigation. The American ECA determines the distribution of 370 millions in aid and thereby determines the orientation of a large section of the economy. But US policy is a failure because it cannot find a substantial political faction which is dependable enough and capable enough to resist the disintegrating forces.

The feudo-bureaucratic cliques of the Kuomintang cannot serve this function. Their venality, their incompetency and their landlord connections make of them a corrupt class. They are incapable of serious concessions even to the bourgeoisie, on which the US would like to base itself. The Chinese bourgeoisie has shown itself incapable of organising a resistance inside the Kuomintang. The failure of American policy is linked to the inner rot of the Chinese bourgeoisie.

A new vigorous political group is essential to US policy. But such a group could only be erected outside of the Kuomintang arena and in opposition to it. It would have to undertake such sweeping reforms as would be tantamount to revolt against these entrenched power. In such a situation the way would be opened to quick Stalinist victory. The dilemma of American policy is that it must support Chiang, out of fear of the alternative to his defeat, and yet this support is squandered and dissipated into unproductive channels, which in turn undermines Chiang’s regime.

There are indications that at Yalta the Big Three divided Asia, as follows: Russia to get Manchuria, Southern Sakhalin, the Kuriles and Darien; US to get the rest of China, Japan and the Northern Pacific; Britain and her satellite empires to keep Southeast Asia and India. In the

## 2. Two Chiangs on the skids

inter-imperial antagonisms which have become dominant since then, the US has been unable to take and consolidate its share. The Russians have given far, far less support to the Chinese Stalinists than the US has to the Kuomintang. Harold Isaacs writes: "...the Russians have meanwhile played a passive game, and they have been amply rewarded for doing so. Every American policy, every America act has so far served the Russian rather than the American interest in Asia. Thus Russia has held itself largely aloof from the developing civil war in China, although not so aloof that its influence is wholly unfelt."

America is hated in China today as never before because of its failures and interventions and continued support to a despotic regime. America has failed to bring either unity or peace to China, although it desired both in order best to effectuate its economic domination.

The failure in China is a major historic blow at American capitalism. It may well prove fatal. The century-long lure of the Chinese market, the fabulous possibilities and potentials of that continent are almost lost. The possibility comes daily closer to realisation that in place of this great hope of American imperialism is rising a bastion of Stalinism which would create a base from which the US could be driven from the Western Pacific and Asia, economically and militarily.

Stalinism's southward march has reached a decisive stage. The Northern provinces have been consolidated. Manchuria is the arsenal for the CP armies.

A stable regime based on moderate land reform and on the support of the middle and rich peasants and landlords has been established. Recent events indicate that the Stalinists intend to expand to an all-national power. Recently a conference was called in Harbin of trade unionists for the purpose of launching a national labour organisation. The working class of the big coastal cities like Shanghai, Tientsin and Canton, and in the interior in Nanking and Hankow is not under Stalinist influence. Memory of the betrayals of 1927-28, though dimming, is still present.

However, in the absence of an independent alternative of substantial power, the CP exerts an enormous attraction as against the terroristic gangsterism of the Kuomintang. The Stalinists know that China can never be conquered, nor can any conquest be made secure, without the urban working masses. That is the explanation of the Harbin Conference. This conference laid the basis for the first: national labour federation. The Stalinists have never attempted this before. Such a federation would have as its object the organisation of the working class under Stalinist leadership. It is part of the plan of Stalinist expansion. The working class has not yet yielded to Stalinist blandishments. Therein lies hope.

The second event is the Stalinist wooing of dissident and dissatisfied bourgeois elements. The May Day call of the CP started: "All democratic parties and groups, people's organisations and social luminaries speedily convene a political conference, discuss and carry out the convoking of a people's representative assembly to establish a democratic coalition government."

There has been considerable response to this call. The Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee (a dissident group), the Chinese Democratic League, the Farmers and Workers Democratic Party and others have replied favourably. Scores of Kuomintang exiles lying in Hong Kong have taken up the call. The outstanding figure among these exiles is Marshall Li Chai-sum, Chiang's former chief of staff. General Feng, the "Christian general," supports the call. Hong Kong seethes with intrigue and negotiations.

The basis is being laid for a "coalition" of these groups with the CP. Not one of these groups has a mass following. However, that is not what the CP needs at this time. Such a "coalition" would enhance the threat to Chiang's regime and would give a semi-legal cover to the Stalinist conquests which could be organised as a "national government."

The great student demonstrations which have swept the cities for months have a spontaneous character and are an immense force of protest. They are not coordinated nor politically channeled. They are movements of protest against Kuomintang tyranny and American intervention. This is the most important active popular upsurge since the end of the war. The government has been unable to suppress it fully. It gathers support from the intellectuals and professors. Its weaknesses are political and social. The latter above all, because it is not linked to the working masses. In the specific context of the current political arena these students, especially those in the Southern cities, that is, those who have not suffered direct contact with it, are drawn to Stalinism.

Hope lies with the uncommitted working masses of the cities, that voiceless millions will find in themselves the power to wrest of the nation against Stalinism from the bloodied hands of the Kuomintang. The first problem and duty of revolutionists is that of survival under conditions of political terror in both sections of China. This problem alone will require require all the ingenuity and political wisdom and heroism that can be mustered.

September 6 and 13, 1948



Chiang Kai-shek.

**The fall of Tsinan, capital of Shantung Province in Northern China, brings to a head the military crisis of the Kuomintang government of Chiang Kai-shek.**

Economic gloom deepens into chronic disaster. Production continues to decline while the rapacious KMT bureaucracy continues to suck the lifeblood out of trade and industry. Meanwhile the \$400 million American aid is dissipated in desperate measures to keep the country going. \$125 million goes to direct military purposes but this is hardly a trickle.

It is not certain whether the venal "court" around Chiang has given him this picture in toto. Nevertheless even he has heard the rumblings from inside his own National Assembly and elsewhere. That is why, with great fanfare and a gigantic publicity stunt, Chiang inaugurated his latest "new" political movement. With great cunning this move was inaugurated by Chiang's son, Chiang Ching-kuo, who spent many years in Moscow denouncing his father and repudiating the KMT. From Stalinist white hope to heir apparent has; proved a short and easy step for this darling of China's Soong dynasty.

With the prestige of having been a "leftist" and armed with the authority of his father's name, the young Chiang

descended on Shanghai several weeks ago. In this com-pradore capital he proceeded to arrest 100 leading bankers and other wealthy worthies who had been considered on the KMT protected list of insiders. Several were summarily executed, others threatened. Factory owners were threatened with reprisal if they ceased production. The most violent speeches since 1927 issued from the mouth of this "crusader."

"Our own economic policy is a socialistic revolutionary movement. The rich man's enjoyment of worldly comfort is actually drawn from the white bones of the poor who work to their death, oppressed by the city's colony of rich." "Shanghai will undergo a thorough change," he promised when he became economic dictator of the city. He then mobilised the KMT "Youth Army" for his support.

Several days after these dramatic events in Shanghai, Chiang announced his "new" 10-point programme which contains the usual empty verbiage so characteristic of his pronouncements:

"1. Work hard for national reconstruction.

"2. Be punctual and orderly.

"3. Eradicate inefficiency and corruption," etc. The heart of the programme is a popular mobilisation of all resources for the civil war: "Everything for the front."

This programme is remarkable in that it does not offer a single relief in the concrete from the multiform oppressions which burden the masses. Not one cent off taxes, no rent reduction, no curb on landlord power or reduction of "requisitioning" of men from the villages for the army, or right to form associations for workers.

It is an appeal to the people. That is something new in KMT policy, but it offers nothing around which a popular response can gather. It is a programme of austerity and greater burdens without relaxation of the dictatorship. No wonder it was answered with apathy.

The younger Chiang's attacks on the Shanghai com-pradores lifted the curtain on this call for support. It was meant as an assurance, as a down payment, on the new programme. It is interesting that the KMT and the regime were specifically excluded from arrest and all blame. In the disaster that haunts China important scapegoats had to be found. But the finger was pointed exclusively at the rich while the magic circle retained the immunity of the KMT itself.

This points to one of the new disintegrating tendencies. For the alienation of the bourgeoisie, especially the com-pradores, grows daily. The rich of the coastal cities no longer have faith in Chiang, his armies, or his currency. They are squeezed by his ubiquitous bureaucracy. Chiang, in desperation, has now deepened this mutual distrust, thereby also weakening his own support. He has gained nothing from the masses in compensation.

October 4, 1948

### CHRONOLOGY

- 1909-12: democratic upheaval. Abdication of the last Emperor, formation of the Guomindang (1912), followed by a period dominated by the rule of regional warlords.
- 1919: May 4th Movement — student protests at Japan's acquisition of German rights in China under the Versailles Treaty.
- 1920: Formation of Chinese Communist Party.
- 1924: Communist Party (under pressure from Stalin and his friends in Moscow) joins Guomindang. USSR sends military advisers to help Guomindang.
- 1927: Guomindang, led by Chiang Kai Shek, seizes Shanghai and massacres Communist workers there. In December 1927 CP attempts an uprising to seize power in Canton, which is heavily defeated. After that, CP organisers retreat to rural areas.
- 1931: Japan occupies Manchuria.
- 1933: Japan occupies China north of the Great Wall; withdraws from the League of Nations.
- 1934: Communist Party, under leadership of Mao Zedong, undertakes "Long March" to retreat to more remote areas.
- 1936: New alliance formed between Guomindang and Maoists to fight the Japanese.
- 1937: Capture and sack of Nanjing by Japanese troops. Huge massacre.
- 1939-45: Second World War. From 1941 Japan is in the war, allied with Germany, and US aids Chiang Kai Shek's Guomindang as an ally.
- 1945: Japan surrenders unconditionally at end of World

- War 2. Soviet Union occupies Manchuria; then withdraws, but takes industrial equipment as 'war booty'.
- 1946: Maoists break alliance with Guomindang and launch civil war against it. US initially seeks to act as mediator between Guomindang and Maoists.
- 1949: Maoists capture Beijing (Jan.); Shanghai (May); proclaim "People's Republic of China" (October). Chiang Kai Shek and Guomindang retreat to Taiwan.
- 1958: Mao launches "Great Leap Forward", an attempt at forced-march industrialisation and collectivisation of agriculture, which results in 20 million or more deaths through famine.
- 1961-2: Growing tensions between Mao and the Russian government lead to open diplomatic split. Over the 1960s, the Chinese government helps to organise "Maoist" splits from Communist Parties across the world.
- 1966-7: "Cultural Revolution" in China. Mao mobilises the army and youth to beat down a faction of the bureaucracy favouring more gradualist and market-oriented policies. Terror, many deaths, huge dislocation of education and economy.
- 1976: Mao dies. Soon after his death, the "Gang of Four", ultra-Maoist leaders, are deposed and arrested. From 1978 Deng Xiaoping, a leader of the anti-Maoist faction in the Cultural Revolution, achieves supremacy. China opens up to the world market.
- 1980s: Chinese government dismantles agricultural collectives and returns land effectively to individual ownership; expands foreign direct investment.
- 1990s: Large-scale privatisation of Chinese industry.

### 3. The “secret” of Communist success

**A** disaster of tremendous importance overwhelmed China with the fall of Mukden. All Manchuria, with its million square miles and 40 million population, is now in Stalinist hands.

The rout of Kuomintang armies is complete in the North. Whole army corps surrendered, tens of thousands joined the Stalinist armies and the number of dead, wounded and lost runs into the hundreds.

The fall of Manchuria dramatises the shift in power to the Chinese Communist Party. The Kuomintang is proved completely incapable of defending its own territories and its own rule; the fortunes of the Kuomintang are at a nadir.

The Chiang regime has ruled by the successive extermination of all opposition. The secret of its power under great adverse stresses is that it has decapitated all possible alternative political formations. It remains to be seen whether it has succeeded to the point where, in the absence of an alternative, the feudal-bureaucratic ruling clique will keep power by default. But even if it does, it can only accelerate the collapse and increase the cost of its own destruction to all China. And in the process it too will undergo great alteration.

Already are heard cries of defeatism. Numerous groups are actively in favour of compromise with the Communist Party; others favour peace without terms and at any price; and still others favour retreat below the Yangtze, surrender of the Great Northern Plain, the Yellow River Basin — the heart of China — to establish a Southern bastion, there to wait for the outbreak of World War Three and American military intervention.

The forces of disintegration, of localism, of warlordism — all the deeply rooted centrifugal forces of feudal China have been given a head. The landlord cliques, the black-marketiers and speculators — the most the most corrupt elements of the ruling class — will now intensify their ghoulish ransacking of China's prostrate body. For the defeats will worsen the economic situation, increase the inflationary pace, decrease the food supply and the raw material supply essential to industry. Relationship between Russia and the United States is also transformed. America is in jeopardy of being driven out of Asia. American policy, in President Truman's second administration, begins with a very narrow base indeed. Even to stabilise a South China regime will require an enormous outlay running into billions of dollars, which would seriously alter the orientation of United States foreign policy. It is questionable whether the Marshall Plan and the Western Union lend-lease are possible simultaneously with a huge military and economic programme for China. For such a programme would require direct, massive intervention. Such an intervention would face great opposition among the Chinese masses and from many sections of the Kuomintang as well. The Communist Party would make great popular gains in a struggle against such intervention.

It may very well be that America's day is done in China, that it is too late and the price is too great. The historic ambition of America's China policy, for exclusive domination over a unified, China is doomed for a long period to come, if not forever. Asia as a possible expansion ground for American capitalist expansion is no longer possible.

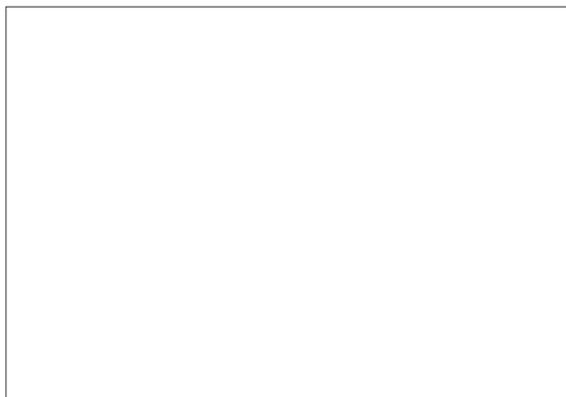
The CP will now be able to establish a stable and substantial state in North China from which to expand its military activities. The disintegration of the Kuomintang will move many elements toward the CP. Talks looking toward a new CP-sponsored coalition have been underway since May 1.

Groups of political exiles centered in Hong Kong, led by Marshal Li, many former generals and leading politicals of the Kuomintang, and the Democratic League are committed to entering such a coalition, which would have great attraction in the cities among students, intellectuals middle class and lower functionaries.

Such a national coalition may be launched shortly, now that a suitable capital is available in Mukden. It would claim to be the true government of all China. Its agrarian reform programme would have even greater appeal than that same programme now under exclusive CP aegis. The isolation of the Kuomintang would be increased. Many groups of bourgeoisie, especially in the Northern cities would look with favour upon such a coalition as their bridge to peace.

It is necessary to review certain questions which events have pushed to the fore. Just what was lost in Manchuria? Here is the greatest industrial development in Asia, and the most modern.

A much more serious problem is the political one. It is a little less than certain that Russia will encourage industri-



Yalta conference

al reconstruction. In 1946 Russia was in a position to guarantee any regime it wished in Manchuria, thanks to Roosevelt's blessing at Yalta. Russia did not choose to entrust the Chinese CP with the industries of Manchuria. Instead she looted, sacked and destroyed. If Japanese imperialism followed a course of forced industrialisation, Russian imperialism seeks to channelise and limit it.

Russian economic manipulations indicate a policy of tight control, and securing of guarantees over these plants. They issued a total of \$8 billion in notes, with which they bought up everything that could not be squeezed under their inclusive formula of war-booty. One of the establishments thus obtained was the largest wholesale and retail merchandising house; also hotels, breweries and even private residences. There are unconfirmed stories that they also obtained joint control over much of the remaining enterprises. Russian policy was not to hand over the economy to the Chinese CP for the construction of a strong Stalinist state in North China. They were distrustful, arrogant and abusive toward Mao Tze-tung's armies and administrators.

The Chinese CP has distributed the land in its areas. But this is no solution to the agrarian problem; it is only the first step toward one. Where will the peasant sell, what will he buy, how will recurrent over-production on the land be prevented? Industrialisation alone can begin to supply these needs. Will the Russians assist or even permit such a development? They have acquired such a strangle-hold over the remains of Manchurian economy as to be able to determine its immediate future.

