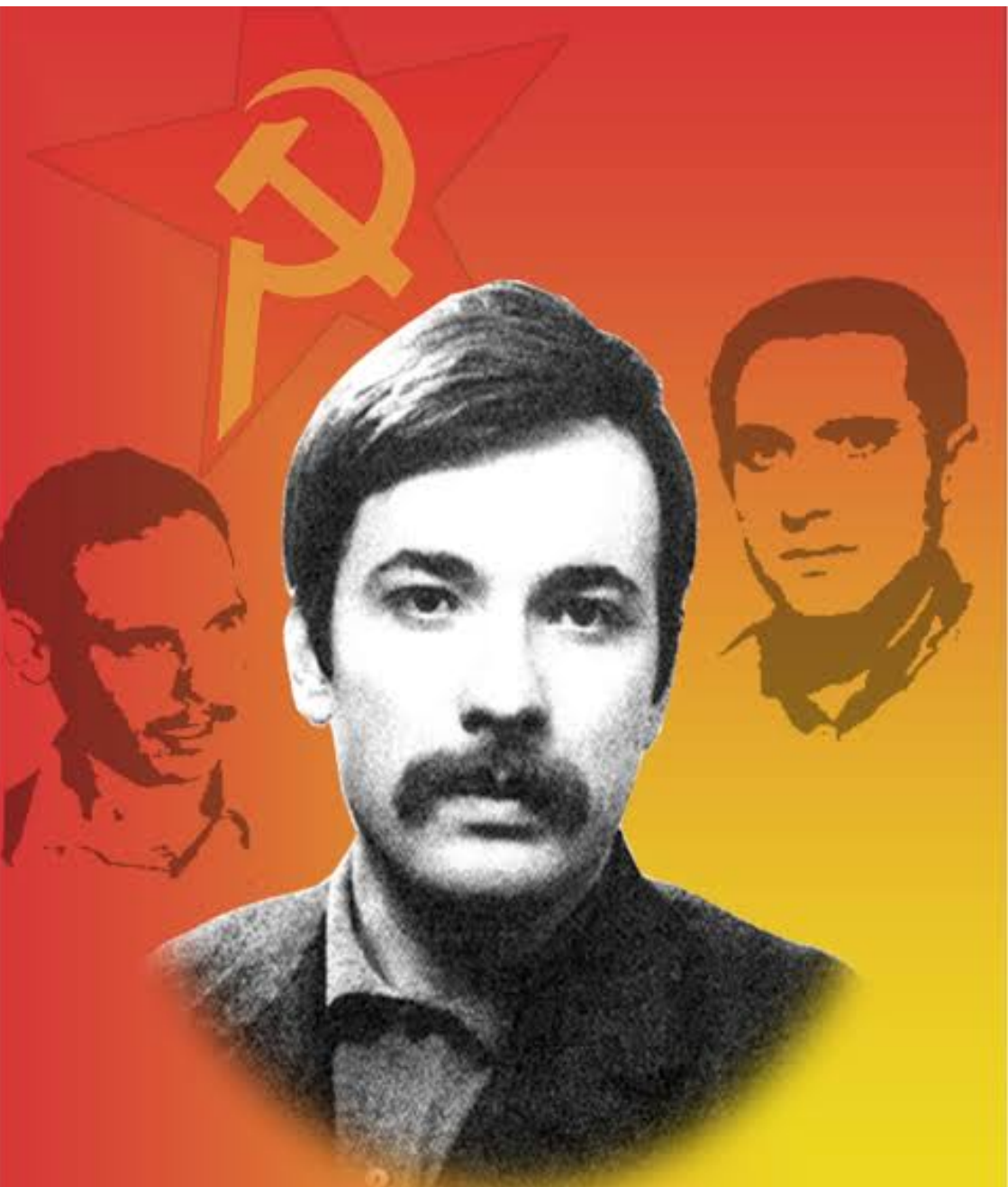




UNINTERRUPTED REVOLUTION I-II-III

Mahir Çayan

UNINTERRUPTED REVOLUTION

I-II-III

MAHİR ÇAYAN

English Translation GÜRKAN GÜR

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UNINTERRUPTED REVOLUTION I

PREFACE

A complete theoretical confusion prevails on the Left in our country. Various opportunist factions, which take the same revisionist theses as their basis and put them on the market in different packaging, and which rely on forces other than their own strength, accuse one another in the harshest terms of opportunism, passivism, betrayal, and so on. They raise storms over minor differences of assessment or expression that cannot even be counted as tactical differences. For years, amid the dust and smoke of sham ideological polemics, shameless distortions, petty-bourgeois clamour and the arrogance of “we are old, we know”, a complete blind brawl has continued.

As a consequence of the absence of a strong proletarian movement in our country, the ideological level on the Left is not high. For this reason, in such an environment it has become impossible to distinguish what is correct from what is false; everything has become mixed together. And in this environment, where the essence of the Marxist-Leninist theory of revolution has been lost, the various forms of opportunism manufacture their original “theories of revolution” in the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Tse-tung, Ho Chi Minh and others, citing their writings. So much so that while one form of opportunism takes Lenin’s writings as its source and accuses the other side of treachery, the other side takes the writings of Mao and Lin Piao as its source and accuses its accuser of revisionism.

“Marxism is an extremely profound, extremely complex doctrine.” Marxism is a doctrine that continually deepens and enriches itself in the face of the new realities of life, surpassing itself. What is essential in Marxism is not the wording but the content. The only unchanging thing in Marxism is, in Lenin’s words, its living soul: the dialectical method. If the concepts of time and place, the two most elementary elements of dialectics, are not taken into account, it becomes possible to speak of Lenin as a revisionist in relation to Marx and Engels, Mao Tse-tung as a revisionist in relation to Lenin and Stalin, and the victorious proletarian revolutionaries of imperialism’s Third Crisis Period as revisionists in relation to Mao.

Everywhere and at all times opportunism resorts to two methods in distorting Scientific Socialism. Either, without taking the concepts of time and place into account, it clings with both hands to theses advanced by the masters of Marxism for other historical conditions and which have become obsolete in the period being lived through, and tries to use these theses as a foundation for its own deviation; or it revises Marxism by declaring that theses of Marxism-Leninism valid under all conditions are no longer valid because “time and place have changed”. As in every country of the world, in our country too every variety of opportunism resorts to both methods, distorting Marxism-Leninism and attempting to confuse the minds of revolutionary militants.

In writing this pamphlet, we took this reality especially into account. We have tried to set out our conception of revolution, and accordingly our conception of organisation and method of work, by showing the course followed by the Marxist theory of revolution as it deepened and enriched itself over time. In fact, the analyses of Scientific Socialism generally proceed not from the abstract to the concrete but from analysis of the concrete towards the abstract. The Left in our country, however, presents a special

situation. As we stated above, amid the theoretical confusion existing on the Left the essence of the doctrine has disappeared from view. For this reason, we decided to begin from the abstract, take the question from the beginning, show how it deepened over time, and descend to the concrete.

In this way, first, we shall set out the Marxist theory of revolution whose essence has been lost in this blind brawl; and second, we shall to a great extent prevent the various forms of opportunism from confusing the minds of our militant comrades with their so-called ideological polemics. (It is of course impossible to prevent opportunist distortions completely. But it is possible to set the question out with complete clarity, and this renders opportunist distortion largely ineffective.) For these reasons, in our analyses we have followed a method proceeding from the abstract to the concrete. We have examined the question in three parts. The first part contains the Marxist theory of revolution in the periods of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

The second part contains the deepening, by Lenin himself, of the Leninist Theory of Uninterrupted Revolution formulated in *Two Tactics*; the application of this theory to the practice of colonial and semi-colonial countries; the separate interpretations by the Comintern under Stalin's leadership and by Mao of this proposition of Lenin; the essence of the thesis of the Non-Capitalist Path; and the Theory of National Democratic Revolution. The third part covers the distinguishing features of imperialism; the enrichment and deepening of the Leninist proposition under new conditions and the revolutionary strategy of semi-colonial countries; the revolutionary and revisionist interpretations of the Cuban Revolution; and the Path of the Turkish Revolution. In addition, each section includes criticism of every variety of opportunism in our country on questions related to the subject.

KURTULUŞ

PART ONE

THE THEORY OF REVOLUTION IN PRE-MONOPOLY MARXISM

I. CONCEPTS OF REVOLUTION IN MARX AND ENGELS

In Marx and Engels we find three types of concept of revolution: political revolution, social revolution and permanent revolution. (We shall examine permanent revolution in Section III.) According to Marx and Engels, political revolution is the overthrow of the existing reactionary power and the passage of political power, within that historical process, to a more progressive administration. For a movement to be a political revolution, it is necessary that the masses of the people,[3] *or at least a significant section of them, struggle for power. Political revolution can be spoken of only when, as a result of the uprising of the masses, power passes into revolutionary hands.*[4]

Secondly, according to Marx and Engels, for a movement to count as a political revolution, the administration formed as a result of that movement must be progressive and democratic. Marx's definition relates to bourgeois society in the pre-monopoly period. Marx's criterion of progressiveness is highly interesting. As the measure of the progressive character of a movement, Marx says:

“Public credit and private credit are the economic thermometers by which the intensity of a revolution can be measured. In proportion as they fall, the destructive and creative power of the revolution rises.” (*The Class Struggles in France*, p. 53)[5*]

Only one kind of administration can deal a mortal blow to public and private credit: a proletarian administration. From this standpoint, on the terrain of bourgeois society, the political

revolution possessing the greatest destructive violence and creative power is the proletarian revolution. This revolution at the same time brings about a social transformation — a social revolution. For this revolution will abolish bourgeois credit and the stock exchange. This means the abolition of bourgeois production and the bourgeois regime and the transition to a new social and economic order.

The February Revolution was a political revolution. The revolution directed against the financial aristocracy did not deal a mortal blow to public and private credit, but it restricted them. February did not put an end to the bourgeois regime; it merely put an end to the rule of one of its reactionary factions and broadened and deepened the framework of democratic rights and freedoms. The February Revolution was not a social revolution, because it did not put an end to the bourgeois regime; but because, as a result of the uprising of the masses, the most reactionary rule of the financial aristocracy was overthrown and a more progressive administration, expressed in the social republic, came to power, it was a political revolution.

Marx's definition of social revolution — by which he means real revolution — is based upon the transition from one mode of production to a more advanced mode of production. On this question Marx says:

“At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come into contradiction with the existing relations of production, or — what is merely a legal expression for the same thing — with the property relations within which they have hitherto moved. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In studying such transformations it is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic

conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophical — in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out... No social formation ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have developed; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society itself.” (*A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, pp. 23–24)

As can immediately be seen, the predominant aspect in the theory of revolution of Marx and Engels is economic and social determinism. The role of voluntarism exists within the determining framework of material conditions. According to this conception, political revolution is the complement of social revolution. Political revolution is the product of revolutionary initiative within the determining framework of material conditions. (By proletarian revolution, political and social revolution are meant together.) If we separate the elements:

1) Political revolution is a necessary stage of social revolution. Political revolution is the work of revolutionary initiative. Revolution is the work of an organisation which draws the masses behind it, is conscious, and knows what it is doing. This is especially so for the political revolution which will lead to socialist transformation.

An organisation of revolutionaries, a minority possessing iron discipline, makes political revolution and secures socialist transformation by raising the consciousness of the masses, raising the level of their consciousness and action, and using revolutionary initiative at the right place and time. Revolution takes place as a result of the action of conscious masses and rests upon the masses. But the revolutionary initiative of a narrowly constituted organisation of professional revolutionaries is of vital

importance here. (Passivists always underestimate the role of revolutionary initiative.)

2) For political revolution to bring about social transformation — this is said for the pre-monopoly period; in the age in which we live, for revolution itself to be possible — in other words, for it to become a social revolution, on the one hand the historical conditions and the economic and social structure must be sufficient, and on the other hand the level of consciousness and organisation of the masses of the people must be high. In social revolution, the determining role is not played by revolutionary initiative alone. Historical heroes do not create history; history creates its heroes. The history of revolutions is full of examples in which, despite having seized power, revolutionary initiative ended in disaster because the objective conditions were insufficient, despite every kind of heroism.

From the movement of Münzer to Sheikh Bedreddin and the Paris Commune, history has witnessed the defeats of revolutionary initiative which did not correspond to the material foundations of the period in which it occurred. However powerful the revolutionary advance in a particular period may be, if that historical period makes it impossible for this advance to achieve victory, if the material conditions of life have not reached a certain maturity necessary for its success, defeat is an inevitable result. In analysing Münzer's movement, Engels masterfully reveals the dialectical unity between revolutionary initiative and historical and social determinism:

“The worst thing that can befall the leader of an extreme party is to be compelled to take over a government in an epoch when the movement is not yet ripe for the domination of the class which he represents and for the realisation of the measures which that domination demands. What he can do depends not upon his will, but at most upon the stage reached by the antagonism of the various classes, upon the degree of

development of the struggle between the classes, and upon the degree of development of the material conditions of life, the relations of production and exchange, which at every moment determine the degree of development of class antagonisms... Thus he finds himself confronted by an insoluble dilemma. What he can do contradicts all his previous actions, his principles and the immediate interests of his party; and what he ought to do cannot be carried out." (*The Peasant War in Germany*, p. 127)

In the theory of revolution, Marx sets out the relationship and contradiction between revolutionary initiative and economic and social determinism as follows:

"Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past." (*The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, p. 21)

And against reactionaries who claim that revolutions are the work of a handful of agitators, Marx explains the cause of revolutions in the following way:

"The superstition which represents revolutions as the product of the will of malicious agitators has had its day. Wherever a revolutionary convulsion occurs, everyone now knows that it arises from social needs which obsolete institutions cannot satisfy." (Marx's 1851 address before the Cologne jury, quoted in Henri Lefebvre, *The Sociology of Marx*, p. 189)

The matter is clear. For revolutionary initiative to succeed in its role, revolution must rest upon a material basis. In other words, the economic base must have reached a certain level for that revolutionary advance to achieve victory.

"Revolutions require a material basis. Theory cannot be realised among a people unless it represents the realisation of that people's needs. It is not enough for thought to strive

towards realisation; reality itself must strive towards thought.”
— Marx

II. THE STAGE OF REVOLUTION, THE STAGE OF EVOLUTION AND THE THEORY OF CRISES

“When great historical developments are involved,” Marx writes to Engels, “twenty years are no more than a day where major developments are concerned, though afterwards there may come days in which twenty years are concentrated.” (Lenin, *The Tactics of the Proletariat in the Class Struggle*, in *The Sources of Marxism*, p. 44.) Marx and Engels formulate the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat in two stages: the stage of evolution and the stage of revolution. In both stages the revolutionary tactics of the proletariat are different. The stage of revolution is a short period. It is the stage in which the existing social order is overturned. During this brief stage the tactic of the proletariat and its vanguard is offensive; there is only one item on the agenda: **UPRISING!**

During this period, the tactic of the proletariat is to smash the existing state machinery and establish the revolutionary power of the proletariat. Marx and Engels, inspired by the revolutionary initiative and traditions of the French, called this tactic **speaking French**. According to Marx and Engels, insurrection is an art.

“Insurrection is an art quite as much as war or any other, and subject to certain rules of proceeding, which, when neglected, will produce the ruin of the party neglecting them... Firstly, never play with insurrection unless you are fully prepared to face the consequences of your play... Secondly, the insurrectionary career once entered upon, act with the greatest determination and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising... in the words of Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known: ‘De l’audace, de l’audace, encore de l’audace!’ — boldness, boldness, and again boldness.” (Friedrich Engels, *Revolution*

and Counter-Revolution in Germany, International Publishers, 1932, p. 100.)[6*]

As can be seen, one must never play with revolution before the conditions are mature. But once the path of revolution has been opened, it is necessary to attack without pause, to win victories every day, however small, so as to draw hesitant elements to one's side, and to attack in order to catch the enemy unawares. This is the tactic of the proletariat in the revolutionary period. What, then, is the task of the vanguard detachment of the proletariat until this brief revolutionary stage arrives? Is it to sit and wait? Of course not. Concerning the tasks of the proletarian party during this stage, which is considerably longer than the stage of revolution, Lenin conveys the views of Marx and Engels as follows:

“The tactics of the proletariat must take account, at every stage and at every moment, of this objectively inevitable dialectic of human history: on the one hand, making use of periods of political stagnation, or of so-called peaceful development, in order to advance, as it were, at a tortoise's pace, and to increase the class-consciousness, strength and fighting capacity of the advanced class; on the other hand, conducting all this work in such a way as to direct it towards the ‘final aim’ of that class and to create in it the ability to accomplish great things in the great days in which ‘twenty years are concentrated’.” (Lenin, *The Tactics of the Proletariat in the Class Struggle*, in *The Sources of Marxism*, p. 44.)