The resources are present, the potential is there, but it is doubtful if the Russians will permit Mao to plan a development which would of necessity contain the seeds of Titoism. The political antagonism within the Russian empire is the key to Manchuria's economic future.

Are the Russians popular in China? A tentative answer would be in the negative. In South China there are illusions and the usual mythology among intellectuals and workers. But in North China where direct contact was made, the Russians are heartily feared and detested.

The Russian armies behaved like conquerors. They looted freely, they were arrogant and openly despised the native population. The Russian Commandant at Mukden permitted himself to say for publication that the Chinese were “people of low culture.” When in 1946 the Russians overstayed the agreed period of occupation, anti-Russian riots tore through China.

Russia has not had to give material aid to the CP armies. It has been able to afford the luxury of just standing by. The CP obtained the bulk of the Japanese weapons and has continued to supply itself with huge stacks of American arms captured from the Kuomintang so that Russia has escaped blame for the civil war itself. The US, by contrast, has intervened openly on behalf of Chiang and it suffers all the effects of Kuomintang disasters.

Russia is now the pre-eminent Asiatic power. Through the native Stalinist parties she can expect the conquest of Asia without war, if no new force enters the picture.

What accounts for the Stalinist victories? One thing does not account for them — Russian help in arms, finances, military direction. There is no evidence to support such claims. The Russians simply have not had to do these things.

The Stalinists win because they have a social programme for the peasantry which corresponds in some degree to the needs and desires of China's millions. There are other factors, but this is the primary one. That their programme is inadequate, that it does not measure up to the historic potential revealed in the 1925-26 Revolution, that its politics are reactionary and oppressive, that it cannot solve the agrarian problem without industrialisation

and planning, that it is an organ of Russian imperialism — all this is true. But it does divide the land, throw out the landlords, reduce taxes and rents from 70 to 80 percent to possibly 30 to 40 percent.

It imposes these reforms rather than rallying the peasantry in great revolts throughout China. The Communist Party does not call upon the peasantry to act in its own behalf. It reserves to itself the exclusive right to liberate the peasantry from landlord tyranny. But it does abolish feudalism and that is China's crying need. This is the programme which causes Kuomintang conscripts to desert by tens of thousands, which disintegrates Kuomintang armies and wins battles. There is no existing alternative to it. The alternative of the Kuomintang is landlordism and political reaction also.

The CP has two other weapons. First, the Chiang regime, whose corruption is unimaginable to the West. The internal decay of the Kuomintang, its alienation from the people, its persecution of all opponents and destruction of all liberties, its cruel and medieval tyranny over the people are weapons in the Stalinist arsenal.

Second, is the US policy which is identified with Chiang. It is understood that American sustenance alone maintains the Kuomintang in power. The anti-American riots of last summer were abetted but not initiated by the Stalinists. At the end of the war America was the hope of Asia but that hope has been bitterly dissipated. American intervention was popular so long as it might have introduced social change. Today America is looked upon as the bastion of reaction and imperialism. The Stalinists have gained by this. Such a conservative observer as Nathaniel Peffer writes: “Had there never been a Russian Revolution, the difference in Asia would be one of degree only.” The realities of Asiatic misery and the awakening to the possibility of change provides the seeds of revolt. This is the groundswell for Stalinist victory, which disorients the revolution to its own purposes.

US-Russian antagonism establishes an imperialist framework for the expression of these desires. Within this framework the United States acts as the decisive reactionary and imperialist force in Asia, especially on the land question. If this antagonism did not exist, or if the US were not an Asiatic power, the struggle for emancipation might break through these deep rutted channels to freedom. American policy in Asia assists Stalinism by channelising independence and anti-feudal movements toward it. The moment a peasant rebels against his landlord he finds himself opposing America and looks for aid in the opposite camp.

Why has America failed with all its vast resources to at least limit Stalinist expansion? America's difficulty is that it arrived too late; Asia's masses are no longer docile. They demand basic social revolution. America, however, represents imperialist reaction which supports all those forces which seek to maintain the people in bondage. United States supports the French against Viet Nam, the Dutch against the Indonesian Republic, the British against the Malayan Independence movement, Syngman Rhee against the peasantry of Korea, and Chiang against all of China. American failure is the result of this reactionary policy throughout the colonial world. It is not an alternative to Stalinism or to native reaction. That is why the fight for freedom begins with the anti-imperialist struggle against America.

In 1945-1947 the United States poured billions into China to no avail. The Marshall policy in 1948 limited China aid until Chiang made concessions. But the United States never demanded social reform, only greater efficiency and less graft.

What next in Nationalist China? Serious changes will take place in the government but the only way which fundamental changes can occur is by the intervention of the masses against the state. American policy may try to reduce graft and introduce efficiency but it cannot drive the landlords out of the Kuomintang or the bureaucratic cliques from the economy without destroying the only social base the Kuomintang has.

As the physical base for exploitation narrows, the rapacity of the ruling groups will increase. The axis of their rule will be greater dependence on the US and concomitantly greater alienation from the masses. The inner decay is rooted in a social soil that has been rotting for centuries.

Its hope now is American-Russian hostilities. It is dedicated to World War III. There does not exist a section of this class which contains the seeds of reformation. The small groups who do want reform find it easier to go over to Stalinism than to struggle against the Kuomintang. America has not found any political or social group on which to base its policy as against Chiang. That is why it continues to support his regime in spite of overwhelming disaster. Chiang will hardly permit it to find such an alternative now that US aid will be more lavish than ever.

For socialists the beginning of policy is the rejection of both Kuomintang and Stalinist reaction and of both imperialisms. For US socialists the first step is the demand evacuation of all American interests and pressures. It is necessary, finally, to find ways of saving and defending the remnants of revolutionary socialists.

November 8, 1948

## 4. Blind alley in Nanking

**T**he armies of Chinese Stalinism are advancing on the Kuomintang capital at Nanking. The extent of social disintegration of the Kuomintang is even more rapid than the advance of the Communist Party armies and this factor alters the picture.

Even the bailiwick of T V Soong in Canton, which seemed so secure a few months ago, is no longer immune to the national tendencies. Of the hated Four Families who rule and plunder Nationalist China, T V Soong is perhaps the most favoured by America. In his direction of ECA in China, Roger Lapham distributed the bulk of it to South China, mainly in Kwangtung province, of which Canton is the capital and T V Soong the dictator.

The government cannot save itself. Its present condition is the direct consequence of its failure to solve a single one of the problems of the Chinese national revolution in which name it took 20 years ago. As a consequence of this failure, the Kuomintang has been isolated socially so that it represents only and is supported only by the feudal elements and bureaucratic capitalists whose links with feudalism are crucial.

All the pressures of a thousand years which are now grinding up and destroying the long-rotted fabric of this out-lived and bypassed social order are now operative against the Kuomintang as its chief political representative. Every class, except the feudalists, is bursting through the suffocating narrowness and undermining the

Kuomintang in the process. What we are witnessing in China is the culmination of that process, begun in 1925, but gradually repressed after 1927. In this sense Stalinism is the heir of the Chinese revolution, in its own bureaucratic, anti-democratic fashion and for its own sinister purposes. That is why Stalinism speaks of a national, patriotic revolution of unity of all classes including bourgeoisie, lower gentry, middle class, peasants, workers, commercial classes — all except the Kuomintang itself.

Everything the regime undertakes fails. This characteristic of a class which has lost all control over its environment is the hallmark of the Kuomintang today. It has expended about four million men against the Stalinists to no avail. Recently it huge financial reform was instituted to no avail and with it a great programme of economic reform in the cities.

The only consequences were the grinding down of the middle classes who were forced to surrender their small savings and forcing the workers into hunger strikes, further alienating urban classes from the Kuomintang. The economic reforms were so devastating that that well-preserved ace-in-the-hole Chiang-Kuo, Moscow trained son of Chiang, publicly apologised for them.

In its own fashion, the Kuomintang has even attempted land reforms of a rather pitiful nature, in the province of Hunan. It may attempt more drastic steps before its final collapse but the solo effect can only be to further undermine itself. No one believes in its ability to do what is needed.

Indeed a contradictory evolution has occurred in the Kuomintang circles. The greater their dependence on the United States because of defeats at home, the greater their antagonism and openly expressed distrust. So, while begging shamelessly for American aid, the Kuomintang circles openly talk about American imperialism. They have worked out a rationalisation (which is indeed partly true) that if Roosevelt had not given Manchuria to Russia as a

sphere of influence, and had not forced Chiang to sign the Sino-Soviet Pact then the present situation would not have occurred. This is considered the root cause of the crisis and this was compounded by Marshall's policy of a coalition with the CP. Thus the Kuomintang even while offering all China in return for aid is turning on its potential savior in order to avoid accepting responsibility for its own follies and failures.

December 6, 1948

## 5. The rats begin to desert

**T**he last few weeks have seen the political initiative in China fall to the Communists, on the heels of their military victories. Many groups which waited, before committing themselves to hear Chiang Kai-shek's New Year's Day message now feel released from any loyalty to his disintegrating state and have gone over to defeatism or are making overtures to the Stalinists.

The death-throes of the Kuomintang will find few sympathisers as all who possibly can do so with safety are joining the scramble to disassociate themselves from the regime and jump on the new bandwagon. The Stalinists are forming alliances in several directions.

The Yunnan war-lord, General Lung Yun, announced his adherence to Marshal Li's group and his readiness to hand over the rich Yunnan province to the CP armies. Yunnan borders Indo-China in the deep South. The entire "Southern bastion," which a few months ago was a possible refuge for the Chiang regime, was falling away and, local war lords, who had retained a measure of independence, were seeking deals with the CP. Mme. Sun Yat-sen was also scheduled to join the new coalition forming around CP headquarters.

The probability is that after most of the present negotiations, which aim at neutralising opposition and facilitating national conquest, the CP will call a new Political Consultative Conference (PCC) of leaders of all its supporting groups and out of this conference it will form its long projected all-national coalition. Since these leaders have no power of their own, no armies, programmes or parties, they will be captives in every sense, albeit willing ones. Only then, with its regime securely in the saddle and its armies in control, will the CP call for elections to a constituent assembly since an election under such conditions would only be a plebiscite.

Engaging in fiercest political warfare the CP deepened the isolation of Chiang's government with the issuance of its "war criminals list." This list did not differentiate among the different Nanking cliques; it did not give a clean bill of health to the "peace" groups or to the so-called liberals. It became clear, even before the rejection of Chiang's New Year message that the CP, flushed with victory, would make no peace with Nanking.

It is determined to establish a new legality in China based on its own power. No KMT continuity will be accepted. With this made doubly clear by the rejection of Chiang's and Sun Fo's appeals since the first of January, the present government is doomed because it can now in no way develop a peace programme. That is why the desertion of the state is now assuming the appearance of people escaping an infected leper colony.

The CP "war criminals" list, by including all Nanking groups, also destroyed the US hope that some of the elements in KMT who are pro-American and are now among the "peace groups" would be able to join the new CP-led coalition and there serve as levers of US policy. For example, the CP list includes Vice-President Li Tsung-jen, a hope of Ambassador Stuart. US is anxious for an organised group of its supporters to initiate peace moves but the CP's decisive rejection to date of Nanking feelers may force these groups to bypass Chiang if they are to save their hides. The CP inclusion of men like Li and others on their list evoked the first angry blast against the Chinese Stalinists by the State Department since January 1947.

The abandonment of Tsingtao by US Marines is part of the pro-peace policy being pursued by the State Department. Pressure on Chiang was increased in Washington as President Truman let it be known that no new allocations to Nanking would be considered before April. But when the CP turned thumbs down on Vice-President Li and Chang Chi-chun, who are in Ambassador Stuart's confidence, the US lost this line of approach. It will now be forced to make even bigger concessions to the CP.

January 10, 1949

## 6. The Communists confront the cities

**S**talinist armies continued to mop up in North China with great strides this past week as Central Government troops pulled back to the Yangtze River as the next defence line. The biggest gains for the CP were in the easy and bloodless conquest of Tientsin and Tangku, its port. Only Peiping still stands, but it is only a matter of time before it too surrenders.

The most interesting aspect of these otherwise clearly foreshadowed military events is that the leadership of the "peace movements" in all of these Northern cities which are completely surrounded by Stalinist armies and have been for months — these movements which made possible the bloodless victories of the Stalinists — are completely under the leadership of bourgeois groups. As noted in *Labor Action* several weeks ago, the announcement of the Shanghai City Council, going over the head of Chiang, in a direct appeal to Mao Tse-tung for direct negotiations, was an attempt by the urban compradores to arrive at an understanding which would salvage their basic economic position.

It is now clear that *this* bourgeoisie, despised and enfeebled by the rulers of the Kuomintang, this class which has no political party of its own, not to speak of military power, is now the driving force for negotiations with the CP at all costs, using its City Councils as the instrument for this.

The working class has played no role in the civil war so far and it is unlikely that it will in the immediate military events to come. The workers do not rise to greet the Stalinist armies, nor do they play a role in the "peace movements."

The CP has been alienated from the cities for 20 years. In August 1948, it held its first national labour conference in Harbin, at which it launched a new Chinese Labour Federation under its own auspices in an attempt to gain control of the urban working class. However, at this conference the CP advised the workers that their main task was "to prepare themselves for the arrival of the liberation armies," but not to organise independent action or even actions coordinated with these armies. The CP prepared for its military victories over the cities by urging the workers to remain passive and to take no part until the Stalinist regime was established in the cities. Only under the new regime were the workers instructed to submit themselves to Stalinist organisations and control, and then the proper role would be assigned to them.

That is why the workers today are silent and defenceless, caught between Kuomintang terror and Stalinist manipulation. This is one of the most ominous developments in the Chinese civil war. KMT China is disintegrating politically as well as militarily.

Chinese Stalinism is now for the first time taking over

large cities. This party, which has had no urban connections for two decades, whose leadership comes from the peasantry and is oriented toward it and which has developed the unique theory that only the peasantry can make the Chinese revolution, now must face the more complex modern problems of urban society. The theory of the CP, as expounded by Mao and his theoretician second-in-command, Liu, is that the peculiar conditions of Asia require the organisation of national revolution within an agrarian framework with the CP substituting itself for the working class as the cohesive and leadership factor which no insurrectionary group in history has been able to create for itself. This bureaucratic and manipulative theory has been successful for the countryside. It has sharp limits for a Stalinist organisation of the entire country.

There are extremely narrow limits to any agrarian programme within an agrarian framework. In modern times the problems of agriculture cannot be seriously dealt with except from the cities, from industry, from the viewpoint of modern urban classes.

Only a modern mentality can revolutionise the superstitions, the family system, the illiteracy and raise production per man and per acre, because all these things can be effectuated only if they are organised under the leadership of the cities.

A small example will illustrate. It is possible to increase the production of cotton and silk within the village, and by its own primitive means, on the basis of a change in the social structure such as abolition of landlordism and distribution of land to peasants. However, these agricultural products cannot be processed by modern industry unless a measure of uniform quality enters into them. In other words, the needs of industry require standardisation of agricultural product in order to be able to utilise them. If industry needs are not placed prior to and in a determining relationship to this production, then the simple increase in agricultural output will not be of national benefit.

This small example is meant to indicate that even in the simplest technical matters as well as in the larger ones of increased production the leadership of the city is essential. Present Stalinist policy in China denies this. It denies the leadership of both the working class and the capitalist class. When this policy begins to fall on the shoals of failure, the Stalinists will be forced to reorient and such a change can only be carried out at the price of widespread distress. All China will be made to pay for the failure of the working class to take over the revolution.

Working class leadership and proletarian orientation would place an entirely different face on the nature of the social transformation of China.

January 24, 1949

## 7. Revolution in a straitjacket

**T**he great metropolises of China, its modern centres of Shanghai, Nanking and Hankow, are about to fall to Stalinist armies. It is now clear that there will be no real, genuine, stable peace until the Stalinists have completed the conquest of all China north of the Yangtse from its estuary on the China Sea to the great Szchechuan plain in the west, one of the most fertile and richest areas.

The problem of the CP is how to achieve hegemony over the rest of China from this continental boundary in the most economical, speedy and politically satisfactory fashion. For this objective, military victories by themselves will not be sufficient. The primary strategy must be political.