The revolutionary struggle of this long period embraces, internally, an uncompromising ideological struggle against opportunism, raising the consciousness and strength of the vanguard class and educating it; and, externally, every form of action from organising the daily struggles of the masses — from the trade-union struggle of the proletariat to the economic and democratic struggles of the masses of the people — to directing political opposition against the existing reactionary

administration by taking a place on the extreme left of the democratic opposition. Marx and Engels called the revolutionary language of the proletariat in this stage **speaking German**, because of the high ideological-theoretical level of the German proletariat and its ability to draw the masses of the people into its ranks.

As can be seen, the tactics of the proletariat are shaped according to concrete conditions and situations. When conditions change, tactics also change. The proletarian revolutionary is one who uses both languages at the proper place and time. As Marx, inspired by Ludwig Feuerbach, put it, the revolutionary is a fighter possessing “a French heart and a German head”. The proletarian party, for its part, is a combat organisation founded upon dialectical and historical materialism, which places every form of action — from the smallest reformist movement to revolutionary terror — on the agenda at the appropriate place and time.

At the root of every right and “left” deviation that appears in the revolutionary movement lies the confusion of the revolutionary tactics of these two stages: attempting to speak French during the evolutionary stage, persisting in speaking German during the revolutionary stage, or speaking the language of the stage badly in either period. (In other words, the cause of all deviations can be summarised as neglecting or exaggerating one side of the dual character of the theory of revolution.)

Throughout their lives, Marx and Engels fought both deviations in the harshest manner. In one sense, Scientific Socialism was shaped by the theoretical and ideological struggles Marx and Engels waged throughout their lives, within revolutionary practice: on the one hand against the Blanquists, the Bakuninists and the German “crude communists” whom Marx and Engels called the alchemists of revolution — conspiratorial tendencies detached from the masses, attempting to speak French before the

objective conditions had matured and manoeuvring to seize power — and, on the other hand, against Proudhonist and Lassalleian reformists and the English and German petty-bourgeois reformists who sought to confine the political struggle of the proletariat within a field compatible with the needs of capitalism.

What are the factors determining the stages of evolution and revolution? Are revolutionary moments dependent upon chance? Of course not. Revolutions have laws. Marx and Engels link the stage of revolution to a revolutionary crisis. (The level of consciousness and organisation of the proletariat must also be sufficient for revolution.) For a long time the concept of revolutionary crisis did not possess a clear and precise character in Marx and Engels. Because of this lack of clarity in the concept of revolutionary crisis, Marx and Engels were mistaken concerning the revolutions of 1848. In Scientific Socialism the theory of crises contains various elements: economic crisis, social crisis, political crisis and permanent crisis. As we noted above, until *Capital* this theory of crises remained rather indistinct in Scientific Socialism.

In the *Manifesto*, Marx and Engels say: “It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put the existence of the entire bourgeois society on its trial, each time more threateningly.” These economic crises are the heart attacks of the bourgeois economy, recurring throughout its life and becoming more dangerous each time. They also create social crises. But the existence of these two crises is not sufficient for a revolution. For the objective conditions of revolution to mature, alongside the economic crisis the social crisis must deepen,[7*] and there must exist a political crisis capable of bringing down bourgeois rule. (The existence of such a political crisis in turn depends upon the deepening of the social crisis and the existence of the economic crisis.)

If these three crises do not reach their extreme point in this way, revolution cannot occur. (For revolution, the objective conditions of revolution must mature.) The concept of revolutionary crisis employed by Marx and Engels during the revolutions of 1848 included an economic crisis and a social crisis which had not fully deepened. When the revolutions of 1848 broke out, Marx and Engels believed that the expected moment had arrived. They regarded the crisis which had broken out as capitalism's permanent and final crisis. At that time Marx and Engels hoped that, without regression or interruption, political power could be seized and social transformation carried out. Engels says on this question:

“Under the conditions then prevailing, we could have no doubt that the great decisive struggle had at last begun, that it would have to be fought out in a single, long and eventful period of revolution [permanent revolution is meant], and that it could only end with the final victory of the proletariat.” (*Introduction to The Class Struggles in France*, p. 12.)

Engels also openly states that between 1848 and 1850 they, and those who thought like them, had been mistaken:

“History has proved us, and all who thought like us, wrong. It has made it clear that the state of economic development on the Continent was then by no means ripe for the abolition of capitalist production (...) and once again it was proved, twenty years after the period described here, how impossible a rule of the working class still was at that time.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 16–18; see also the Preface to the 1888 English edition of the *Communist Manifesto*.)

Marx too states that, because the objective conditions were insufficient in the 1850s, it was wrong to expect a proletarian revolution:

“Since such a period of general prosperity is possible, in which the productive forces of bourgeois society develop as exuberantly as is at all possible within bourgeois relations,

there can be no question of a real revolution. Such a revolution is possible only when these two factors, the modern productive forces and the bourgeois forms of production, come into contradiction with each other... A new revolution is possible only in consequence of a new crisis. It is, however, just as certain as the latter.” (*The Class Struggles in France*, p. 159.)

Marx states that, because the objective conditions were insufficient between 1848 and 1850, each revolutionary advance of the proletariat became progressively weaker and died away:

“Whenever the movement seemed to gain fresh impetus, the proletariat tried to regain the foremost position, but each time it did so more weakly, and with ever more meagre results.” (*The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, p. 28.)

After all these statements, the concept of revolutionary crisis acquires greater clarity than it possessed in the *Manifesto*. As Marx says, so long as the contradiction between the social character of production and private ownership of the means of production has not become antagonistic, and capitalism still possesses the capacity to develop the productive forces, capitalism’s cyclical economic crises cannot lead to a revolution.

It is clear that the system of production is a dialectical whole. Like every dialectical whole, it contains unity and coexistence, but also separation and contradiction. At one historical moment the existing relations of production correspond to the productive forces, stimulate them and develop them; at another historical moment those same relations come into conflict with those productive forces and restrain their development. This is the dialectic of a mode of production.

A series of conflicts arises from the fundamental contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production. These conflicts are economic — between production and consumption; social — between classes, between the proletariat and labouring people on the one hand and the bourgeoisie and its

various factions on the other; and political — between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the struggle to destroy or preserve the bourgeois state and order. The revolutionary moment is the situation in which, as these fundamental contradictions reach their extreme point, the three crises merge into a single crisis and deepen — that is, the existence of a revolutionary crisis. Uprising can be placed on the agenda only when such a situation exists.

Marx regarded the existence of a world war bringing all the nations of Europe face to face as a necessary condition for the class struggle in France between 1848 and 1850 to expand and reach the European revolution — the world revolution. Looking at the fact that the First World War led to the world's first great proletarian revolution, it is impossible not to say that this thought of Marx was indeed a great prophecy — but a scientific prophecy. (It is, of course, well known that the part of Marx's prophecy according to which the revolution would first occur in England and spread to all the countries of Europe did not come true. What is important here is his prophetic observation that a world war among capitalist countries would lead to proletarian revolution.) Marx says on this question:

“The class struggle within French society broadens out into a world war in which the nations confront one another. A solution on a world scale becomes possible only when, through a world war, the proletariat is placed at the head of the nation which dominates the world market — England. The revolution, which finds here not its end but its organisational beginning, is no short-lived revolution. The present generation is like the Jews whom Moses led through the wilderness. It has not only a new world to conquer; it must sacrifice itself in order to make room for the men who are able to measure up to a new world.”
(*The Class Struggles in France*, p. 132.)