Economic dislocation, especially in the great coastal cities, is inevitable. The CP without an urban base could not commence to establish any more than a shadow power by itself. As a result of the flight of capital, collapse of transport, and bifurcation of city-country economic ties, shortage of raw materials, there will be unemployment, hunger and discontent in the great cities. Decline in foreign trade will immobilise the ports.

These elements of distress will be accentuated by certain specific consequences of the Stalinist victory as such. First, since its victory is a conservative bureaucratic one, achieved by military means, it has not roused the vast energies of the people and the working class. No new cadres of leadership are springing out of the great heart of the people because they remain inarticulate. That unique social phenomenon which is characteristic of every true social revolution which sees millions of yesterday's silent, oppressed, anonymous coolies [an archaic racist term for Chinese workers, obviously used here ironically] come to life, learn with a rapidity beyond wildest imagining and grasp the subtlest social and political conceptions, taking to themselves the destiny of great nations, teaching the leaders, giving birth to hosts of new leaders and engaging in all those multi-form activities of power which were but yesterday the exclusive prerogative of the master class — this mighty charge of the people to the helm or history is not present in China today. This is at once the condition of Stalinist victories and is also deliberately fostered by them.

One example will indicate the bureaucratic character of the Stalinist reforms, precisely in that field from which it draws its main strength — agriculture. Mao Tze-tung says:

"...do not attempt to eliminate the whole feudal system of exploitation overnight .... It is necessary further to differentiate between the: various regions and stages ...while in those regions which it is still temporarily difficult firmly to occupy, do not be in too much of a hurry to carry on agrarian reform but rather do some practicable work beneficial to the masses in accordance with existing conditions, pending a change in conditions. Differentiating between stages means that in areas which the people's liberation army has just occupied the tactics of neutralising the rich peasants and small and middle landlords should be set forth and carried out, reducing the sphere to be struck to only eliminating the KMT's reactionary armed forces, hitting at big feudal tyrannical elements .... Afterwards, ...step by step develop to the stage of eliminating the whole feudal system."

In old areas under CP control he advocates that "...neither the liberal bourgeoisie nor the industry and commerce operated by landlords and rich peasants can be infringed upon: special attention must be given to non-encroachment on middle peasants, independent labourers, professional people and new-type rich peasants...." (*China Digest*, June 1, 1948.)

Thus are the "stages" of land reform carefully designed. Where the CP, armies have not yet firmly established their power, the peasants are not to be in a hurry "to eliminate the whole system of exploitation over night..." Self-activity is denied in favour of CP conquest. If there is to be "liberation," only the CP will do it, not the peasants themselves. After conquest, the CP seeks allies among all classes of the village so there too the reforms are carefully organised according to advance directives. And, finally, in old areas, a new class of kulak, the "new-type rich peasant," who owes his new wealth and prestige to the CP becomes its chief economic and social ally. Class division, far from being abolished, is placed under the CP's protection, provided only that the party retains decisive political power and a position above all the classes in the village so that it can arrange the balance between them to suit its own needs.

The consequence is a paralysed peasantry, not a popular national revolutionary movement in the villages. Instead of revolution in the village, in which feudal remains could be drastically uprooted by a people who would invest their new organs of power with their own authority to defend their self-won rights, the heavy hand of the CP manipulates social relations by stages, only as its

own power is established and according to its own bureaucratic political needs. The peasantry become political dependents.

These peasants do not always appreciate the niceties of CP manoeuvre. A very recent report by one of the US agencies for the Chinese CP writes: "When a landlord also has industrial and commercial holdings, the problem is more complicated. It is not easy for the poor peasant to distinguish between wealth derived from two different sources. When the peasants take possession of the land in the country it seems perfectly natural for them to move on to the town and confiscate the landlord's inn, his shop, or his factory. Such mistakes have been made in the past." (Letters from China, January 1949.)

During and immediately after the war, when peasants attempted revolution in the countryside, the CP deliberately repressed them on at least three separate occasions.

In the cities, the situation is not different. Stalinist directives to the working class call upon it to wait for the army of liberation and not to act on their own. At the Harbin labour conference last summer the instructions were as follows: "The immediate... tasks of workers in Kuomintang areas were considered to be (1) the consolidation of their own strength; and expansion of their fighting ranks so as to prepare for the arrival of the liberation army, (2) cooperation with the national industrialists in their common fight against the bureaucratic capitalists."

In no case are workers to rise up against their decades of coolie existence to create their own power. In decrees regarding the government of newly conquered cities, disobedience to CP military directives by any class or group is to be severely punished; the administrative machinery is to be left intact until the party apparatus takes over.

Stalinism is not an urban movement in China. It could not hope to administer cities, let alone organise trade and industry without allies. While it will try to organise the workers into organs which it can control and manipulate, it must seek political alliances with other classes. The nature of the bureaucratic revolution requires it at this stage. It is the only way this agrarian-based, bureaucratic party can extend its rule. Yet another disability presents itself as part of Stalinist rule. A socialist revolution would not accept Russian domination over Manchuria, but would rescue the 75 per cent to 85 per cent of the entire nation's industry which is in Manchuria for Chinese use. Stalinism cannot do this because of its subordination to Russian needs.

Stalinism alienates China from the rest of Asia, particularly from the rising nation states of Southeast Asia. It cuts China off from vast physical and political resources in this area. Because of its Russian relations a Stalinist China would be cut off from its great political potential for a coordination, democratic socialist regional economy. These difficulties and problems make coalition indispensable for Chinese Stalinism at this stage. Some KMT groups are necessary for such a coalition. In addition, available as the ace in the hole is Marshal Li's anti-government "revolutionary KMT." His value to the Stalinists is not alone that of a well-known personage who could be a useful front, but also as a power in the southern provinces of Yunnan and Kwangsi, which he can possibly bring over to the coalition, thus diminishing the cost of extended and prolonged military struggle.

The necessity to shorten the war to conserve military power and begin economic reconstruction also forces Stalinism to search for coalition rule. As Mao has indicated in the above quotation, it may be possible to moderate the "stages" of land reform to suit the needs of local warlords.

Shanghai just before the Communist army reaches the city

### WON'T SHARE POWER

**W**hat has been described above are the means which Stalinism is at this moment utilising in order to achieve its objective of a bureaucratic collectivist society in China.

The Socialist Workers Party ["orthodox" Trotskyists] makes the error of confusing these expedients with the end product and thus comes up with the fantastic conclusion that the Chinese CP is preparing to capitulate — to Chiang! Or perhaps to the Chinese bourgeoisie. Nothing could be more fanciful. Or are they preparing to become the servitors of the new kulak class? — a dubious honour at best!

Mao makes clear the Stalinist economic objectives: "After the nationwide victory of the revolution, the new democratic state will have in its hands enormous state capital which controls the economic pulse of the entire country, taken over from the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. It will have also the agricultural economy emancipated from the feudal system. Although for quite a long time the agricultural economy will still be basically scattered and individual, it will be guided step by step in the direction of co-operatives in the future. Under these conditions the existence and development of small and middle capitalist elements are not at all dangerous."

In typical jargon he then repeats these simple objectives in an unmistakable summary: "the economic structure of new China is: 1. State economy — that is its leading element; 2. An agricultural economy developing step by step from individual toward collective farming; 3. The economy of independent, small industrial and commercial businessmen and the economy of small and middle private capital. These are the entire economy of the new democracy." ("Turning Point in China", by Mao Tze-tung, December 25, 1947.)

The blueprint or goal is clearly established as Stalinist rule in a bureaucratized society. The means which is what current struggles in China are centring on are those most suitable to this end, that is, those which create the least political friction. The CP would rather deal with a powerless capitalist or kulak class and make all manner of circumlocutious compromises with them rather than face the need of coping with an aroused people in city and village. That is why their means are as bureaucratic as their objectives. It is, for them, more economical this way.

However, some of their methods may even bear an outward similarity to those of revolutionary socialism because they share in common with it anti-feudal and anti-capitalist objectives. It is just as fallacious to accept such acts as good coin as to emphasise the compromises. The anti-feudalism of Chinese Stalinism has the same relationship to historic developments as the anti-capitalism of Eastern European Stalinism.

The summation of these objectives is embodied in the central political slogan of the CP today — for a new Political Consultative Conference (PCC). This would be a meeting of the leaders of various political factions to organise the division of power in the new state. The people would not be consulted until the central questions were disposed of. Only then would there be elections to provide the usual facade of Stalinist democracy. This entire programme is sharply counterposed to the demand for an immediate election to a democratic constituent assembly.

January 31, 1949

## 8. Mao and neo-Stalinism: the path of the Chinese CP

**A**re the Chinese Stalinists different? The very question is one of the more cruel hoaxes of our time, yet many people honestly believe that somehow the CP of China is not like other Stalinist parties.

We are not referring here to the economic or political programme of the Chinese CP, but only to its internal regime, to its attitude toward factions, relationship between members and leaders, freedom of internal expression — those organisational characteristics which determine whether or not a party is democratic, whether it sets its own policies or is subservient to alien powers.

Thus Harold Isaacs in his book, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*, indicates that such was the case as long ago as the Great Revolution of 1925-27, through its Russian advisers, Borodin and Bluecher. The Russian mission had greater authority than the leaders of the party. In his novel, *Man's Fate*, André Malraux's hero does not go to Chen Duxiu or the other party leaders to get a reversal of policy; he travels 1500 miles to Hankow to see Borodin. It was the Stalin-Zinoviev majority in the Russian CP which, through its control of the Comintern, ordered those policies which resulted in the disastrous blood bath of 1927.

It was as an answer to Trotsky's criticism of this policy that Li Li-san was ordered into the terrible adventure of the Canton Commune, where the militants followed orders, hearts heavy with foreboding of certain defeat. Then Stalin pointed to the bloody fiasco as an example of Trotskyist policy and used it as a polemical weapon in the Russian party. Li Li-san, who today is Stalin's agent in Manchuria, was denounced as a Trotskyist and recalled to Moscow.

Isaacs describes Li's ousting in revealing words: "A letter arriving from Moscow on November 16 (1930) ordered open warfare against him (Li Li-san) in the party. Under the personal supervision of MIF (Comintern agent to the Chinese CP — J.B.) Li Li-san was brusquely deposed — the young men so abruptly enthroned as 'leaders' of the Communist Party (replacing Li — J.B.) had all been students in Moscow during the years of revolution and had won their spurs conducting witch-hunts against Trotskyist sympathisers among the students at Sun Yat-sen University — these docile young men became the undisputed leaders of the party. Other leaders of the party won the right to remain in its ranks only by degrading themselves, by making the self-denying recantations."

Chou En-lai, Li's right-hand man denounced himself: "I call upon the whole party to condemn my mistakes." Li himself became "reconstructed" and recanted in Moscow. This ignoble spectacle was the turning point in the Stalinisation of the Chinese CP. After 1930 the new leadership, which owed its elevation to Moscow and had no independent stature in the Chinese struggle, became the instrument for enforcing every twist of Stalinist policy in the weakened party.

When in 1935 the Comintern held its seventh world congress in Moscow and the programme of the so-called "third period" was reversed to one of "Popular Frontism," the Chinese party leadership skidded to a halt and reversed itself also. The leadership of 1930 was removed peremptorily, denounced as adventurist and capitulationist.

All this was done without a party congress. From 1921 to 1928 the party held six congresses. Between 1928 and 1945 there were no conventions. These were the years of Stalinisation. During this period two complete changes of leadership and programme occurred.

The decision of the seventh world congress was part of the reorientation of Russian foreign policy to meet the threat created by the rise of Hitler. The Chinese party, not yet recovered from the butchery of Chiang, was ordered to make peace with him. Mao Tze-tung, the new leader, made his offer of peace to the Kuomintang and the bourgeoisie. The party even abandoned its agrarian programme, as Mao declared: "We have already adopted a decision not to confiscate land of the rich peasants. As for active anti-Japanese officers and big landowners, we can state that their estates are not subject to confiscation."

The fact that the peasants did not sanction or desire this lenient policy made little difference. Nym Wales, a pro-Stalinist publicist, records the conversation of a CP leader on the change: "The people all liked the Soviet better — the landlords will perhaps like the new democracy better, but there are few landlords here to enjoy it. The people won't let the landlords vote. In general, however, the people give up to the Soviets easily. They trust the leadership of the CP to do what is right for them." (*Inside Red China*, page 214.)

When in 1945 the Russians marched into Manchuria and stripped electric dynamos, mines pumps, arsenal machines and tools, rolling stock, materiel and supply dumps, the CP of China made no protest whatsoever. There is a rumour, which has had wide circulation, that Mao did not like the Russian policy. But the Russians brought with them into Manchuria a ready-made leadership, Moscow-trained. These students from the Stalin school came as "Red" Army men, although they were Chinese. Their leader was none other than the completely renovated Li Li-san, who was immediately placed in the leadership of the party and made liaison man between the party and the Russian army. He retains this strategic post still today.

All China was torn with demonstrations against continued Russian occupation and looting of Manchuria. The CP could no longer remain totally silent, though it tried. Finally, Li made a statement: "I want to tell you that the Chinese Communist is a patriot first and no matter who interferes with the rights of China he will certainly be opposed to them."

After this fine beginning, Li stated the attitude of the CP toward Russian looting: "But I feel that the movement of machinery is not the important problem at all. Of course the Soviet Union moved some machinery but not a large amount compared to its war losses." This remarkable condoning of the looting was part of official Russian propaganda.

They too claimed that what they took was but meager recompense for war losses. Apparently it did not occur to Li, the Chinese patriot, to point out that Russia had been at war with Japan exactly two weeks and its losses in those final days before surrender were small indeed relative to its permanent acquisitions via the Yalta Pact, whereas China too had been in the war. For 15 years she had been under Japanese attack and a claim might well be made for her losses.

Both before and since the war, Russia has been busy with its own dismemberment of China. Before the war she had already established control over Inner Mongolia and Outer Mongolia. During the war she set up the puppet East Turkestan Republic. The spoils of Yalta gave her the main ports of Manchuria, Dairen and Harbin, control of the railroad system; and since then a stranglehold on the entire economy of this most industrialised area in all China. Russia is now engaged in a deal to take control of all Sinkiang, the largest province in China. To all of these things the CP has answered with the assurance that the greatest threat was American imperialism. By not so much as a whisper have these "patriots" protested the dismemberment of their country.

### THE MAO CULT

**T**here may very well have been differences of opinion over Russian policy in the Chinese CP leadership. There is no way of knowing. All opinions except the official one are kept in the Central Committee, carefully shielded from the world as well as from the CP members. Factions are forbidden, all decisions are handed down as finished. A monolithic front is maintained before the membership and the world.

The cult of Mao Tze-tung is, in its own primitive fashion, as assiduously cultivated as is the Leader cult elsewhere. The entire history of the party has been rewritten to heighten the achievements of Mao. All previous leaderships are damned and denounced, all have either been expelled, exiled or have recanted. In the literature of the party, phrases of obeisance to the superiority of Mao are always carefully included. As Anna Louise Strong, a Stalinist publicist, puts it so well in her revealing essay, "The Thought of Mao Tze-tung"; "since the leadership of Mao Tze-tung developed, the Chinese Communists do not consider that they have made any profound mistakes."

Since 1928 purges have been common. Under the jargon-slogan "criticism and self-criticism", the leadership have conducted struggles against "opportunism of the right" and "adventurism-Trotskyism of the left." In addition, nests of "capitulationists", "dogmatists", counter revolutionists of many hues, have all been exposed and treated according to their desserts. The pattern and sequence of these purges has paralleled that of the Russian party. In the early thirties, Social-Democrats were everywhere in alliance with Trotskyists, of course, and both were alleged to be in alliance with Chiang. Earlier, in 1928, Trotskyists were hounded. During the Moscow

Trials, Trotskyists were again uncovered, this time as allies of Japan since Chiang was now part of the "anti-imperialist front".

Since 1929, Communist China has not been a party but a state. It has existed as a distinct state power with an army and political organs. Since the founding of the Chinese "Soviets" in the South, there has existed a special GPU or political police. The first head of the Chinese GPU was Teng Fo.

The first mention of a special GPU department occurs in 1931 when such a division was regularly established as one of ten government departments. Already by the end of that year the GPU was busy earning its place, for we read in Bela Kun's *Fundamental Law of the Chinese Soviets* (p.10) "at that time we already knew that the counter revolution had their central organisation in our midst. Thereupon the State Political Department (GPU) [this parenthesis is in the original — J.B.] exposed several reorganisations... This conspiracy was completely exposed ...a purge of alien elements commenced in the party. In Hua Nang region, for instance, more than a hundred politically alien persons were expelled from the party."

Later, in July 1931, the GPU again proved its vigilance: "Lately we have discovered an organisation of Trotskyists. From their depositions we learned that the Trotskyists united with the Social Democrats ... when we began to detect the organisations of the SDP we likewise called attention to other reactionary political groups."

Again in 1931 a GPU official reports: "We pay very great attention to confessions made by counter-revolutionaries, to their voluntary repenting. The Kiangsi Provincial government has issued regulations about admission of guilt, with sincere confessions and a truthful description of the organisation and its plans being recognised as mitigating circumstances." (Quoted by Dallin from *Soviet v. Kitaye*, p. 270-271.)

The passion for confessions and denunciation described above can be best understood by recalling that 1931 witnessed the first Moscow Trials of engineers and Social Democrats where the pattern of confession so widely used in the later trials was first employed.

Edgar Snow refers frequently to the Chinese GPU or Cheka in *Red Star Over China*, as does Nym Wales in her book *Inside Red China*. Nym Wales describes in some detail her relations to the GPU in 1936 in Yenan. Her object is to make it out as a friendly, protective force, and no doubt it was to her. It never seems to occur to her to wonder why such an institution should exist at all in the barren half-desert of Upper Shensin. Nor does she think to question accusations by the GPU of Trotskyism, counter-revolution and the rest of the Stalinist calendar of crimes.

In the few lines from our Shanghai friends, quoted elsewhere in this issue, it is clear that the regime of political denunciation and terror continues to be a part of Chinese Stalinism to this day. Like its counterparts everywhere, it roots out and physically exterminates its political enemies.

To give this the name of "democracy" is a brand of cynicism that is common enough these days, when all values are distorted. The claim is not made here that the Stalinists are organising a totalitarian police state in China at one full blow. The very backwardness of the country mitigates against its easy achievement. A police state based on a ubiquitous bureaucracy requires a measure of modernisation and material surpluses which are not yet at hand. *But this is the direction of Chinese Stalinism.* And in proportion as it does establish these very essential physical conditions — which under other conditions would be the guarantor of greater freedom and a better living standard — under Stalinism these material increases are precisely those instruments by which the police state is built. That is why those who are satisfied to point only to material progress serve to obscure the Stalinist inversion of the usual social process.

We do not mean here to discuss speculations about Titoist tendencies. There are such tendencies in Chinese Stalinism and its peculiar relationship to the economy of the country. The point is that Tito's party is no less monolithic, no less authoritarian, no less characterised by political terrorism and leader worship than the Russian or the Chinese party. The Chinese Communist Party is aiming at a monopoly of political power. All compromises with coalitions, with propertied classes in city and village will not alter this basic fact. They will permit the city bourgeoisie to retain their factories and mercantile establishments (provided they do not encroach on big industry and big commerce which will be nationalised). But they will not permit them to organise political parties to represent these interests. They will support the village tukhoa (kulak), but at the same time insist that he accept the party as his sole political defender.

They will form unions and workers will be forced to join, but any party that arises to speak for the workers outside of officially created organisations will be dealt with as counter-revolutionary. Without political organisation and power to parallel and insure economic interests the compromises and coalitions with other classes are

*Continues on page 8*

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expedients depending on the good-will or exigencies of the ruling party.

In effect, the CP is establishing a sort of new "era of tutelage." It is strange that many people who denounce Chiang's fraudulent "tutelage" for the despotism it is accept the same trappings by the CP as good coin. That Chiang's autocracy is feudal, while the Stalinists' is anti-feudal is true; but that it is any the less despotic for this difference is not the case. In the current lexicon of political terms Stalinist economy is connoted as a "special form", or as Henry Wallace would say, it is "economic democracy".

There is no denying the transcendent importance of the abolition of feudalism, which will redistribute wealth and increase the peasants' livelihood initially. (This will be considerably less true for workers in the cities.) However, like every class society and every totalitarianism, Chinese Stalinism will have its crises, which will be resolved in the only way open to a state with a monopoly of political power — at the expense of the people, through the imposition of great agonies and distress on whole masses, through the death and enslavement of millions, and finally through participation in imperialist war which in turn will destroy much of the economic gain.

The rising bureaucracy, precisely as economic advances are made, will tend to inhibit rather than release the unlimited energies and ingenuities of the people. It will distort the economy to the needs of Russian foreign policy. It will pay its tithe to the Russian master economically and politically. These are not guesses or speculations, for they have occurred elsewhere under similar circumstances. They are part of the history of the Chinese CP. Where there is no political democracy there is no barrier to such developments.

Political democracy means the right to determine economic policy, in the first instance. Criticism and disagreement, are the profound sources of inspiration to a people's ingenuity. These are essential ingredients to the construction of modern economy, for they are essential to the modern mentality. Without freedom, economic reconstruction is a burden imposed from above. This is the path of Chinese CP.

February 7, 1949

# 9. Peking versus Moscow: the case of Anna Louise Strong, part 1

**T**he Moscow dispatch announcing that Anna Louise Strong had been placed under arrest as a spy startled all observers of Stalinist political life.

In its terse announcement Tass reported that: "Mrs. Strong is accused of espionage and subversive activity directed against the Soviet Union." She is described as "the notorious intelligence agent." It is indicated that she will be expelled shortly from Russia. Another amazing phrase of the dispatch declares that she made her way into the USSR "only through negligence of certain foreign relations officials." Since her "notoriety" as a spy, and certainly as an anti-Russian spy, is rather newly fabricated, the attack on "certain foreign relations officials" is surprising, unless it is possible that there were differences of opinion in the Foreign Office about the incident and unless the public announcement is at the same time a proclamation of victory for one faction.

From no direct observation does the charge make sense. The charge does not specify for whom she did this spying. Interestingly, she is accused also of "subversive activity." In the last accusation made against a US newspaperman in Moscow last April, in the case of Richard Magidoff, the implication was clearly that he was a US agent. In all other cases of such charges in Eastern Europe in recent years, whatever the particular verbal formula, the charge always accused the Western Powers. For some reason that is not clear, this implication is not present in the charges against Strong. One is forced to ask: for whom was she spying?

The idea of her being an American spy is slightly absurd from several points of view, although spying is a game in which the grotesque and incongruous are normal. There does not seem to be any surface evidence. But again it must be emphasised that this fact alone does not exclude the possibility. The US, like other states, has its agents. However, if A L Strong is an American spy she has not only done this work in remarkable fashion but the propaganda she has poured out for Russia probably outweighs any information she could have passed to her employers.

She is the author of about a dozen books in praise of Stalinism in a variety of countries — Russia, Spain, Poland and China. She has written hundreds of articles for scores of publications in support of Stalinism. She has been a standard name in innumerable respectable front organisations. In 1930 she founded the *Moscow Daily News*, Russian government organ published in Moscow but circulated widely throughout the English-Speaking world. She married a Russian official. In November 1944 she was obviously assigned to do a job on the Lublin puppet regime of the Russians for Poland and in 1946 published her unstinting praise in "I Saw the New Poland." In "The Soviets Expected It," she developed the Russian line that the Hitler-Stalin pact was a clever tactic essential to gain time for Russian defence against the inevitable attack — thus completely whitewashing the "fascism is a matter of taste" Molotov-Ribbentrop agreements and the policy of collaboration with Hitler which helped launch World War II. If all this is the work of an American agent, then the US Secret Service ought to demand its money back.

It is clear that her "notoriety", as claimed by Tass, had not yet percolated to local Stalinist circles, which were caught as surprised and flatfooted as the next man. When this reporter called the *Daily Worker* for comment the answer was extremely curt and definite: No statement!

In the recent period Miss Strong has been most closely identified with the American Committee for a Democratic Far Eastern Policy, which has published a number of her articles in its periodical, *Spotlight*, and only two weeks ago brought out her latest book, "Tomorrow's China." (This book was serialised in the *Daily Worker*.) Miss Maude Russell, secretary of the group, had this to say: "Miss Strong's connections with our committee are as a reporter on China. Her writings are very valuable to the American people. We intend to continue to circulate her book." Confusion, chagrin and consternation were evident in the tone and content of this statement. Another perfectly good "front" has been stabbed in the back.

In the last two to three years, and on many previous occasions, Miss Strong has covered the Chinese Stalinist front for various agencies, most recently and currently for the worldwide Stalinist news service, Allied Labor News. She is the only reporter to have interviewed Mao Tse-tung in recent months and the only reporter to be permitted to roam about Manchuria since the Russian occupation began in 1945. At one time, when Chinese CP headquarters was in Yen-an, the welcome mat was out and Mao

was always at hand to tell his romantic life story to every reporter who could break through the Kuomintang cordon. But this is no longer so.

Since 1945 Miss Strong is the only one to have made public interviews, not only with Mao but with most of the other top Chinese CP leaders. Manchuria and Stalinist China are now closed to foreign correspondents. With the exit of Agnes Smedley and Gunther Stein and the departure of Edgar Snow for what appears to be semi-permanent New York residence, Miss Strong has been the chief external propagandist for Chinese Stalinism. Since 1946 she has been identified not so much with Russia or Stalinism in particular as in her earlier exploits, but with the Chinese party.

In her latest book, "Tomorrow's China", and in an essay published in the defunct magazine, *Amerasia*, Miss Strong writes of Mao and of the CP leadership with the adulation usually reserved for Stalin alone. What is more, she attributes to Mao the distinction of being the sole new contributor to Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism and of having developed a uniquely felicitous programme for China which "extends" these theories to the special situation of that "backward country".

Incidentally, in a speech delivered on January 17, 1949, which has been reprinted as a pamphlet entitled "Chinese Lessons for American Marxists," Earl Browder points to this distinctiveness of Chinese CP theory, its "exceptionalism" as the reason for its success. He quotes from several of Miss Strong's articles in support of his thesis that Mao Tse-tung's policy has been to develop a particular line for Chinese Communism, to "China-ise Marxism and Leninism." (Page 9.) Browder quotes extensively from "The Thought of Mao-Tse-tung," by A L Strong. Browder was purged for just such an exceptionalist approach in the US.

Now there have been rumours of serious differences in the top echelons of the Chinese party. First there was reported to be discontent with the Russian looting of Manchurian industry — which today is an enormous obstacle to economic reconstruction, for which the Chinese CP must take responsibility. Also the Russians

Contemporary artist's tattooed back, depicting Mao's Long March

Chinese Stalinist depiction of the revolution

appear to have established "mixed companies" for control of the products of what remains of Manchurian industry and agriculture. Proposals of this kind were associated with the Tito-Stalin split (see *The New International*, Oct.–Nov. 1948).

Miss Strong reports in her latest book that after stripping the industries the Russians closed their Siberian frontier against the Chinese Stalinist armies and trade. Sections of the Chinese leadership are not at all happy about the stranglehold the Russians have obtained in the Northeast. From 75 to 80 per cent of all Chinese industry was in Manchuria. Industrially all the rest of China is not a very great prize compared with this. Without Manchuria, efforts at reconstruction must start from what is practically zero.

There seem to be several other evidences of conflict between Russian and Chinese Stalinism. One can well imagine, for example, the dismay when the discredited Nanking government was able to announce its negotiations with Russia, over the head of the Chinese CP, to give Russia an economic monopoly over Sinkiang, largest province in Northwest China. For behind the screen of CP victories the Russians have been the real victors through a policy of dismemberment which makes it increasingly difficult for the Chinese party to parade as patriots without attacking Russia.

What is more important, Nanking has received an unearned respite through these stab-in-the-back tactics of the Russians. Much of the mystery of why the CP armies have deliberately refrained from taking Nanking and Shanghai is probably explicable in the light of these events. Russian policy seems to be to attempt to prevent a Tito-like development in this party, which, like the Yugoslavian, is capturing power under its own steam.

Anna Louise Strong has become the chief propagandist for this party and a close associate of its leadership. If she is not an American agent, and she is not charged with being one, she might be considered a Chinese agent.

Perhaps not a spy; but then she as also accused of "subversive activity." This would also explain the public attack on "certain (Russian) foreign relations officials." For it may be that Miss Strong was acting as a courier to groups in the Russian Foreign Ministry, from the Chinese party, who favour a different attitude toward the party. The Tass announcement would serve as a warning to such people.

It would also be a public demonstration of Russian displeasure and a warning to the Chinese leadership. It would serve as a signal to all Communist Parties to tone down and begin to be critical of the Chinese party and of Mao Tse-tung. This would also explain the peculiar nature of the action. Instead of treating the alleged spy as a spy — that is, trying her in court — she is denounced and expelled. Surely if she were a US spy who had so thoroughly concealed herself these many years she could not receive help from that quarter. Or, if a trial was inadvisable, she could have been disposed of quietly as Julia Stuart Poyntz. Instead we have great fanfare which is best explained at this moment as a deliberate and pointed warning to the Chinese party by means of ejecting its agent.

February 21, 1949

## 10. Whose spy is who? The AL Strong case, part 2

**A**t this writing there remain a few additional observations to be made, but no serious modification of the original idea seems necessary on the basis of events of the past week.

The explanation of the Strong incident which seems to cover most of the known facts is that her arrest as a spy by the Russian police is an incident in the silent struggle between Russian imperialist objectives in China and the needs of the Chinese Communist Party. There have long been indications of difficulties between the two. The Strong incident is the first public declaration by Moscow of its determination and a warning to the Chinese and all Communist Parties.

Russian expansion in Asia has already dismembered large parts of China. At Yalta it received special privileges in Manchuria. There are indications that the Russians have established a stranglehold over Manchurian economy. But this also creates undue problems and difficulties for the Chinese Stalinists. For Manchuria, containing 75 to 85 per cent of all China's industries, is the biggest prize in China, and without it Chinese economy is reduced to complete dependency.

There have been rumours of conflict for several years now between Russian and Chinese Stalinist policies. So much so that when the Russians marched into Manchuria in 1945 they brought with them "their own Chinese" under the leadership of Li Li-san, one time head of the Chinese party, who has since taken a post in top leadership and is key liaison man with the Russians.

The rumour will not lie down that General Lin Piao, chief of the Chinese CP armies in Manchuria, is also part of the Russian group. Li is assigned to his staff. His army of 300,000 is the best equipped of all Chinese armies. He seems to have replaced the Chinese veteran Chu Teh, Mao Tze-tung's closest associate. Russian ambition seems to aim at a pan-Mongol and pan-Turk buffer zone extending from the Japan Sea to the Persian Gulf. As part of this vast and far-flung internal projection it comes into conflict with Chinese Stalinism in Manchuria, Sinkiang and possibly North China.

Miss Strong has been most closely identified with the Chinese party in recent years. Indeed she is the only propagandist to have travelled throughout Manchuria in the postwar period and the only one to have had frequent interviews with the entire top leadership of the Chinese party. In an essay entitled "The Thought of Mao Tze-tung" and in her most recent book, "Tomorrow's China," she reports extensively on the Chinese leadership. Indeed, A L Strong had become the international publicist of the Chinese party.

If any more evidence of this were needed, the publication by *Borba*, Yugoslav CP organ, of its exchange with the

Soviet Information Bureau on Miss Strong's book would be enough. The Yugoslav release quotes a letter from Miss Strong as follows: "I want to point out certain publishing changes that were made in Moscow by the editor of the Soviet Information Bureau. I do not have time to send you personally those changes, but the Soviet information Bureau will send you a copy through their representative in Belgrade." Which means that up till a few months ago Miss Strong released her material on China through Russian propaganda agencies and her "notoriety," as Tass described her in its announcement of her arrest as a spy, is rather of recent origin.

We wonder what the Committee for a Democratic Far Eastern Policy, US front organisation which published her book here, will have to say at this bold description of the book as a Stalinist handout. This particular organisation has circled some eminent persons — T A Bisson, Harrison Forman, Stanley Isaacs, Michael Straight. Arthur U Pope, Freda Kirchwey, Leland Stowe and numerous other obvious non-Stalinists.

The Yugoslav release brings us back to the question for whom could Miss Strong have been an agent? Surely not for the US. She is not even accused of that. *Borba* printed its revelations in answer to implied accusations that Yugoslavia had been the source for Miss Strong's espionage. Whatever sub-service information exists, it seems infinitely more likely from available data that she was an agent of the Chinese Communist Party, not as a spy, but an agent for its policies or a protagonist of its leadership, and as such came into conflict and became a symbol of the conflict with Russian ambitions in China.