More than thirty years after Marx said these things, and more than thirty years before the first proletarian revolution, Engels

further perfected this prophecy concerning the first proletarian revolution and, on 15 December 1887, gave the proletarian revolutionaries who followed them warning of the time of revolution. (Only Lenin and the Bolsheviks in Russia heeded this warning of Engels.) Engels says:

“For Prussia-Germany no war is now possible except a world war, and a world war indeed of an extent and violence hitherto undreamt of. Eight to ten million soldiers will slaughter one another and in doing so devour the whole of Europe until they have stripped it barer than any swarm of locusts has ever done. The devastations of the Thirty Years’ War compressed into three or four years and spread over the whole Continent; famine, pestilence, general demoralisation both of the armies and of the mass of the people produced by acute distress; hopeless confusion in our artificial machinery of trade, industry and credit, ending in general bankruptcy; collapse of the old states and their traditional state wisdom to such an extent that crowns will roll by the dozen on the pavement and there will be nobody to pick them up; absolute impossibility of foreseeing how it will all end and who will emerge victorious from the struggle; only one result is absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the establishment of the conditions for the final victory of the working class. This is the prospect when the system of mutual outbidding in armaments, driven to extremes, at last bears its inevitable fruits... The war may perhaps push us temporarily into the background, may wrench from us many positions already won. But once you have unleashed forces which you will then be unable again to control, things may go as they will: at the end of the tragedy you will be ruined and the victory of the proletariat either already achieved or at any rate inevitable.” (Quoted in Lenin, *Socialism and War*, pp. 172–73.)

III. PERMANENT CRISIS AND THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION

During the period from 1848 to the autumn of 1850, the revolutionary perspective of Marx and Engels was that of permanent revolution. This strategic view was the result of an incorrect assessment of that period. Looking at the two great crises of 1847 — the world commercial and industrial crisis and the agricultural crisis — Marx and Engels believed that capitalism's final hour had arrived, that the great struggle had at last begun and that the era of socialist revolutions had opened. In other words, they regarded the world-wide economic crisis of capitalism which broke out in 1847 as the system's permanent and final crisis. The theory of permanent revolution was therefore a product of the theory of permanent crisis.

In the period 1847–50, believing that proletarian revolution in France and Europe would take place in the near future, Marx and Engels advocated that the proletariat should lead Germany's delayed bourgeois-democratic revolution. During this period they concentrated most of their theoretical and practical work upon Germany:

“The Communists turn their attention chiefly to Germany, because that country is on the eve of a bourgeois revolution which is bound to be carried out under more advanced conditions of European civilisation and with a much more developed proletariat than that of England in the seventeenth, and France in the eighteenth century, and because the bourgeois revolution in Germany will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution.” (Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, p. 91.)

As can be seen, the revolution Marx and Engels envisaged for Germany was permanent revolution. And this permanent revolution was not a theory of revolution without stages, but a theory of **revolution by stages**. This is extremely important. It is

the fundamental characteristic distinguishing this theory, which Lenin applied to life in the imperialist period, from the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution.

Marx and Engels were not the only ones who envisaged permanent revolution for Germany in 1849. Gottschalk and his supporters also envisaged permanent revolution, but theirs was a revolution without stages, or a one-stage revolution.[8*] (Underestimating the revolutionary potential of the peasantry and rejecting the alliances of the proletariat constituted the essence of this theory.) They fiercely opposed Marx's proposal of revolution by stages — first bourgeois revolution, then proletarian revolution: “Why should we shed our blood? As you proclaim, preacher [Marx is meant], are we to escape from the hell of the Middle Ages only to run into the arms of capitalism?”

Against Gottschalk and his supporters, who advocated immediately establishing the revolutionary power of the proletariat and passing to communism through permanent revolution, Marx and Engels argued that the task of the “coming revolution” in Germany was to sweep away the remnants of feudalism and deepen bourgeois democracy, and that it was impossible simply to leap over a historical task as they proposed. At the foundation of the theory of revolution by stages envisaged by Marx and Engels lay the idea that the proletariat itself, in alliance with the petty-bourgeois democrats and against the liberal bourgeoisie, should carry out Germany's delayed bourgeois revolution, and that the proletariat should then, without stopping, make the revolution permanent and carry it through to socialism.

According to this theory, the liberal bourgeoisie had to be opposed because it was cowardly and weak, had been frightened by what had happened in France, had reached agreement with the feudal lords and betrayed the revolution. Germany's bourgeois revolution could therefore take place only against the liberal bourgeoisie — that is, despite it. Nevertheless, this revolution

would not be a socialist revolution; it would be a “republican and social” revolution. The feudal and local aristocracy would be overthrown, universal suffrage introduced, the peasants freed from serfdom and transformed into free citizens, and bourgeois democracy deepened. But private property, capitalist exploitation and conflict between classes would continue.

Alongside private property, however, public property would also exist to the extent that the proletariat participated in government. In other words, the proletariat would have a say in the regulation of the economy and production. The class character of the state would be mixed. Power would be the joint power of workers, peasants and the radical petty bourgeoisie. In this way, the conditions for a new advance towards “socialist democracy” would be created.

It must not be forgotten, however, that after the liquidation of feudal property in the countryside, the democratic petty bourgeoisie would seek to establish its own domination by spreading small-scale capitalist production and property in its place. In other words, it would try to halt the revolution “as quickly as possible”. The proletariat must not give it this opportunity. It must immediately organise itself as an independent party and make the revolution permanent.

“While the democratic petty bourgeois want to bring the revolution to an end as quickly as possible... it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, until the proletariat has conquered state power, and until the association of the proletarians, not only in one country but in all the dominant countries of the world, has advanced so far that competition among the proletarians of these countries has ceased and at least the decisive productive forces are concentrated in the hands of the proletarians.”
(Marx and Engels, *Address of the Central Committee to the*

Communist League, quoted in Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, p. 38.)

This, then, is the theory of permanent revolution of Marx and Engels which would later become the theory of revolution of Marxism in the imperialist period. If examined carefully, Marx and Engels' theory of permanent revolution contains four principal elements:

1) The theory of permanent revolution is the result of the theory of permanent crises. (Permanent crisis is not uninterrupted crisis. It means that capitalism's mortal crisis is interrupted from time to time but does not disappear. In other words, capitalism enters its deathbed; from time to time it comes out of a coma and improves, but it cannot rise from the bed.) 2) The theory of permanent revolution is based upon the belief that the European revolution is close at hand.

3) The theory of permanent revolution is based upon the idea that the peasants, previously regarded as the army of the bourgeoisie, should constitute the army of the proletariat. It envisages the broad peasant masses being channelled against feudalism not by the bourgeoisie but by the proletariat. In other words, the theory of permanent revolution is the Marxist analysis of the revolutionary potential of the peasantry. 4) Marx and Engels' theory of permanent revolution is based upon the idea that the proletariat should lead the delayed bourgeois revolution in Germany and that this proletariat, with the assistance of the European proletariat — particularly the French proletariat — should move without interruption towards socialist revolution.

To summarise, the essence of this theory rests upon correctly assessing the revolutionary potential of the peasant masses and channelling it towards revolution under the leadership of the proletariat. In the permanent revolution of Gottschalk and the "Crude Communists" around him, by contrast, the essential features were the underestimation of the revolutionary potential

of the peasant masses and the disregard of the determining role of economic and social determinism — they argued that a historical period could simply be skipped. (A left deviation.) Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution is also founded upon this idea.

As we shall see in later sections, all right opportunists and passivists lacking revolutionary initiative have likewise always tried to find an ideological cover for their passivism by apparently clinging tightly to the proletariat while underestimating the revolutionary potential of the peasant masses. As can be seen, every "right" and "left" deviation meets in placing upon the proletariat a burden which it cannot carry alone and in underestimating the revolutionary character of the peasantry. This is the common feature of right and "left" deviations. (This is the basis of the Menshevik essence of Trotsky, who appeared to stand on the extreme "left" during the Russian Democratic Revolution of 1905.)

As we stated at the beginning, Marx and Engels later abandoned this theory, after the 1850s, because it rested upon the theory of capitalism's permanent crisis. The 1850s, however, were years in which capitalism developed and stimulated the productive forces and bourgeois society enjoyed prosperity in the bourgeois sense. (As is known, capitalism entered permanent crisis in the imperialist period.) The economic crisis of 1847, which Marx and Engels had regarded as capitalism's "permanent and final" crisis, was neither permanent nor capitalism's final crisis. In the autumn of 1850 Marx and Engels recognised their error. (See Part Two.) They stated that the crisis had been a cyclical crisis. Capitalism had not yet entered the period of permanent and uninterrupted crises.