It is interesting, however, that Moscow should be tainting her, ever so lightly, it is true, with Titoism. For it is just this tendency in the Chinese party — its desire to organise a strong, unified China — that is at issue. This is not yet Titoism. It has a long way to go for that. That is why Miss Strong's arrest must be viewed as a warning rather than a broadside. Nationalist tendencies in the multiform Russian empire may take more varied forms than Tito has shown and the single connotation of Titoism will not be broad enough to include them all.

An iron curtain has rung down over Manchuria. Correspondents are excluded; reports are scarce. A silent battle is raging there which may be of greater importance for the future of China than the Yangtze front. It is a war waged in camera between factions for strategic positions. But its ferocity should not be discounted. The prize is enormous. Like all differences in Stalinism, it is waged in the top committees only, in semi-conspiratorial fashion. That is the anatomy of Stalinist inner politics.

February 28, 1949

# 11. What is Chinese Stalinism?

## Notes on the new state party

**T**hroughout Asia the post-war period has been one of vast social upheaval. What happened in Europe after the First World War is now happening in Asia after the second.

Without the organising technology of modern society which links together great areas and peoples and without extensive industry which creates a more homogeneous and substantial working class, Asia's revolutions have taken varied forms.

In no case have these changes been organised by a socialist revolutionary party basing itself on the workers. Leadership has fallen to national bourgeois classes, social democrats (Burma) or to mixed elements of the bourgeoisie and nationalist landlords.

Though in most instances these elements have sought and obtained mass support from the peasantry and the working class, the leadership has never passed to these latter. Thus the great transformation is taking place under conservative auspices and with limited objectives.

While Stalinist parties exist in almost all the countries of Asia, in only two of them is the nationalist movement operative in the name of Stalinism as such, and only here does Stalinism so completely dominate the movement as to clearly stamp its own character on it in exclusive fashion — in China and in North Korea. Elsewhere national bourgeois groups (India, Indonesia, Siam, Ceylon), social-democrats (Burma) or landlord elements (South Korea) are in the forefront.

### PATTERN IN CHINA AND KOREA

**I**n several of these countries social-democracy is active (India, Indonesia, Viet Nam). This is a new phenomenon which deserves examination, since Social Democracy in colonial areas on a large scale is something new.

Trotskyist or left anti-Stalinist groups exist on a larger scale than they do anywhere in the West in Ceylon, India, Burma, Indonesia and possibly Indo-China.

The exception to the above pattern is Indo-China, where the CP is a leading but not exclusive or completely dominant force. The reason for this is the protracted struggle which forces Indo-Chinese nationalism to seek international allies; that is, the national struggle is forced into the inter-imperialist framework. If warfare is renewed in Indonesia, as seems likely, the movement there may also be forced onto the alien tracks of Stalinism. Wherever imperialism has been too weak and has made serious concessions Stalinism has had to take second place.

Both China and Korea have this feature in common: in both countries the two world powers face each other directly, creating a fixed inter-imperialist limitation to the struggle unless it took the road of social revolution. Without that alternative (and the reason for its failure in Asia needs to be studied) middle elements between the powers were doomed. In the revolt of Asia, which is one of the great new forces of the post-war period and which is the most dynamic progressive factor in the world today, only in China and North Korea has Stalinism become dominant; these two instances are deviations from the general pattern, for they represented a new tyranny and enslavement.

Thus in China, the US supported Kuomintang rule, but at the same time tried to strengthen the "liberals." This was the essence of Marshall's proposals. But neither the Kuomintang nor the CP wanted the liberals as US spokesmen, and the liberals were too weak to accept such a role. The dolorous fate of the Democratic League is the full history of Chinese liberalism.

The Kuomintang is no longer and has not been for many years the party of nascent capitalism. Unable to make headway against the continuous warfare and conquests of the Japanese, the bourgeoisie lost political power. Never fully emancipated from imperialism, part of it under Wang Ching-wei sold itself completely to Japan. Never fully divorced from usury and landlordism, it could not resist the growing dominance of feudalism over the Kuomintang during the war, when the state was in the interior removed from the seats of power of the bourgeoisie and dependent on the landlords.

The Kuomintang, during the Chungking period, became a narrow dictatorship resting on local landlord alliances in the distant provinces and on the Whampon clique of militarists who were personally sworn to Chiang. The top families of the state utilised their monopoly of political and military power to take over the nation's economy. When the government moved back to Nanking this economic power was extended to the entire

country. This bureaucratic state capitalism was anti-bourgeois, its methods and practices were aimed at limiting and hampering the capitalist class. The Kuomintang had gone full cycle and become a brake on capitalist development.

The Democratic League was largely representative of the intellectuals, the university professors and the students. The key programme was prevention of civil war through establishment of a national congress in which all parties would be represented. This coincided with the programme of the US for China, and Marshall later singled out these men of the Democratic League as "the splendid body of men" with whom alone he wished to work. Today the Democratic League is underground in Kuomintang China; its main center is in exile in Hong Kong. Its greatest aspiration is to enter a coalition with the CP in an attempt to win minimal conditions for the survival of the bourgeoisie.

The Democratic League is the last effort of a capitalist political party to play a role in China. Its present condition is a good measure of the miserable insignificance of capitalism. There can be no capitalist development without a capitalist state power and political party; these the enfeebled, demoralised, compromised, economically shattered bourgeoisie have been unable to create.

### CHINESE CAPITALISM

**T**he historic failure of Chinese capitalism is the fundamental underlying cause of the failure of American policy there.

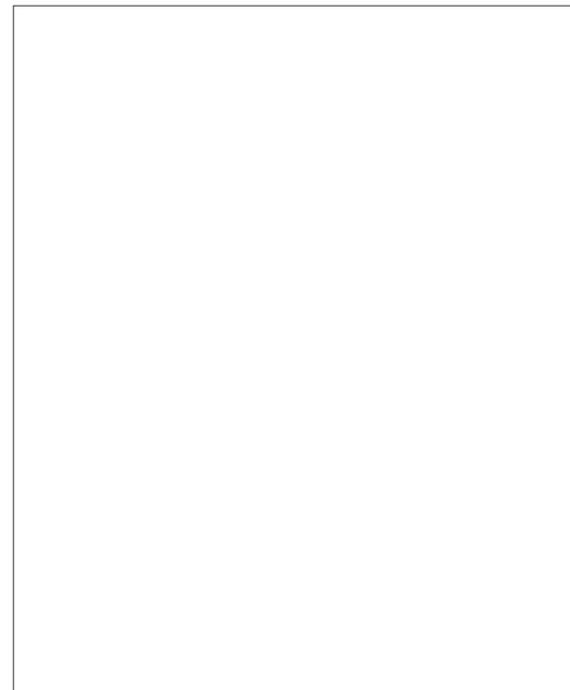
It was the only possible counterweight to socialist or Stalinist development. Its failure opened the dikes to Stalinism as the leader of the "national revolution." It is Stalinism which has fallen heir to the unfinished tasks of the bourgeois revolution begun in 1911. War since 1938 and five years under puppet rule have exhausted the capitalist class so that today, like the proletariat, it is a spectator in the civil war, unable to determine its own future. Neither of the two great classes of modern society is a leading factor in the present civil war.

Capitalism failed in China because it was unable to solve a single one of its pressing problems. It could not oust the imperialists; it could only shuttle between them to sell itself to the highest bidder. It did not unify the country geographically, politically or economically. It failed to develop a centralised state of representative character. It could not even begin to introduce the most moderate land reform because it was itself corrupted by usury-land relations. Nor did it succeed in achieving the basic requisite of modern national existence — industrialisation. Having failed in every one of these essentials, it could not hold power against the landlords or the Stalinists: nor did it have the strength to effectuate a new alliance with US imperialism independent of the Kuomintang.

Chinese capitalism is not alone in this defeat. It is doubtful indeed if any native capitalism will succeed in making itself the dominant force anywhere in Asia. In none of the new states emerging out of the disintegration of capitalist imperialism is there a bourgeoisie strong enough to rule by itself; this class tends to develop its power through state-controlled economy and it is not likely that it will be able to assert itself on a purely economic basis. This is certainly one aspect of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution which remains valid. It is unlikely that classical capitalism has any more of a future in Asia than anywhere else. What forms will arise out of the dissolution of Oriental society are not clear as yet.

Between Chinese feudalism and Stalinism, "liberal" capitalism is being crushed. (The same is true in Korea.) The inter-imperialist conflict is precisely what creates the greatest difficulties for the native capitalists in these two countries. Thus the inter-imperialist conflict establishes narrow limits for the national struggle, distorting it in its own interest. And where the US intervenes it forces the national leadership into Stalinist channels. All over Asia the desire for national freedom goes hand in hand with the struggle against feudalism and the creation of modern industrialism. These are the social aspirations of the rising classes. Chinese Stalinism is an indigenous movement in the sense that it has secured to itself a monopoly of the leadership for these ends in China. Its party, programme and leadership are known and have established deep roots in the historic struggles of the last 20 years.

Its name is linked with the desires of the peasantry. Its armies are Chinese and nowhere in these armies is there an important amount of Russian power or Russian armaments — at least none has been revealed to this time. Like



Chinese CP depiction of Mao on the Long March

the Yugoslavs, the Chinese Stalinists are conquering without the Russian armies. They are establishing their own tradition of victories and their own patriotism.

### A NATIVE STALINISM

**T**his means that while the Chinese CP is part and parcel of international Stalinism and takes its lead in all matters from the Kremlin, it is not a movement of Russian expansion in a simple sense but the growth of a native Stalinism, which carries out the needs of Russian foreign policy on its own. It is more like the Yugoslav CP in this sense than (say) like the Polish.

Its leadership has not been Russified by long years of residence in Moscow, although the Russians did bring their own Chinese commissars to Manchuria, who are now major factors in the leadership of the Chinese CP (CCP); and Chu Teh and Chou En-lai have been to Moscow. This party has fought its battles largely without Russian material or even diplomatic help. Not that it has had no help. But its kind and quantity is as nothing compared with US help to the Kuomintang or Russian "aid" to the Polish CP. These distinctions are important for the future.

Thus while the Chinese civil war takes place within the context of the inter-imperialist struggle, this context distorts it but does not so dominate it as to replace or overshadow the elements of national and social conflict. Only if the US altered its policy to one of full intervention and thus precipitated active Russian measures could the civil war become subordinated.

But the inverse is not true either. The CCP is part and parcel of world Stalinism. Its attitudes have always been governed by the latest requirements of Russian foreign policy just like every other CP. Its internal regime of hierarchy, discipline, bureaucracy and idolatry for the Leaders, including the entire Russian hagiography, as well as its slogans and foreign policy have followed every zig and zag of the Stalinist. When Trotskyists were being purged in Moscow they were also being purged in China. When the Bukharinists' turn came in Moscow, it came in China too.

One of the major crimes of Chinese Stalinism is its utilisation of the great agony of the 400 million to the purposes of Russian foreign policy. Victory for the CP does not remove China from the inter-imperialist struggle, as socialist victory would, but transfers the alliance to Russia. This is one of the major reasons why revolutionary socialists cannot support Chinese Stalinism any more than they can support it anywhere else. Far from bringing peace to China, the CP (no less than the Kuomintang) will involve China in vast international imbroglios and eventually in a war in which it has no possible interest. This is the terrible price Stalinism exacts for its conquests.

The British historian R H Tawney has written that he who achieves an alleviation of the abysmal human degradation which is the lot of the Chinese peasant will win the support of half a million villages. This is the limitless source which feeds the Stalinist flood.

fixed from above.

The bureaucracy for the entire country is developed in advance, in isolation, almost in laboratory fashion. This is the cadre of the state, which advances with military victory, carries through the agrarian policy and organises the new citadels of political power. It deals with social groupings as a separate entity and by retention of its social independence determines the relationship between classes on the basis of the needs of its own rule. Thus Liu informs us that the policy for today is construction of a “new capitalism” but that the party retains the liberty to move against this “new capitalism” and its economic classes when it decides the time has come for “socialism.” It is the party — or more accurately, the state-party-army — which is the bearer of historic change, no matter in whose name it acts at the moment.

## DISTORTION OF REVOLUTION

**A** close study of Mao Tse-tung’s writings indicates, as Liu implies in the opening sentences above, that the CP considers itself the leader of the nation, of all classes in Chinese society and as such it fulfils a programme which is above classes, i.e., in its own interests as the state power.

This Bonapartist conception gives the CP great tactical flexibility. At the same time it is a theory of social revolution, but not of the bourgeois-democratic revolution nor of the proletarian socialist revolution; it is the theory of the bureaucratic-collectivist revolution.

The social revolution which is clamouring for birth in China, as elsewhere in Asia, is conquered and distorted. As Liu puts it: “Today we are building capitalism, but it is a ‘new capitalism’ like the ‘new democracies’ of Eastern Europe, and for this a national alliance of classes eases the ascent to power and also serves to keep the masses quiescent.

But as Mao put it so succinctly: “The United Front must be under the firm leadership of the CP” (*Turning Point*, p20) But when “it is time to build socialism [read Stalinism — J.B.]” after the consolidation of power, the CP “will be ready for that also.” This is the answer to those who speculate about the Chinese CP following a path different from that of Stalinism elsewhere.

When placed against the background of the Great Revolution of 1925–27 the most striking feature of current events in China is the absence of the working class in an active role. Where are Canton’s millions who in 1925 challenged the might of foreign gunboats and Kwangtung warlords, gave the power to the Kuomintang and forced their way into the CP by tens of thousands? Where are the heroic masses of workingmen who paved the way for the Northern Expeditions by their independent militancy?

The steel workers and coal miners of Hankow and Wuhan are silent today but in the turbulent years two decades ago they performed miracles, defied the British gunboats, organised mass unions in the cities and organisations of the poor peasants on the countryside, and still had enough left to man the armies of the Kuomintang, later the “left” Kuomintang. And still later, when Chiang’s terror had wounded and bled the aroused giant of China’s revolution and Stalinism had eviscerated its spirit, this proletariat was still capable of the final defiance of the Canton commune.

It was under the leadership of this great urban class that the peasantry organised the struggle against medieval leftovers and militarist tyranny. The democracy of the upheaval was self-evident in the rise of local leaderships everywhere, freedom from traditional restraints, the enormously rapid progress in political education of millions of the submerged and illiterate.

The people held the stage and the workers took the lead, allying themselves with and creating political groups which acted on the people’s needs. The masses taught the leaders, very often marching far ahead of them. The revolution in the villages was not a peasant revolt in geographic or social magnitude but, under the advanced lead of the proletariat, it took on the radical character of an agrarian revolt, not reform. Ties between urban and rural masses were indissoluble in the common struggle.

This heroic popular social movement of 20 years ago is a measure of the conservative, manipulated, primarily military march of Stalinism today.

## POSITION OF WORKING CLASS

**T**oday the Chinese proletariat does not have a party of its own; it is not an active, organised, cohesive social class. It does not have a programme of leadership to express its desires in the present situation.

The intervening decades have brought cumulative disasters. When the Canton commune was suppressed thousands of workers were slaughtered, and in the Kuomintang reaction in every city followed the massacre of the militants. Police terror, assisted by underworld hoodlumism and secret police, established a regime over

## Bureaucratic manipulation: the “cultural revolution” of 1966-7

The CP has become a peasant party in the sense that it seeks its base primarily in the countryside and that it has developed a theory which gives leadership of the Chinese social revolution to the peasant class through the instrumentality of the CP. It has not been connected with the struggles of the workers for over a decade. It has not had power in any sizeable city. It is a rural party and its entire outlook and membership is rural, as is most of its leadership. The problems of workers and cities are foreign to it.

## STALINISM AND THE PEASANTRY

**N**owhere else in modern history has a national revolution been led by a party based on the peasantry. The unique Chinese experience is possible because Stalinism is that unifying ingredient which is absent in the peasantry as a class. With its discipline, ideology, leadership and indefatigable organisational labours it creates cohesion and gives unified direction.

An extremely revealing and frightening statement of the Stalinist theory of the Chinese revolution has been made by Liu Hsiao-chi, member of the Central Committee, and next to Mao Tse-tung, the leading theoretician; it is worth quoting at length.

A L Strong, the reporter of his remarks, paraphrases Liu: “Even the concept of the ‘proletariat’ [quotation marks in original] as a base for the Communist Party is given a new meaning.” And Liu says:

“All this [proletarian leadership] applies to the western world. But in China we have only a few such people. Of our 500 million people only two or three million can be called industrial workers, whom the imperialists and capitalists are the training to be the reserves of the CP some day. Meanwhile Mao Tse-tung is training two or three million from another kind of people who are not only no less disciplined and devoted but in fact perhaps even more disciplined and devoted than the industrial workers. China has only a few industrial workers to be the foundation but we have millions of kids [CP youth!] like this. Such people have never known Marx, but they are brought up in the spirit of communism. Their discipline and devotion to public affairs is no less than that of the industrial workers. They give their lives to the light against foreign imperialism and native oppressors even when very young. They fight now for the ‘new democracy’ but if in the future it is time to build socialism, they

will be ready to build it. If it is time for communism, they will be ready for that also. Only one thing they will not build or accept — the old forms of capitalism. Today we are building capitalism but it is a ‘new capitalism’. As the core of this ‘new democracy’ and ‘new capitalism’ we have three million people — the army, the party, and the government — who have lived for 20 years in what might be called ‘military communism’. It is not the ‘military communism’ they had in Russia, for here it is applied only to this leading group [the army, the party, and the state of three millions].” [*Amerasia*, June 1947, page 163]

In her comment on this statement, Anna L Strong adds: “China’s revolution is a peasant revolution. Its basic characteristic is that the peasants (not the workers) form the principal mass that resists the oppression of foreign capital and left-over Medieval elements in the countryside. In the past, Marxist analysis has not been applied to guide such a revolution.”

## CP AS EMBRYO STATE

**S**ince 1927 Stalinism has not been a political party in China but an armed camp, an embryo state. Party members and leaders were equivalent to state officials.

Sometimes the fortunes of the state party were low indeed, as after the Long March when it was reduced to 40,000. In those days, and even today, not only were and are party and state identical, but the two are coefficients of the army’s power and are identical with it too.

Liu is exaggerating when he says “we have three million people who have lived 20 years in what might be called ‘military communism’, for the present CP and army of two and a half to three million are post-war developments. But the process he so clearly describes is important.

For 20 years this group, acting as a state and military and political power, isolated from the working class and the cultural influences of the coastal cities, has developed a hard bureaucratic corps. Carefully selected through numerous purges, the leadership is a tight homogeneous hierarchy. Not part of the peasantry, its self-arrogated role is to lead, organise, discipline and provide policy for the peasant but never to become part of his class. While the peasantry remains the atomised mass it naturally is, the CP takes its best sons to itself and manipulates the real needs of the masses in its struggle for power. All this it does consciously. Relations between party and class are

the working class which did not permit widespread organisation. With the best militants assassinated or in hiding, the proletariat was left leaderless and beheaded. The links with the peasantry were broken. Political organisation was non-existent.

The treason of Stalinist policy culminated in the exodus to the South. The workers were abandoned to the Kuomintang; many of the surviving militants left with the CP peasant armies in the hills and in mountains of South-central China.

The CP desertion of the cities was a betrayal from which the workers never recovered. After these shattering defeats even an underground of serious proportions could not develop. On occasions since 1927 the CP has raided the cities and universities for new leadership elements which had aroused the police of the Kuomintang. This has been the only relationship the CP has had with the urban workers.

In addition to police terror and gangsterism the Kuomintang organised the workers into its own "blue unions." When after the war even these "unions" became restive, Chu Hsen-fan, Kuomintang-appointed president of the Chinese Federation of Labour, was driven to exile in Hong Kong. Chu joined with Marshal Li in the "Kuomintang-Revolutionary League" and is now a Stalinist front in their recently launched Labour Federation.

Under Japanese and puppet rule the workers were unable to raise their heads. They were cut off from the anti-Japanese struggle. It is a weakened class which has not recovered from the disasters of 1927 and the subsequent 20 years of oppression. These were the cumulative disasters which permitted the control of the revolution and its transformation into a new reaction by the CP.

## CP AND PROLETARIAT

**The CP of 1948 is not the party of 1928. It does not look upon the workers as the leading class. Its attitude toward the workers is that they are necessary for production and to carry out directives, but its politics are not directed toward the workers.**

Piece work and speedup have been made universal. Production quotas for the individual worker as well as for each productive unit are established. Payment is made according to achievement. The entire Stalinist incentive system has been introduced under oppressive conditions.

Stakhanovism and "labour heroes" are the means of establishing fear on the job, for it is not well to fail to meet the goals set by the pace-setters. "Labour heroes" receive public awards and state recognition in the presence of their fellow workers. Congresses of "labour heroes" are held at which methods of speedup are discussed. The process of differentiation in the factory is begun with the new "labour heroes" being set above their class.

Since the CP is tied to its agrarian base it will project the cost of industrialisation onto the workers as the only class from which the tremendous burdens that are inevitable in such a programme can be safely extracted. From this indicated assumption we may conclude that Stalinism will from the beginning be especially oppressive to the workers of China. With their first contact with cities, there are already reports of declining standards of living.

In its relation to the working class the CP acts as a ruling bureaucracy exercising state power. Its separation from urban culture and urban classes and its complete Stalinisation in the last 20 years has transformed it into its party alien to the proletariat; it is a bureaucratized agrarian party. It does not even manipulate the workers through detailed control of its organisations because its estrangement is so complete.

During August 1947 in the Manchurian city of Harbin the CP began to re-establish connections with the urban working class through an All-China Labour Congress. Delegates are supposed to have come from Kuomintang cities representing underground unions. It is significant that it is three years after the war, and after almost an equal period of Manchurian rule, that such a congress is called. The scanty reports available on this meeting are all from official Stalinist sources. What comes through clearly is that the workers were given no role in the overthrow of the Kuomintang — except to "prepare to welcome the People's Liberation Army; and to support and take part in revolutionary movements of the people [the CP, that is — J.B.]."

## RELATION TO CAPITALIST CLASS

**Relations to the capitalist class are carefully defined: "...workers should make a distinction between the 'comprador' capitalists of the ruling bureaucracy and national capitalists who are also oppressed. They should endeavor to win the latter for struggle against imperialism and the Kuomintang." (Above quotations from *China Digest*, August 24, 1948.)**

The final official resolutions of the congress established

two programmes for labour, one for Kuomintang areas and one for the "liberated areas." These statements are important statements of policy. In Kuomintang areas :

"(1) The consolidation of their [workers'] own strength and the expansion of their fighting ranks so as to prepare for the arrival of the Liberation Army. (2) Cooperation with national industrialists in their common fight against the bureaucratic capitalists. (3) The dispatch of skilled technicians into Liberated Areas ...(4) The protection of all factories and machines." [*China Digest*, August 21, 1948].

The relation of the workers to the CP armies clearly defined as a passive one of "preparing" for the CP armies to take power. If there is to be "liberation" the CP will bring it, and this task is exclusively and uniquely the CP's.

In the directive on administration of newly conquered cities (*China Digest*, August 13, 1948) the Central Committee orders:

"All law-abiding enemy functionaries, personnel of economic and educational organs and policemen should not be taken prisoner or arrested. They must be given duties and remain their original posts under the orders of definite organs and personnel, to watch over their original organs."

The directive very carefully states the role of each section of the bureaucracy and bourgeoisie but has not one single word on the part workers or their organisations are to have in the "liberation" and reorganisation of the cities. On the contrary every effort is made, as the above quotation shows, to keep the administration intact until the CP political commissars arrive to take over; Those "who violate these policies must be thoroughly taken to task..." The policy is fixed and imposed, and woe to him of any class who dares to struggle against it.

In relation to the civil war the CP pursues a conservative military policy. Popular activities independent of its own troops are frowned upon. There is no call for workers or peasants to rise in revolt in Kuomintang areas. Social policy is likewise a function arrogated by the CP and carefully imposed by advance bureaucratic determination of its limits, stages and methods.

## NO SURRENDER TO CAPITALISM

**Every last element of spontaneity or mass participation is strained out of the movement. In this way the entire direction of the real social revolution which is the profoundest desire of the people is transformed into a new tyranny of bureaucratic collectivism.**

The "new democracy" of Stalinism does not aim at eliminating the bourgeoisie or the agrarian rich at this time. The only group put out of the pale of acceptance by the CP is the Kuomintang itself. With all other classes it proposes a period of "joint reconstruction."

In order to carry through such a programme the CP must guarantee the quiescence of the masses. However, this does not constitute a surrender by the CP to native capitalism. Nothing would be further from the mark. For the power of all classes is strictly defined and limited by the CP, which retains all real power. Through its control of the peasant unions and the village poor, the CP can and will launch an offensive against the new kulaks which its present policy is producing. Through similar control in the cities the CP will (when it is decided) be able to use the workers and petty bourgeois against the capitalists. The CP, by its position above the classes manipulates all of them to its own state needs. The class struggle is replaced by class manipulation.

This is the actual relationship which is emerging under the "new democracy". Instead of a pro-labour state we have the emergence of an anti-labour state; instead of a peasant power, an anti-peasant power; in the name of democracy the new tyranny of Stalinism arises out of the failure of capitalism and proletarian independence.

It is hardly likely, since no serious alternative exists, that the urban working class will be able to avoid the fatal embrace of the CP. Yet it will take a long time before this party's roots are secure among the workers. Memories of the betrayal of '27 persists among older workers, and tendencies to reject the labour-capitalist collaboration policy of the CP are inevitable. A period of economic chaos is probable and restlessness with CP rule and with the bourgeoisie will develop. Also, Stalinism's labour policy is one intensified work and increasing production at labour's expense. The agrarian policy of Stalinism tends to create a newly rich kulak in the village who will threaten the food supply of the cities. All this is in prospect and the sailing will not be easy for the new masters.

That the present Stalinist revolution in China is led from and gives prior leadership to the village is of enormous importance. Much of the peculiar political manoeuvring in China today — the coalition programme of the CP, its hesitancy to utilise the masses except under closest control, its slogan of "return the factories to their owners" — arise from this original difficulty. The CP may actually be unable to organise and administer all of China because of this alienation; The key to the uprooting of

feudalism, to a modern revolution in the village as well as national unification, lies in the cities. Unless modern transport and communications are constructed the country cannot be held together physically. Unless agriculture is reorganised to the needs of industry city and country will not be integrated. Only an industrially-oriented agriculture can create the mentality which will accept sharp breaks from traditional peasant patterns and introduce new methods adapted to local use as well as deal with such otherwise "insoluble problems" as land fragmentation.

The lesson of the Great Revolution of 1927 is the very opposite of that stated by Liu above. The revolutionary urban masses, at the head of which was the working class, did prove sufficient to take and organise the power. The Stalinists have put this tremendous dynamic force in fetters, substituting themselves for it. It may well be that its alienation from the working class will prove to be the Achilles heel of Chinese Stalinism.

## NOTES FOR A PROGRAMME

**At this moment a socialist programme must begin with this working class which is not yet committed to or permeated by Stalinism. This working class can still be imbued with independence.**

The CP is, as we have stressed, an agrarian party primarily. An independent proletariat could eventually organise its own organs, take the power in the rich coastal cities, organise an independent democratic movement which could call the peasants to revolutionary action. It could organise under the programme of ousting the capitalists regardless of party; for social and political democracy, not a new one-party regime; for maximum freedom to organise freely, without CP direction, through the democratic activities of the masses; against the CP doctrine of revolution by "stages"; restoration of the revolutionary leadership to the workers; for full freedom of speech and press. Such a movement could extend its hand in comradeship to the peasantry with the call to arms for an immediate arming of all the people in fighting units of their own under elected officers of their own.

Against the central national political slogan of Stalinism (bureaucratic party coalitions in a new political consultative conference) can be posed the call to democratic assemblies of freely elected delegates, first in each city and province and then nationally; rejection of a new political consultative conference as a coalition of leaders in which the CP is bound to establish one-party rule, since the other leaders represent nothing. And above, all peace to China, not the "new democracy" of Stalinist totalitarianism but the socialist democracy of the workers and peasant poor.

The struggle against imperialism is the fight against imperialism and its agents, American and Russian. Drive American dollars out of Kuomintang China and renounce Russian control of Manchuria through its control of the South Manchurian Railway. Free the cities of Dairen and Harbin from the Russian army; national freedom requires an end to Russian as well as American rule and spheres of influence.

These are points in broad outline for a revolutionary socialist programme. The chief need is for a party, an independent workers' party. For the social bases of the proletariat remains untapped. It is still possible to reorient the Chinese revolution by a leadership which believes in the ability and necessity of proletarian hegemony, which believes that the cities must lead the villages.

Such an orientation strikes at the heart of Chinese Stalinism and is the basis of democracy. The workers of China need a party of their own. That is the beginning of a programme.

However, Chinese Stalinism has prepared the repressive machinery with which to prevent activities designed to undermine its rule. Whatever temporary liberties are allowed to the small bourgeoisie of the cities it will not permit any expression whatsoever the working class outside of its own fully controlled organs. For it is a universal characteristic of Stalinism that it fastens itself on the working class and this class is its first victim.

This means that what is most necessary, the closest relations between revolutionary anti-Stalinist socialists and the workers, is the most hazardous and most difficult and will be met by the severest counter-measures. The programme described above is an orientation fraught with enormous difficulties and it is by no means certain that it can be effectuated in the immediate future. For the attack on all socialist and left opponents is already under way and it is a campaign of extermination.

In these circumstances the problem of survival is of chief importance; the vigilant assistance of socialists everywhere will be necessary if these cadres are to be saved. All manner of special forms of organisation and struggle will be necessary and these very instruments of survival can also become the means of making connection with the workers and organising the struggle with them.

*New International, February 1949*

# 12. The bureaucratic revolution rolls on



Mao inspecting construction on the Huang River in 1952

**T**he central strategy of the Chinese CP armies is clearly not geographic. While their march below the Yangtze has brought huge territorial acquisitions, the main military objective is the destruction of Kuomintang armies rather than conquest of specific objectives.

This kind of piecemeal strategy is an essential characteristic of the Stalinist conquest. It is based on military advance strictly planned and regulated by the top leadership. The great masses of the village and city are deliberately kept quiescent. Their support is solicited, but only as benevolent neutrals. On the day of launching the present offensive the CP military leadership issued an eight-point proclamation, the first point reading in part: "It is hoped that all people regardless of their class, faith or profession will maintain order and adopt a cooperative attitude toward the People's Liberation Army."

Nowhere in the countryside have CP armies been met by self-liberated peasants who have risen against their oppressors and taken the power. Reporters on the scene write that the peasants continue their daily round of toil while the armies manoeuvre and battle around them. This also is a consequence of the bureaucratic character of the revolution.

Point 7 of the above proclamation indicates the policy that keeps the peasant in his place until the CP gets ready to liberate him. "The feudal land-ownership system in rural areas is to be abolished, but it must be eliminated only after adequate preparations and step by step. The land problem can only be solved after the Peoples Liberation Army has arrived and work has been carried on for a considerable period for its solution." This is a far cry from the great popular revolutions of other times or of China in 1925–27, when the armies of the then revolutionary KMT were, greeted everywhere by local peasants' militia and general popular soviets.

The tiredness of the people is evident. They do not take their own destiny in hand but permit the CP to do it for them. Thus the CP is coming to power on the backs of a passive populace rather than on a great insurgent wave. That is why it has been able so successfully to canalise the movement. That there is no alternative leadership in exist-

ence to offer another road, to rouse the people, to challenge the CP monopoly — these are conditions which give the CP an unprecedented advantage.

In every other modern revolution a rainbow variety of ideologies has had to struggle for support and positions of hegemony. Every philosophy, in attempting to give answers to the fundamental questions raised by the revolution itself, contended for power. The revolutionary dynamic brought the marketplace of ideas into the remotest villages and demanded that each man make his choice. This was the source of the enormous release of energy and the dramatically democratic nature of the revolutionary process. Millions, emerging on the stage of history, became politically literate overnight, developed unforeseen talents, assumed new roles and carved out a new historic path.

But while this has been the nature of revolution in modern history, this has not been true in China today. The CP is marching to victory over a road which is a political desert. No contenders are in the field against it and no other political movement allied with it. The military character of its conquest is a consequence of this reality. We are witnessing the classical form of bureaucratic-collectivist revolution, the precondition for which is the prostration of the great urban social classes which have been the prime movers of history since the Renaissance.