In the following years Marx concentrated upon the question of the crises of capitalism. In *Capital* he examined in detail capitalism's cyclical crises and the general crisis of the system. Marx clearly showed that the essence of these cyclical crises rests

upon “the fall of profit below its normal rate”; that such cyclical crises fundamentally regulate the economy by absorbing the excesses of overproduction and thereby treat the structure; and that after every cyclical crisis there begins a period of relative prosperity. (See *Capital*, vol. 5, pp. 694–95.)

As a result of these analyses, Marx recognised that, because of the stage of development capitalism had reached in that age, permanent crisis was not possible at that time, and he abandoned the theory of permanent revolution. For many years the theory remained abandoned and forgotten — until capitalism actually entered the period of permanent (general) crises, that is, the imperialist stage. During this interval, economic and social determinism — the determinist aspect — always predominated in the Marxist theory of revolution.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Lenin discovered the law of the uneven development of capitalism in the economic and political fields — the first indications of this law are present in Marx’s abstractions in his critique of political economy — and formulated the theory of imperialism as capitalism’s highest stage. He declared that the age of capitalism’s permanent and final crises had begun, that the “moment of the great struggle” awaited by Marx and Engels had now arrived, and that the theory of revolution of the Russian proletariat was the theory of permanent or uninterrupted revolution.

The spokesmen and parties of the Second International, particularly its Russian branch, the Mensheviks, interpreted mechanically Marx and Engels’ statements that they had been mistaken on the question of permanent revolution. They took as a dogma, supposedly valid under all conditions, Marx and Engels’ assessment that under the historical conditions of the pre-monopoly period capitalism could not experience permanent crises and that therefore the theory of permanent revolution could not be considered valid — without taking into account the

fact that under the conditions of the imperialist period capitalism had entered an age of permanent crises. (Such an approach is the unchanging characteristic of right opportunism and passivism.)

Abandoning the concrete analysis of concrete conditions, they clung with both hands to theses advanced by Marx and Engels for other countries under other historical conditions — that revolution would begin in the most developed capitalist country and that peaceful transition might also be possible. But capitalism was no longer the capitalism of the period of Marx and Engels. Capitalism had entered the age of permanent crises, the age of proletarian revolutions. The theory of permanent revolution which Marx and Engels had regarded as incorrect in the pre-monopoly period became, in the period of capitalism's permanent crises, the Marxist theory of revolution.

VI. REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE AND PEACEFUL TRANSITION

Marx and Engels, in Lenin's words, did not bind themselves to questions concerning the forms of the transition to socialism. They laid down only the general rule. According to this rule, in order to overthrow the bourgeois dictatorship the proletariat must resort to revolutionary violence, to force. Force, in Marx's words, is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one. According to Marx, social revolution has only one road:

“Only in an order of things in which there are no more classes and class antagonisms will social evolutions cease to be political revolutions. Until then, on the eve of every general reconstruction of society, the last word of social science will always be: Combat or death; bloody struggle or extinction.”
(*The Poverty of Philosophy*, p. 195.)

But Marx and Engels, in order not to fall into dogmatism in the face of the many-sidedness of life, also spoke, conditionally and within limits, of peaceful transition — that is, in places where the

objective could be reached more quickly and more securely by peaceful agitation. Marx and Engels envisaged the “peaceful transition to socialism” as a possibility for England and America, countries with very different characteristics from continental Europe. According to them, these countries possessed features which could make peaceful transition possible.

First, capitalism was more vigorous in these countries than on the European continent. In England, the proletariat constituted the majority of the population, was very well organised in trade unions, and possessed a higher cultural level than the proletariat of continental Europe. The capitalist class understood its own interests much better than its counterparts on the Continent and possessed a tradition of compromise. Alongside all these features, in these countries the bourgeois state — that is, bureaucracy and militarism — was weaker and less developed than on the European continent. For these reasons, in England and America the proletariat might come to power through the bourgeois parliament, through the electoral mechanism, “by buying out the capitalists”. In an article written for the *New York Tribune* in April 1851, Marx says:

“For the English working class, universal suffrage and political power are identical. The proletariat constitutes the majority of the population. The winning of universal suffrage in England would constitute an advance towards socialism far greater than anything which has been honoured with that name on the Continent; the inevitable result of the winning of universal suffrage... would be the political supremacy of the working class.”

V. “NATIONAL CHARACTER” AND INTERNATIONALISM

Before entering this question, let us briefly consider the views of Marx and Engels on national character and internationalism. In making a concrete analysis of concrete conditions, Marx and

Engels looked at proletarian revolution from the standpoint of the capitalist countries as a whole. Above all, they linked the liberation of the proletariat and the working people of the world to the coming to power of proletarian internationalism — the First International — in Europe and America. They always opposed confining the revolutionary struggle within narrow national boundaries, within the framework of the nation. According to them, the aim of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat is to transcend the boundaries drawn by the bourgeoisie and realise the internationalism of nations; the proletarians have no fatherland, their fatherland is international.[9*]

“The proletarians of all countries have one and the same interest, one and the same enemy, one and the same struggle before them; the great mass of proletarians are already, by their very nature, free from national prejudices; their entire movement is fundamentally humanitarian and anti-national. Only the proletarians can abolish nationality.” — Marx

But this must not be interpreted as meaning that in each country the proletariat should not fight its own bourgeoisie within those boundaries and establish its national power. On the contrary, the working class of each country must first of all organise itself as a class in such a way as to be capable of seizing power in its own country; it must base its short- and long-term tactics upon the economic, social and political conditions of the country it accepts as the terrain of struggle — that is, upon a consistent analysis of the social structure and a correct assessment of circumstances. From this standpoint, the class struggle of the proletariat is national only in form, not in content. Marx criticised the wording in the Gotha Programme, drafted under Lassallean influence, because it approached the question from an excessively narrow national standpoint. He writes:

“In opposition to the Communist Manifesto and to all earlier socialism, Lassalle conceived the workers’ movement from the narrowest national standpoint. He is being followed in this in

the draft programme, and that after the work of the International! It is altogether self-evident that, to be able to fight at all, the working class must organise itself at home as a class and that its own country is the immediate arena of its struggle. In so far its class struggle is national, not in substance, but, as the Communist Manifesto says, ‘in form’.” (*Critique of the Gotha and Erfurt Programmes*, p. 36.)

This is how Marx and Engels approached the relationship between internationalism and “national character”.

VI. PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION: IN ONE COUNTRY OR THROUGHOUT EUROPE?

In the pre-monopoly period, when it was not yet possible fully to establish the uneven development of capitalism, Marx and Engels argued that the victory of revolution could not be consolidated in a single country and that, immediately following a world-wide crisis, the joint liberation of the proletariat of all capitalist countries would come onto the agenda. As an example of the impossibility of completing a proletarian revolution within narrow national boundaries, Marx points to the defeat of the French proletariat in June 1849:

“The workers... believed that they could complete a proletarian revolution within the national boundaries of France. But the relations of production in France are conditioned by her foreign trade, by her position on the world market and the laws of this market. How was France to break them without a European revolutionary war, which would strike back at the despot of the world market, England?” (*The Class Struggles in France*, p. 48; italics in the original text.)

As can be seen, in these years Marx regarded England as the starting point of the world revolution — the European revolution. According to Marx, in order for the existing political crisis in France to reach a solution and for the proletariat to take power,

there had to be a crisis shaking the whole world and, during that crisis, a proletarian revolution had to break out in England:

“The class struggle within French society broadens out into a world war in which the nations confront one another. A solution on a world scale becomes possible only when, through a world war, the proletariat is placed at the head of the nation which dominates the world market — England.” (Karl Marx, *The Class Struggles in France*, p. 132.)

Marx and Engels, who between 1847 and 1850 believed that permanent revolution would take place in continental Europe and later stated that they had been mistaken, thus placed greater weight in their theory of revolution after 1850 upon economic and social determinism than upon revolutionary initiative. According to them, the European revolution would begin in England, the country where the productive forces had reached the highest level of development — where the objective conditions were most mature. Having settled in England in 1850, Marx and Engels regarded that country in this way for a long period. They saw it as the starting point of the world revolution.