If the above is true of the Chinese peasantry, it is even more valid for the capitalists and working class. Neither of these have political organs to express their interests. In contrast to 1927, the "compradore" bourgeoisie does not have its KMT rallying center. The workers are not in a political revolt and general strike as in 1927. Typical of the scene is Shanghai today, where the greatest unrest is caused by the inflation and where economic strikes are common. But with CP armies at the gate and KMT power at an ebb, the workers remain non-political, not even organised as a class grouping.

The CP seeks an alliance with the compradores in order to ease its take over. "All privately operated factories, stores, banks, warehouses, vessels, wharves, farms; pastures, etc., will be protected." The compradores have only to remain at their posts.

To the workers the proclamation gives the following

instructions: "It is hoped that workers and employees in all trades will continue work and that businesses will operate as usual." From the other viewpoint, the CP is directed, in another statement by Li Li-san, as follows: "The trade unions as the principal mass organisations of the workers must be established and coordinated. All workers with hand and brain should be systematically organised by industries." CP rule is based on the closest organisation of every section of the population. Now that it is coming into cities it will apply these techniques to the workers as well. This is a far cry indeed from the release of enormous mass-organisational energies which the revolution of 1927 generated.

Not only the military character of the revolution is determined by its bureaucratic origin but even the very tactics of the military advance. In terms of a mass popular movement it would not be possible to proceed with piecemeal conquest, reform by stages, conquest of one city at a time and only when the army gets there and the administrative apparatus has been prepared (the so-called "Peiping Formula"), the lengthy negotiations with discredited classes and governments. The economy of this bureaucratic revolution is one of its most attractive aspects to many of its American liberal supporters. For the revolution unfolds under the conditions and directives of law and order.

Control of Shanghai will present the CP with its largest single problem to date. Assuring the food supply of its six millions alone will challenge its greatest efforts. The maintenance of services, control of sky-rocketing inflation, supply of raw material for industry and, above all, foreign commerce and foreign relations, will become the new axis of CP politics. With Shanghai, the CP will bid farewell to its agrarian days.

It will have to administer a sizeable working class. As the new masters, Stalinism will intensify exploitation of labour to raise production. In cities already in CP hands, the workers have invariably been the first victims.

The conquest of all China by Stalinism is an event in world history whose full significance will unfold in time. If Stalinism can organise effectively this continent of half a billion people and begin its industrialisation, it may very well be one of the great turning points of history. A powerful social force, albeit the force of counter-revolutionary Stalinism, is sweeping aside the three-millennia-old incubus of decay and stagnation. China is being torn from her antiquated roots and thrust into the modern world maelstrom. The tragedy of the Stalinist victory lies in this: that this gigantic event takes place under the aegis of a totalitarian rather than a liberating leadership, one which will tie China to the Russian despotism in world politics as well as in domestic economic construction.

Whatever Stalinism can manage to do in that ancient land, China is certain never again to live simply in its ancestral decadence. China's emergence into the world arena will alter the world balance of forces. It has already begun to have the sharpest repercussions on the politics of all Asia.

For capitalism, this irrevocable removal of China from the imperialist arena is a fateful blow. Just about 100 years ago European and American imperialism began the dismemberment and exploitation of China. Unlike the case of India, no one power achieved dominance. Cut into many "spheres of influence," China was the melting pot of imperialism. Because of their inability to overcome their own antagonisms, no one of the capitalist masters ever reaped the full fruits of exploitation there. Latest to aspire to this prize was the US. One of its post-war objectives was control of all China, south of the Russian sphere in Manchuria, through domination of a powerful centralised regime under Chiang Kai-shek. This dream is now dust. The US is left without even a "policy" in China. A huge potential market has been permanently removed from the arena of American capitalism.

The Chinese CP has made these conquests on its own. It is the only CP to have achieved power in a major country through internal political and military victory. With extension of its power beyond the Yangtze, the Chinese leadership is increasingly faced with problems which cannot be solved by Russian dictation. No Chinese party could hold power long simply by following Moscow's orders. The power and prestige of the native leadership has been increased enormously by these recent events.

However, Russia's relations to China are not the same as to East Europe. Strategically, there is no Western power the other side of China. Economically, Russia is on a higher level in relation to China by contrast with her European borders. Russia's aims are not, therefore, the same in Asia as in Europe. That a conflict between Chinese and Russian Stalinism — both nationalistic — is inevitable, may very likely be true. This conflict will center firstly on the question of who is the real power in Manchuria and its industries.

But this conflict need not take a Titoist form. Nor is it in the immediate offing. It is more likely that we are about to witness something new under the sun: the development of an all-Asiatic form of Stalinist society. Many preconceptions will fall before this development.

May 23, 1949

## 13. The integration of the intelligentsia

**F**rom Peiping last week the Chinese CP news agency announced completion of preparations for a definitive conference to be held late summer to form a new national government.

One of the aspects of the bureaucratic revolution is the Stalinist emphasis on continuation in office of the old functionaries of lower rank wherever possible. The CP seeks to win to itself whole sections of the old administration whom they desperately need to operate their governmental structure. Recently new schools were established where "ex-Kuomintang officials learn to serve the people."

Beside the smaller fry CP strategy is concerned with recapturing whole sections of the remaining KMT as splits in that dying organism increase and deepen. Li Chi-sen himself represents such a split. So does Chu Hseuh-fan, former head of the KMT-sponsored All-China Labour Federation and now in the same post under the new regime. It is rumoured that Chu is in negotiations with Tu Yuen-san, former underworld boss of the Shanghai labour unions and a candidate for a list of the top ten most corrupt KMT leaders. General Li supposedly has good connections with the Kwangsi clique as well as the warlords of Yunnan, in the deep South.

Perhaps more important than these opportunist considerations is that the presence of Li in the CP-controlled coalition is a means of gaining the support of the urban bourgeoisie. For the commercial and industrial classes do not have political parties to speak for them. In an indirect and ambiguous fashion Li Chi-sen acts as a symbol of coalition, that is, the representation of other interests than those of the CP, thereby making a claim for the confidence of the bourgeoisie. So long as the bourgeoisie is necessary to the Stalinists, General Li will have a place.

The Democratic League is the other major participant. This organisation had real strength among students, teachers and liberals throughout the country in the early post-war days. Even now it has many adherents among Chinese students abroad. Raising the banner of political

peace and national unity above partisan interest, the Democratic League engaged in sharp criticism of Chiang Kai-shek as well as of the Stalinists. It gave fullest support to the Marshall Mission and the first abortive PCC. It was the last attempt to form a political buffer between the extremes which were plunging toward civil war. General Marshall saw in the handful of liberals who formed the league the best hope for effective American policy.

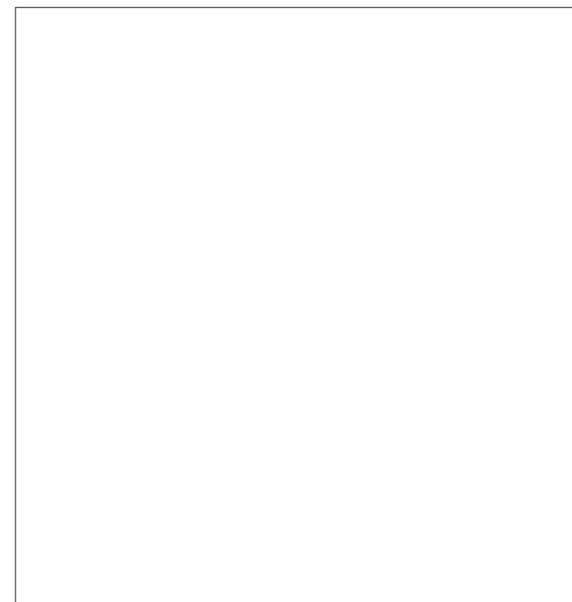
In March 1947 the Chinese National Student Federation issued a New Year's manifesto recording its equal opposition to the Stalinists and the Nationalists. It declared itself for "the Party of the Middle Way" and organised popular demonstrations against the civil war. Naturally, all these actions occurred in Nationalist areas; the Stalinists had succeeded in thrusting the onus for civil war on the KMT.

In retaliation Chiang Kai-shek illegalised the Democratic League and began police suppression of the students. KMT thugs murdered several league professors, who became political martyrs for the students, while the CP came to the political support of the students. Caught between blandishments on the one side and active terrorist hostility on the other, the League and the most politically alert students turned northward for salvation.

However, the Democratic League was never quite a political party. It never succeeded in becoming more than collection of what the Stalinists call "democratic personages." With KMT suppression these people came to accept the CP as bringer of peace and democracy. The League retains formal existence but its leading intellectuals increasingly tend toward political surrender of initiative and independence.

In recent months these groups have acquired a new significance. As the CP began to occupy cities it called upon students and intelligentsia to march behind the armies to form the administrative corps of the new governments. On one occasion a call went out for 10,000 students, which was oversubscribed.

One reporter indicates the changed situation: "In the last few weeks a steady stream of students has been quit-



"Communist" troops march into Beijing

ting the various nationalist universities and middle schools to enter Communist territory. A significant example is the University of Honan. The writer knew some of the students there: they were a timid, on the whole conservative, 'provincial' community. This summer, when the Communists temporarily occupied Kaifeng, the capital of Hanan, they appealed for teachers and technicians. Two large groups from the university professors as well as students threw up everything they had and left for Communist territory." (*Eastern World*, January 1948)

While there are some idealistic motivations involved, the great magnet for the Chinese intelligentsia is the place they can occupy in the newly created hierarchy. With deft use of flattery, the Stalinists make places of honour for the intellectuals. In the creation of the new bureaucratic class that is emerging to rule China the intellectuals and technicians will form a large stratum.

This development has further reduced the independence of the Democratic League. Its members and those who would otherwise support it find it increasingly difficult to discover any distinction between their own desires and those of the CP.

July 4, 1949

## 14. A look at future problems

**A** turning point has been reached in the Chinese bureaucratic revolution. Recent events have forced the hands of the new rulers. They are now in the process of accelerating a change in policy which they had expected to accomplish gradually, or as Mao Tse-tung never failed to emphasise, "by stages."

The Stalinist government has increased taxes and revenue in kind in order to feed its newly conquered cities. In fact, it has attempted to woo the workers, from whom the party has been alienated these last 20 years, by tying wages to the rice-price index. This has been done in Shanghai and Nanking as part of the "labour honeymoon," a prelude to integrating the workers into the CP-controlled apparatus. In Manchuria, where the CP is securely in the saddle, such "leniency" towards labour is long past.

In the face of the disaster to agricultural production in the stricken areas, the CP has undertaken not only to feed the cities, then, but also to provide fixed food income of the workers. The resulting squeeze on the peasantry has brought about the first rumblings of revolt in the countryside. The Red Spears secret society has again become active and other groups seem to be able to rally small peasant oppositions. They do not represent threats to CP power by any means but they are straws in the wind whose significance has been grasped by the new ruling class. For while engaging in suppression of every show of discontent, a change in policy has been ordered.

When the army launched its drive for the Yangtze Valley in March the public manifestos promised that "the feudal land-ownership system in the rural areas is to be abolished." However, "it must be eliminated only after

adequate preparation and stage by stage." In other words, no agrarian revolution which would transform social relations through the activity of the peasants themselves. The stages were to be regulated by the rate of CP consolidation. "The land problem can only be solved after the People's Liberation Army has arrived and work has been carried on for a considerable period for its solution." The nature of the change must not too sharply upset the agricultural system so that all social classes emerging from agrarian reform should owe their status to the CP. "Generally speaking, reduction of rents should be carried out first, and land distribution later."

Thus the hinterland of the newly taken cities is still under the traditional semi-feudal structure except that its rich peasants have waxed ever richer as a result of food shortages. Reform by "stages" has now developed into a danger because the swollen-rich peasants are strong and can now resist any change more effectively. They can also demand their own prices. The secret societies are not so much peasant organisations as rich peasant organisation.

Therefore, Lin Piao, Central Committee members, has ordered acceleration of land reform. On July 21, he declared: "In Central China, where industry is weak, the cities at present rely greatly on the villages for their supply of food and raw materials — while feudal influence and KMT secret agents are still very strong in the villages. It is very important that the feudal system in rural areas be overthrown ... The central emphasis must first of all be on work in the countryside." (Emphasis in original — J. B.) For a time the emphasis must shift from the great Yangtze cities.

However, even where the agrarian reform has been carried out its results have not always been exactly as planned. The basic law of agrarian reform which the CP

has promulgated not only retains class divisions in the village but allies the party with the "new rich peasant" — the village Stakhanovitch-kulak. This class, freed from feudal overlordship with its economically depressing burdens, increases production and accumulates wealth so that the tendency toward a "scissors crisis" has already become a major problem in North China when CP rule is less than a year old. From Tientsin on March 24 the official New China News Service reports: "One of the problems still to be worked out is the restoration of a balanced relation between the economics of the city and the surrounding countryside. The purchasing power of the peasants has increased greatly after the land reform and they are able to buy more goods than the old village industries can supply."

Antagonism between the needs of city and country is part of the backwardness of China but has been accentuated precisely by the nature of the CP agrarian programme of abetting the "new rich peasant" class. In Central China, where even this reform has been awaiting the readiness of the bureaucrats, those problems are even more distorted and extreme because they still have a feudal form. On top of this, natural disasters of flood and drought have enhanced the position of the rich peasant to a commanding position, while it has brought disaster elsewhere.

It is likely then that the party will attempt to change its relations to the peasantry:

- 1) It will intensify land reform in newly conquered areas as a measure of preventive consolidation.
- 2) It will raise taxes in kind, particularly on the rich peasant "ally".
- 3) It will begin to tighten up on capitalist elements and change its emphasis to the middle and even poor peasantry to increase its base of village support. These policy changes are indicated from the present growing crisis. However, it is unlikely that anything more than, temporary alleviation of the most pressing difficulties will be accomplished.

The real problem that presses even more irresistibly against the new social structure is industrialisation. The regime has built up an enormous pressure in the countryside by its "stage" policy and its encouragement of the "new rich" peasants. It has taken them into the CP, given them all manner of prestige and honours, organised con-

# 15. Rigging the bureaucratic state

gresses of these "labour heroes" and in fact has organised agriculture around them — the rich peasant Wu Men-yu has been made a national symbol like Stakhanov and Boussygin were in the first Five Year Plan.

Industrialisation cannot be put off or develop slowly with American and British imports, as have been expected until recently. A new sharp turn is necessary, the first outlines of which are already emerging. It is the peasant and the worker who will be made to pay for a new forced pace. Even lifting the blockade will not change this now.

The tendency of Stalinist economic policy is toward withdrawal from the world market. At a time when the Chinese party has embarked on intensified industrialization it has made autarky its watchword: not a complete withdrawal but sharp limitation on imports. The difference between the world market costs and the higher production costs will be borne by the masses of workers and peasants. What the CP leadership has in mind is not identical with Stalin's programme of "building socialism in one country." For as Mao Tze-tung stated in his major declaration of July 1: "Internationally we belong to the anti-imperialist front, headed by the Soviet Union, and for genuine friendly aid we must look to this front and not to the imperialist front." China's industrialisation will occur at a political price.

This is the reality behind the new relationship to the US. So that none miss the point, Mao said: "We are told that we must do business. Certainly business must be carried on. We are only against our own and foreign reactionaries who hamper us from doing business... We are told that we need the aid of the British and American governments. Today this is childish reasoning. Imperialists still rule today in Britain and the US. Will they give assistance to a people's state?"

What Mao is saying is that it is not primarily a matter of "business" but of "assistance" or subsidies. "The CP and also the progressive parties and groups in these countries are now campaigning for the establishment of trade and diplomatic relations with us. These are good intentions." But they do not answer the main need since the amount of potential trade is so limited.

Such vast economic alterations will bring tightened state control. Although the "alliance" with the "national bourgeoisie" is not yet over, its arena will be increasingly limited under the restricted economy that is being built and the entire arena of the "new democracy" will be narrowed.

The first cost of these problems is to be transferred to the working class. On July 23 the entire Shanghai press suddenly discovered that workers in many cigarette factories had asked for wage cuts to assist in the emergency. The groundwork is being laid for an attack on the workers' standard of living as the "honeymoon" draws to an end under present exigencies. Such cuts may become a form of pressure on workers to leave Shanghai; hunger is an instrument of Stalinist economic policy.