After the 1850s, however, the English workers' movement rapidly moved towards petty-bourgeois reformism and the trade-unionist swamp; and a middle stratum between worker and employer, the labour aristocracy, gradually began to emerge. Seeing that this aristocracy had succeeded, to one degree or another, in channelling the class struggle in a direction compatible with the needs of capitalism, Marx and Engels lost hope in England and once again turned all their attention towards continental Europe. After the brutal suppression of the French workers in the Paris Commune, Marx and Engels placed all their hopes in the struggle in Germany. They regarded a possible victory of the German proletariat as the beginning of the world revolution.

To summarise: for Marx and Engels, who regarded the European revolution as a whole, the first victorious proletarian revolution would take place in a European country where the productive forces had reached a relatively high level of development. In other words, economic and social determinism predominated in the theory of revolution of Marx and Engels. The role of revolutionary initiative was more secondary. But, parallel with the gradual movement of the centre of revolution from the West — from England — towards the East, the relative importance of revolutionary initiative also increased. (The determining aspect, however, always remained the economic and social determinist aspect.)

PART TWO

THE THEORY OF REVOLUTION IN THE MARXISM OF THE IMPERIALIST PERIOD

I. THE TRANSFORMATION OF FREE-COMPETITION CAPITALISM INTO MONOPOLY CAPITALISM

From the Franco-Prussian War and the Paris Commune which followed it until the beginning of the twentieth century, capitalism entered a period of relatively peaceful development. We may also call this the period of peace. This was a stage in which capitalism developed and stimulated the productive forces and secured prosperity in the bourgeois sense — in a word, a stage in which capitalism grew robust. But, like everything that develops and grows stronger, capitalism during this period also developed and strengthened its own weakness and decay. In other words, while capitalism was rising on the one hand, on the other it was rapidly moving towards decomposition, parasitism and monopoly.

This was a period in which individual capitalism rapidly disappeared, monopolies, cartels and trusts came to dominate the economy, and the domination of free-competition capital was transformed into the domination of finance capital. Lenin divides the process by which free-competition capitalism was transformed into finance capitalism into three stages. (Lenin begins this process in 1860.):

“The principal stages in the history of monopolies are the following: (1) the 1860s and 1870s, the highest, culminating stage of development of free competition; monopoly is in the barely discernible embryonic stage. (2) After the crisis of 1873, a lengthy period of development of cartels; but they are still the exception. They are not yet durable. They are still a transitory phenomenon. (3) The boom at the end of the

nineteenth century and the crisis of 1900–03. Cartels become one of the foundations of the whole of economic life. Capitalism has been transformed into imperialism...” (Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, p. 29.)

After the world economic crisis of 1857–60, capitalism entered a complete period of prosperity — a boom. Discoveries and developments in science and technology unprecedented until then set capitalism upon a process of rapid development and ascent. By applying the latest discoveries of science and technology to industry and rapidly developing it, capitalism expanded large-scale production through gigantic enterprises. Production became rapidly centralised and concentrated.

Banks increasingly abandoned their former intermediary role and began themselves to turn into giant monopolies investing directly in the economy. As a result of the domination of economic life by cartels and trusts, and particularly of the banks’ penetration of industry, small and medium enterprises rapidly began to disappear. Through the holding-company system, the great monopolies became the sole masters of the economy. Thus capitalism entered a new age: the age of finance capital.

“The concentration of production; the monopolies arising therefrom; the merging or coalescence of the banks with industry — such is the history of the rise of finance capital and such is the content of that concept.” (Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, p. 60.)

The natural consequence of this development was that the uneven and discontinuous development of capitalism, which had not been clearly visible in the period of free competition, emerged in all its nakedness and became increasingly pronounced.

“The uneven and spasmodic development of individual enterprises, individual branches of industry and individual countries is inevitable under the capitalist system.” (*Ibid.*, p. 77.)

Together with monopoly, this uneven development created an enormous surplus of capital in the economy. Since capitalism could not develop agriculture in a manner corresponding to industry, and since production for profit always created a shortage of consumption — because the hunger and poverty of the masses of the people rapidly increased — this surplus was necessarily channelled into colonial countries. The old colonial policy based upon the export of commodities gave way to imperialist colonialism based upon the export of capital. The world was divided among a handful of monopolies.

“The countries which export capital have divided the world among themselves in the figurative sense of the term. But finance capital has led to the actual division of the world.”
(*Ibid.*, p. 83.)

And all the countries of the world “form links in the chain of world finance-capital operations”. While all this was taking place, unprecedented innovations and discoveries in science and technology[10*] were creating conditions favourable to closing the differences in level among capitalist countries. Within these conditions, a more backward capitalist country could, through leap-like development, catch up with an advanced country and demand a “more just” redistribution of the already divided world according to the new balance of forces. It was inevitable that this would lead to wars of redistribution among the capitalist powers.

At the imperialist stage, capitalism’s uneven and discontinuous development deepened and intensified the conflicts among monopolies. The natural result was the opening of breaches in the imperialist front and the possibility of the victory of socialism through those breaches.

“It is easy to understand why imperialism is moribund capitalism, why it constitutes the transition to socialism: monopoly, which grows out of capitalism, is already the dying

of capitalism and the beginning of its transition to socialism.”

— Lenin

A historical period was now being left behind. History was turning a new page. The title of this new page was the **era of proletarian revolutions**. The period of “peace” was over. The period was beginning in which proletarian revolutionaries would move from interpreting the world to changing it, in which everything would be turned upside down, and in which capitalism would begin to experience permanent and general crises. The “expected moment” which Marx and Engels had believed had arrived in the period 1840–50 had now truly arrived.

II. THE “ORTHODOX” DISTORTION OF MARXISM AND THE LENINIST THEORY OF REVOLUTION (I)

The international organisation at the end of this period, in which competition had been transformed into monopoly, was the Second International. During this “peaceful” period, when capitalism secured prosperity in the bourgeois sense, the parties of the Second International in Europe achieved great successes through parliamentary methods. The workers’ party in Germany in particular won enormous electoral victories. (In many electoral districts it received more than fifty per cent of the vote.) Like all periods of peace, this was a period in which passivist and right-wing tendencies on the Left grew fat. The parliamentary victories turned the heads of all the parties of the Second International. Believing that this period would continue in the same way, they made no preparations for a period of war. Stalin summarises the passivism of the Second International as follows:

“This was the period of a comparatively peaceful development of capitalism, a pre-war period, so to speak, when the catastrophic contradictions of imperialism had not yet had time to reveal themselves fully; when economic strikes of the workers and trade unions developed more or less ‘normally’;

when electoral struggles and parliamentary groups achieved ‘dazzling’ successes; when legal forms of struggle were praised to the skies and it was believed that capitalism could be defeated by legal means. In a word, it was a period in which the parties of the Second International were growing fat and had no desire seriously to think about revolution, about the revolutionary education of the masses.” (Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, p. 17.)

In the final years of his life, seeing this dangerous development, Engels tried to warn Wilhelm Liebknecht and Kautsky about the reformism of the Second International. In his 1891 *Critique of the Erfurt Programme*, Engels sharply criticised the passivist and parliamentary illusions surrounding “peaceful transition”. But all Engels’ criticism and warnings were fruitless: the parties of the Second International sank ever deeper into the swamp of parliamentarism. Such was the condition of the European Left around 1900, at the beginning of the era of proletarian revolutions. Intoxicated by the electoral victories obtained during the period of ascent in which capitalism had developed peacefully, the parties of the Second International completely failed to understand this new period of capitalism. They believed that the “period of peace”, which was only temporary, would continue.

Abandoning the concrete analysis of concrete conditions, forgetting that Marxism is a guide to action and that it enriches and deepens itself through history, these parties turned the propositions of Marx and Engels concerning the pre-monopoly period into dogma. They even generalised statements Marx and Engels had made concerning exceptional circumstances and fell into complete dogmatism. The “orthodox” preservation — that is, the freezing — of the propositions of Marx and Engels concerning the pre-monopoly period suited their objective position. This dogmatism simultaneously provided an ideological cover for their betrayal and cowardice.

They attempted to apply to the period of capitalism's general crises, the period of socialist revolutions, the theory of revolution, method of work and tactics which Marx and Engels had envisaged for the period of capitalism's ascent, when capitalism was still developing the productive forces and had not yet come into contradiction with them — for the “period of evolution”. Had Marx and Engels not said that a proletarian revolution could not take place in one country within narrow national boundaries? According to the propositions of Marx and Engels, was revolution not to break out “simultaneously” in the advanced capitalist countries in the form of a world revolution? Was the first proletarian revolution not to begin in the country where the productive forces were most developed, the objective conditions most mature, and democracy and the cultural level of the proletariat highest?

Therefore, every revolutionary attempt in a country where the productive forces were at a low level of development was supposedly condemned to defeat, like the June 1849 defeat and the defeat of the Paris Commune. It was therefore necessary to wait for the productive forces to mature. Moreover, these parties not only dogmatised statements Marx and Engels had made under different historical circumstances, they also generalised propositions concerning “exceptional” circumstances.

They generalised Marx's conditional limitation that a proletarian revolution might achieve victory peacefully in England, where the proletariat constituted the majority of the population, and argued that the proletariat had to constitute the majority of the population before it could make a revolution. According to them, the proletariat would become the majority of the population and come to power by winning the majority of votes. This was how the parties of the Second International interpreted Marx and Engels in the era of proletarian revolutions.

While the passivists of the Second International were dogmatising Marxism in this way, Lenin, who regarded Marxism as a guide to action, closely followed the process by which capitalism was being transformed into imperialism through the concrete analysis of concrete conditions. (Lenin wrote *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* in 1916, but all his analyses from the beginning of the 1900s rested upon direct analysis of the contradictions of the imperialist period.) According to Lenin, this was no longer the period of Marx and Engels; capitalism had entered a new stage. Capitalism had now entered the period of permanent and general crises, the process of dying, which Marx and Engels had mistakenly believed it had entered between 1847 and 1850.

Correctly observing capitalism's uneven and discontinuous development, which became fully evident in the monopoly period, Lenin drew from it the conclusion that the victory of socialism in one country was possible:

“The development of capitalism proceeds extremely unevenly in different countries. It cannot be otherwise under commodity production. From this it follows irrefutably that socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously in all countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries, while the others will for some time remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois.” (Lenin, *The War Programme of the Proletarian Revolution*, in *Socialism and War*, p. 61.)

Lenin says: “Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone.” He states that the proposition of Marx and Engels that “revolution will break out simultaneously in all countries” had become obsolete in the imperialist period. According to Lenin, the parties and spokesmen of the Second International who dogmatised and repeated this obsolete proposition of Marx and Engels were doing nothing but serving the bourgeoisie:

“We know all sorts of people who consider themselves very clever and even call themselves socialists, yet assert that power should not be seized through struggle until revolution has broken out in all countries simultaneously. They do not suspect that by such chatter they turn their backs on revolution and go over to the side of the bourgeoisie. To wait until the working classes make revolution on an international scale means that everything is to remain frozen in expectation. This is absurd.” (Lenin, quoted by Stalin in *Right and Left Deviations*, p. 220.)

According to Leninism, it had become obsolete to regard proletarian revolution as a question solely of a country’s internal development and to investigate whether the development of the productive forces was sufficient. In the imperialist period, the conditions for revolution in any particular country do not depend upon the level of development of the productive forces. For imperialism, by destroying economic autarky, has turned separate national economies into links in a chain called the world economy. From the standpoint of the system as a whole, therefore, the objective conditions for revolution exist in all countries.

It is consequently wrong to expect the first proletarian revolution to occur in the country where capitalism is most developed and where democracy and the cultural level are highest. This proposition of Marx and Engels, correct for the pre-monopoly period, had become obsolete in the imperialist period. According to Leninism, the first proletarian revolution will take place not in this or that country where capitalism and democracy are most developed, but in the country where the imperialist chain is weakest:

“The front of capital will be pierced where the imperialist chain is weakest; for the proletarian revolution is the result of the breaking of the world imperialist chain, and it is quite possible that the country which begins the revolution, the country which pierces the front of capital, may be less

developed in the capitalist sense than other, more developed countries, while nevertheless remaining within the framework of capitalism.” (Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, p. 32.)

According to Lenin, the theory of “peaceful transition” advanced by the parties of the Second International was also wrong. Since capitalism had entered its period of dying, it had greatly strengthened its bureaucracy and militarism. In the imperialist period social revolution had only one road: to smash “the bureaucratic and military machine by force”. The thesis of peaceful transition envisaged by Marx and Engels for England and America in the pre-monopoly period had become obsolete and invalid in the monopoly period. Lenin says:

“Today... Marx’s qualification is no longer valid. Britain, like America, the biggest and last representative in the whole world of Anglo-Saxon ‘liberty’, in the sense that there was no militarism and bureaucracy, has completely sunk into the all-European filthy, bloody morass of military and bureaucratic institutions which subordinate everything to themselves and trample everything underfoot. Today, in Britain as well as in America, ‘the preliminary condition for every real people’s revolution’ is the breaking up, the smashing of the ‘ready-made state machinery’.” (*State and Revolution*, p. 52.)

In the Leninist theory of revolution it is possible to break the imperialist chain in a country where the working class is weak and the great majority of the population consists of peasants. The essential point here is to set the revolutionary potential of the peasantry in motion under the leadership of the proletariat and its party.

“As is known, Lenin completed and developed Marx’s theory with regard to the relation of the proletarians to the peasantry.” (G. Dimitrov, *The Principal Periods in the Development of the Party*, in *Towards the People’s Republic*, p. 124.)

In Lenin's theory of revolution, because of the characteristics of the imperialist period, the role of revolutionary initiative carries far greater weight than it did in Marx and Engels. In the imperialist period, because the material foundations of revolutions are ready, the resolution of the question depends upon the advance of revolutionary initiative at the appropriate moment. As the role of the peasantry increases in the revolutionary theory of Scientific Socialism and the centre of revolution moves towards the East, the voluntarist aspect comes to the fore.

Since the parties of the Second International had no intention of making revolution, they had no problem of channelling the revolutionary potential of the peasants or winning the peasants to the ranks of the proletariat. They postponed revolution to an unknown time when the majority of the peasants would have become proletarianised and the proletariat would constitute the majority of the population. According to the "orthodox" thinking of the Second International, the peasantry as a whole had to be regarded as part of the army of the bourgeoisie. According to this conception, "the peasants as a whole are merely suppliers of food products" and their interests are opposed to those of the proletariat. To paint society in two opposing colours in this manner was nothing other than the classical "orthodox" conception of Second International opportunism.

The passivists of the Second International based all the opportunist theses we have briefly summarised above upon Marx and Engels. They had completely failed to understand what was essential in Marxism. In Stalin's words, they froze Marxism by abandoning its essence — the concrete analysis of concrete conditions. In the first years of the imperialist period, only Lenin and the Bolsheviks distinguished the essence of Marxism from its wording, preserved that essence, and deepened and enriched

Marxism in the face of the new realities of life. Lenin said in the 1900s:

“We do not regard Marx’s theory as something completed and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the foundation stone of the science which socialists must advance in all directions if they do not want to lag behind life. We think that an independent elaboration of Marx’s theory is especially essential for Russian socialists.”

III. THE “ORTHODOX” DISTORTION OF MARXISM AND THE LENINIST THEORY OF REVOLUTION (II)

THE LENINIST THEORY OF UNINTERRUPTED REVOLUTION AND MENSHEVISM

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Lenin, observing that capitalism had been transformed into imperialism, held that the moment which Marx had believed had arrived between 1847 and 1850 — “the moment of the great struggle” — had now truly arrived. “The war between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is now on the agenda throughout Europe.” And Lenin declared the theory of permanent revolution which Marx and Engels had envisaged for Germany in 1850 to be the theory of revolution of the Russian proletariat. Between 1840 and 1850 Marx and Engels had indeed been mistaken in this theory of revolution. They had believed that with the world commercial crisis of 1847 capitalism had entered the period of general and permanent crises. In reality, capitalism at that time was still in its period of ascent. A proletarian revolution in Europe was therefore impossible.