On the part of the State Department, a harder attitude is emerging. To begin with, policy is no longer based on expectations of an early Chinese Titoism. The recent White Paper not only "wrote off" China but in effect acknowledged extension of the Iron Curtain to China's bordering nations. Washington's China policy will tend increasingly to coincide to its general policy toward Russia and its satellites. De facto recognition, a probability, will not alter this. No economic aid is likely while an economic squeeze is probable.

Certain conclusions can be drawn indicating the changed relationship.

1) The antagonisms between the US and Chinese Stalinism are fundamental. being both economic and political. An early accommodation is unlikely since no basis exists for it.

(2) Chinese economy is being reorganised to reduce dependence on all imports and certainly on American imports for which no economic basis exists. This will have enormous repercussions. Internally, the state will assume decisive economic power and for industrialisation will develop capital accumulation through in exploitation of labour and larger taxes on the peasantry. Totalitarian measures will be strengthened. All "Western" influence will be driven out.

3) Between Stalin and Mao Tze-tung there are differences but not, at this time, irreconcilable differences. In all likelihood some economic agreements have been reached, of which the recent Manchurian trade treaty is one. There is no prospect of Chinese Titoism in the immediate future. Only after the present stage has been overcome and new difficulties arise will this question again arise. What is likely is early recognition of the new "people's democracy" by Russia as soon as it is formed.

(4) The inherent tendencies toward Stalinisation will be speeded up. Class antagonisms in the village and inside the CP itself will come to the fore more rapidly, demanding solution. The CP will be put to the decisive test of whether it can organise a new ruling bureaucratic class out of the varied elements it has rallied to it before the pressures get beyond control.

August 29, 1949

**The assembly convened by the Chinese Communist Party has proclaimed a new state from the capital at Peiping. Mao Tze-tung, head of the party, is also chief of state; Chou En-lai, one of the party's top triumvirate, premier and foreign minister. Communist Party domination is indisputable and complete in all sections of the new government.**

In the larger framework of the international balance of power the problems are only becoming apparent and new ones will arise. The US has been outflanked in the entire North Pacific, for example. With Manchuria under the Russian thumb, with connections to the industrial complex of Mukden and Changchun, and with rail, air and road connections to Siberia secure, the Russian bases in Dairen and Port Arthur are substantial fortresses. They are located less than an hour from Japan and two hours from Okinawa. The Philippines are within easy range of even short-range bombers. For the first time a Russian Asiatic fleet can have permanent and extensive berths.

South Korea has been reduced to a helplessly surrounded island which can be overrun at will. Japan can be little more than a new Bataan and there are strong movements among all classes to reach an agreement or at least a modus vivendi with the Russians. In any case Japan is an unsuitable U. S. base and has been strategically neutralized. US policy of support of native reaction has turned popular sentiment against MacArthur's occupation. From its Chinese base Stalinism will now be in a position to launch a political offensive against the US inside Japan. Nor are the Japanese Zaibatsu any more reliable for the US. Already many of them look to China as the only major market possible to them. American refusal to permit such trade will create new antagonisms.

These developments explain the hysterical cries for help from the reactionaries in power in South Korea, from the Philippines and from Chiang Kai-shek in their pressure for a Pacific Pact. And because commitment to such a pact would involve an enormous but hardly compensated outlay Washington has rejected these appeals. Looming over tomorrow's horizon is the threat to Southeast Asia — Viet Nam, Burma and Malaya.

The manner in which a new state is established is usually a good indicator of its character. There is no attempt to obscure the domination of the Communist Party. Not only are the heads of state CP leaders but "the working out of the initial draft [of the programme of the state] was entrusted to the Communist Party of China", according to Chou En-lai. The army and the state apparatus are monopolies of the party. Yet other elements are participating and the Political Consultative Conference, as well as the regime, is described as a coalition.

It should be noted that this PCC was not a constituent assembly. It was not elected nor in any way charged by the people with any political power. The delegates are representatives of various types of organisations and in all cases they were appointed by or are themselves the leaders of these organisations. Thus the CP delegates were not elected by the CP membership or by a convention. Fourteen political parties are represented. But these are

parties only by courtesy.

Obviously there is no question of whether "Western-type" democracy is or is not applicable in China. This farce was arranged by the CP as its programme for the composition of the new state. It has need of diverse elements around the banner of national revolution. It is not able to rule unilaterally as yet nor does it dare establish popular arenas of discussion with power of election. Problems of political and economic reconstruction enforce alliances with diverse classes at this time in the absence of a great people's upsurge. But all these classes are given their status by the party which thereby retains the power to move against them when it becomes expedient.

For the CP the major problem of consolidation is how to create a new national ruling; class around the party as a core by recruiting elements from many sections of the population, especially the young intellectuals. Over a country as huge and varied as China, this is a matter for many years. In Russia, which was economically more advanced, the Stalinist consolidation took about ten years. That is why the theoretical leader of the CP, Liu Shao-chi, stated; "we deem it inappropriate [he is referring to the insertion of the goal of 'socialism' in the programme] because the taking of considerable socialist steps in China is a thing of the rather far future."

However, the main thing is the retention of state power in the hands of the party. Under this aegis the goal will be pursued as rapidly as it can be.

The PCC, far from being a democratically determined congress empowered to establish a new government, has more of the characteristics of a fabricated junto.

It should be noted that one of the chief accusations against Chiang Kai-shek was his claim for the monolithic rule of the Kuomintang during "a period of tutelage." The CP government, in effect, does the same but in the name of "national democracy"; it can do this because of the enormous power it has developed in its bureaucratic revolution. Its state is a bureaucratic centralised authoritarianism based on the emergent class of bureaucrats which for the moment has side alliances with selected non-representative leaders of the peasantry, small landlords and petty bourgeoisie.

It may be objected that this is much too definitive a characterisation for what exists in China today. Surely this state and the Russian state are not identical? It is, of course, true that the Chinese Stalinists have not yet consolidated their power and this may take some years. Nor have they organised the economy to the degree that holds even in East Europe.

But these are differences of degree only. With the political power they have captured, the direction of the state is unmistakable. That there will be many obstacles goes without saying. But the entire energy of the state will be bent toward the consolidation of the new class and the extension of its power over ever larger areas of life. That is why it is entirely proper to designate this state as being of the same order as all other Stalinist states.

October 17, 1949

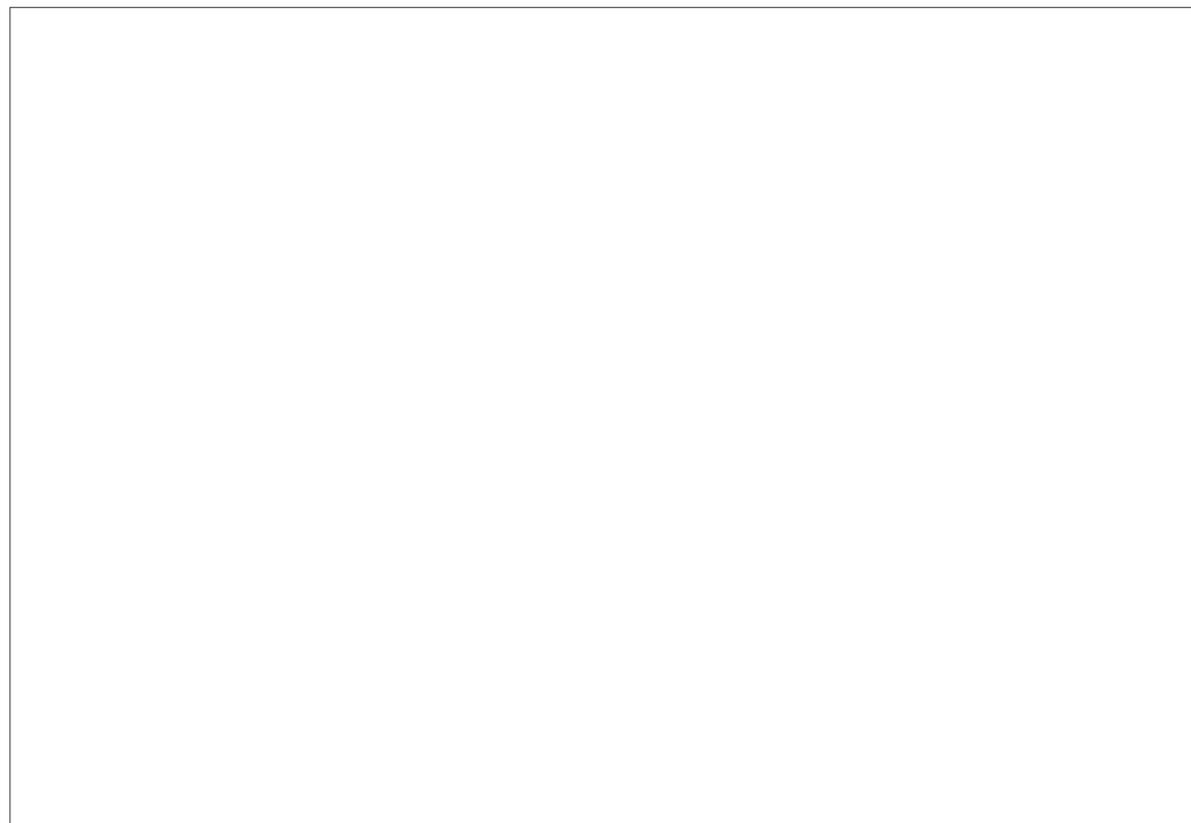
## 16. The fall of Canton

**T**he fall of Canton brings a close to a two-and-a-half year civil war in China. Except for the rice bowl of Szechuan, deep in the Yangtze valley, every major section of traditional China is in CP hands. Canton is not simply another city. It was the heart of native capitalism.

As long ago as the middle of the 16th century this city became the major trading port with the Portuguese and later with the Dutch and British. During the last century, it was here that the only major popular resistance was organised by the commercial classes over the heads of the corrupt imperial government at Peking. Canton was the heart of the Kuomintang and the city where Sun Yatsen was first able to set up a nationalist government. And in the great revolution of 1925–27 Canton supplied the armies for the northward march. Shanghai, by contrast, was always a foreign city, which grew to power around the imperialist concessions. Until 1927 the city was administered by foreigners. Canton was just the reverse. The British set up their concession on the island of Hong Kong outside the city, and the local tradesmen continued to flourish.

This week the leading citizens were negotiating the city's surrender to the CP. They raised no objection to the desertion by the KMT nor did they demand that it defend them. The KMT was no longer their party or state. They showed no compunction in welcoming the new rulers.

Canton also has been the fortress of the working class. While for many years disorganised, this situation now presents a serious test in social relations to the CP. Since few of the industries there are immediately nationalisable because of their small size, it will be labour-capital relations. The problem will be how best to conquer the



Kuomintang march out of Canton

workers, crush them in the party's embrace and still maintain good relations with both classes.

Finally, Canton brings the Chinese party to the Viet-Name border for the first time. It can now make liaison with the forces of Ho Chi-Minh, and this would alter the relations between the various factions in the Viet-Nam national alliance. It is yet to be seen how Ho will react to the new situation and whether the Chinese CP will make direct overtures.

In any case, the French are faced with a new urgency in Indo-China. American policy has thus far followed the

French to the present brink of disaster. But there is no way to turn with this policy any more. Long postponement of an American policy for Southeast Asia is no longer possible. No doubt Nehru's current tour of the capitals of the imperialist world is related to this matter. The State Department's White Paper offered no guide. These events tend to force the hands of capitalist imperialism, and the US and France will be forced to reorient their policies in Asia.

October 24, 1949

## 17. Self-determination for Formosa (Taiwan)

**T**he battle of Formosa which has raged over Washington these past weeks is now concluding its first phase. Truman's announcement that the United States has no intention of intervening, since Formosa is Chinese territory and must be settled by Chinese political forces, does not close the matter. But it reduces the opposition to the position of critics rather than potential makers of policy.

Intervention was discarded because it could not serve the higher political interests of US diplomacy, which is now shifting its base to India and Japan. The State Department, for example, is heavily involved in the British Empire Conference at Colombo, Ceylon. The State Department also cherishes the thesis that, if not open Titoism, at least deep fissures, can be made in the Chinese CP leadership by a more benevolent policy.

But like the rabid militarists, this "enlightened" policy has power politics as its point of departure. And like the former, it disregards the Formosan people. Nor is the Chinese CP in any different position. It too simply asserts its legal right to Formosa basing this right on the notorious Yalta decision where small and large nations were distributed as on a chessboard.

None of these groups have proposed to let the pawns speak for themselves. No one in a position of power has spoken up in defence of the rights of the six million Formosans. Yet no one has a better right to be heard.

There is no better single criterion for nationhood than the struggle of a body of people to become a political entity.

Formosa is largely peopled by Chinese, many of them old settlers dating back to the collapse of the Ming dynasty in 1644. After the Sino-Japanese war of 1890, Japan took Formosa and held it for 50 years. During this time the island was transformed. It became alienated from the main currents of Chinese life and instead entered on the road of modernisation taken by Japan.

It became an integral part of the inner empire and was an administrative unit of the central Japanese government rather than a colony. It became the Hawaii of Japan, its sugar bowl. Extensive railroads, airfields and harbor installations were developed along with modern mines and industrial establishments. Yet its people did not become Japanese.

While the Formosans never became quite reconciled to Japanisation, the gap with China became wider than they knew. Formosa was a relatively modern society while China groaned in the agony of the most corrupt warlordism. When Chiang and his carpetbaggers moved in on the island in 1945 they were received as liberators because of the feeling of common cultural origins. But the Formosans soon saw their error.

The Kuomintang brought with it its secret police, its inefficiency, the personal squeeze, labyrinthine bureaucracy — and its provincial, cliquish, stultified culture. Like locusts, every official brought his swarm of retainers. In place of her modern Japanese taxation system, there was introduced the system of repeated, uncertain, pyramiding taxes, much of which remained in personal pockets. Cynical repression replaced the efficient foreign administration.

The Formosans were pressed to the limits of endurance. When cholera broke out in 1946 the Chinese officials sold UNRRA medicines on the black market to the helpless victims at whatever the traffic could bear. A thousand lepers were loosed from the leprosariums because the administration would not spare funds for their maintenance. Japanese as a language was suppressed and Chinese made mandatory. Bribery became the national means of getting along among a people who had lived under the Japanese code of honest administration. Concubinage was introduced. Prostitution became common.

While the medieval minds of the Kuomintang could strip a people of wealth, they did not know how to oper-

ate a modern industry. Gradually the modern installations came to a halt. Agriculture and industry both fell into decline. Black-market prices rose to 800 per cent of official prices. Inflation is increasing daily.

This was the background of the Formosan revolt of 1947 — an unarmed uprising of desperate people. The object of the revolt was not yet independence but simply the reform of government, to lighten the tax burden and reduce corruption. To guarantee this the Formosans set up local governments of their own which, however, acknowledged the sovereignty of the central regime and agreed to carry out its laws.

Chiang's response was the massacre of 20,000 people. Troops poured in from the mainland and were let loose on helpless civilians. The people fell into despair. Hatred for all things Chinese went underground.

Yet, at no time did the Communist Party ever gain a foothold. Whatever the reason, the fact is clear. Stalinism has no strength on this island.

The dwindling fortunes of the Nationalists do not have a long future on Formosa, left to themselves. Barring US intervention, the people will grow stronger against this rotting power. On the other hand, a Stalinist invasion will not only bring war to the island but, if victorious, will establish a new Chinese and Stalinist tyranny. The people of Formosa have not been participants in the Chinese civil war and neither side has a claim to rule them. Of recent years their only politics has been first anti-Japanese and then anti-Chiang. Their only desire is to disengage themselves from Chinese political struggles.

All this does not yet make nation. But in the last two years an independence movement has begun to grow. From Hong Kong and Tokyo its agents have begun to organise a Free Formosa party. This movement is still in its infancy and it is small, because the police regime keeps it suppressed. Yet it is bound to grow as against the Kuomintang because the latter can only grow weaker. If Stalinism conquers, this movement will be suppressed with a for heavier hand.

Socialists should defend the rights of the Free Formosans. Its people have a right to peace and this is possible only through independence. Socialists should oppose the Stalinist invasion as much as the Chinese dictatorship. This programme for a Free Formosa also applies to other areas such as Tibet.

Let the people decide their own future! That is the only democratic road.

January 16, 1950