For this reason, even if the proletariat had led the democratic revolution in Germany, it could not have made the revolution permanent because there were no simultaneous proletarian revolutions breaking out in Europe. For the German proletariat to pass without interruption from the bourgeois-democratic stage to the socialist stage, the assistance of a victorious European

proletariat already in power was necessary. Now, however — in the imperialist period — capitalism had entered the era of permanent crises. From the standpoint of the system as a whole, the objective conditions for the European proletariat to come to power had matured.

Consequently, the theory of revolution which Marx and Engels had abandoned after the 1850s was, in the period of capitalism's permanent and general crises, the sole correct theory of revolution for the proletariat of a country such as Russia, standing on the threshold of a delayed bourgeois-democratic revolution. In other words, according to Lenin, the position of Tsarist Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century resembled the position of Germany in the years 1840–50, when Marx and Engels were awaiting a European revolution. Stalin says of this similarity:

“What happened to Russia and Lenin was what had happened to Germany and Marx and Engels in the period 1840–50.”
(Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, p. 15.)

Drawing attention once again to the statement in the *Manifesto* that the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Germany would be the beginning of the proletarian revolution, Stalin says:

“The same must be said of Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century; only Russia was at a higher stage of development than Germany in 1840–50. Russia was destined to carry out this revolution within the framework of an advanced Europe and with a proletariat more developed even than that of Germany, let alone England and France; and everything indicated that this revolution would be the ferment and the beginning of the proletarian revolution. It was no accident that as early as 1902, in the preparatory days of the Russian revolution, Lenin wrote in *What Is To Be Done?* these prophetic words: ‘History has now confronted us [that is, the Russian Marxists — J. Stalin] with an immediate task which is the most revolutionary of all the immediate tasks confronting the proletariat of any country. The fulfilment of this task, the

destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European, but also of Asiatic reaction, would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat.” (*Foundations of Leninism*, pp. 15–16.)

The reason why the Russian proletariat became the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat was that Tsarist Russia contained within itself all the contradictions which had reached an extreme point — in other words, it was the weakest link in the imperialist chain.

“That is why Russia was bound to become the focus of those contradictions of imperialism whose inevitable solution was a revolutionary explosion; not only because these contradictions were revealed in Russia in an especially repulsive and especially intolerable form, not only because Russia constituted the principal support of Western imperialism, linking the finance capital of the West with the colonies of the East, but also because only in Russia was there a real force capable of resolving the contradictions of imperialism in a revolutionary way. Hence, the revolution in Russia was bound to be a proletarian revolution,[11] and from the very first day of its development it was bound necessarily to assume an international character and consequently to shake imperialism to its very foundations.” (*Stalin, Foundations of Leninism**, p. 14.)

The natural consequence of this assessment was that the Russian proletariat would conduct two different wars within a single process:

“The war between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is on the order of the day throughout Europe. This war has long since reached Russia too. In contemporary Russia it is not two forces at war that give content to the revolution, but two heterogeneous and different social wars. The first war must be fought within the womb of the present autocratic order and rests upon serfdom; the other is the war arising within the future bourgeois-democratic order which is being born before

our eyes. One is the struggle of the whole people for freedom [the freedom of bourgeois society], for democracy, that is, for the absolute sovereignty of the people; the other is the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie for the socialist organisation of society. Socialists are therefore confronted with the difficult and weighty task of conducting at the same time two wars which are completely different in their character, aims and in the composition of the social forces capable of taking a decisive position in the struggle.” (Lenin, *Socialism and the Peasantry*, in *The Worker-Peasant Alliance*, p. 15.)(12*)

This was the Bolshevik revolutionary perspective on the eve of the Russian bourgeois revolution of 1905.[13] *We can summarise the distinguishing characteristics of this perspective as follows: 1)** The Leninist theory of uninterrupted revolution is the theory of revolution of capitalism’s period of dying. This theory is valid not only for Tsarist Russia at the beginning of capitalism’s general crisis, but also for all countries which have been unable to enter the process of imperialist-capitalist development and are therefore colonial or semi-colonial.

2) The Leninist theory of permanent revolution goes further than Marx’s theory of permanent revolution in channelling the revolutionary potential of the peasantry towards revolution. According to this theory, in the imperialist period the proletariat can command the peasant army. And the task of the proletariat which wishes to make the revolution uninterrupted is to command this army. 3) In a country such as Tsarist Russia, for the bourgeois-democratic revolution to be transformed into a socialist revolution, the assistance of a European proletariat which has already come to power is necessary.

The revolutionary perspective of the Menshevik faction of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party — the Russian branch of the Second International — was, as a natural consequence of the Second International’s official conception of revolution, the exact

opposite of the Bolshevik perspective. According to the “orthodox” conception of the Second International, the first proletarian revolution would break out in a country where capitalism and democracy were most developed and where the proletariat constituted the majority of the population. The revolution which broke out in that country would then spread to the others. Thus the world revolution would be simultaneous.

Proceeding from this conception, Menshevism held that since the objective conditions for the outbreak of a world proletarian revolution had not matured in the 1900s, and since the administrative cadres required by the proletariat after seizing power had not yet been fully formed, it was inconceivable that the proletariat should lead the democratic revolution in Russia. Until these conditions matured, the Russian liberal bourgeoisie should carry out the bourgeois revolution and the proletariat should support it. Until the expected moment arrived, in a “Western-type democratic environment”, the Russian proletariat would accumulate strength through parliamentary methods of struggle.

The Bolsheviks’ theory of permanent revolution, according to the Mensheviks, was an absurd and anarchist theory. It proceeded from the errors of Marx and Engels between 1840 and 1850. Had not Marx and Engels later stated that they had been mistaken and abandoned this theory? And did not Marx, in the Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, published in 1859, condemn this theory through his definition of revolution?

The proletariat, according to Menshevism, can concern itself with only one revolution: its own revolution, the socialist revolution. For this, the bourgeoisie must first have carried out its own revolution and developed capitalist production. Until the productive forces have matured, until the proletariat constitutes the majority of the population, and until bourgeois society and the bourgeois order have become established in Russia, there can be no question of proletarian power. This was the theory of

revolution envisaged by Menshevism for the Russian proletariat. As we shall examine in the next section, these two theories formed the basis of the Bolshevik and Menshevik conceptions of the party and methods of work. It is clear that those who interpret the world differently will also differ in the means by which they seek to change it.

IV. THE BOLSHEVIK AND MENSHEVIK CONCEPTIONS OF THE PARTY

The Leninist theory of uninterrupted revolution, in a country where the proletariat is weak, rests upon revolutionary initiative making use of the various possibilities for revolution — the most important of these being the revolutionary potential of the peasantry. The distinction between the class character of a particular historical stage and the role of the classes within that stage is fundamental to this theory. This distinction is the natural consequence of the greater weight of the voluntarist aspect in the Leninist theory of revolution.

In the theory of revolution of Marx and Engels — because of the concrete conditions of their period — the economic and social determinist aspect carried greater weight than the voluntarist aspect. In Leninist theory, by contrast, the determining role of politics in relation to economics carries greater weight. In other words, revolutionary initiative is fundamental. (To say that it is fundamental does not mean that it determines everything by itself.)

“Politics is the concentrated expression of economics. Politics must take precedence over economics. To argue otherwise is to forget the ABC of Marxism.” (Lenin, vol. 42, p. 278, French edition.)

The priority given to revolutionary initiative and to politics in the Leninist theory of revolution also shapes the Leninist conception of the party. According to Lenin, the proletariat has

two types of organisation: **workers' organisations** and the **organisation of revolutionaries**.

“A workers' organisation must in the first place be a trade-union organisation; it must be as broad as possible and as little clandestine as possible. An organisation of revolutionaries, on the contrary, must consist first and foremost of people whose profession is revolutionary activity...” (Lenin, *What Is To Be Done?*, p. 340.)

According to this conception, the proletarian party must consist entirely of professional revolutionaries. The Party is a combat organisation formed by professional revolutionaries. These professional revolutionaries are people who “have broken all ties with the existing order in society, who devote not merely their free evenings but their entire lives to revolution, who have acquired a minimum Marxist formation and who tend towards specialisation in particular fields.” And in a party initially composed of such professional revolutionaries, no distinction can be made according to class origin:

“In view of this common characteristic of the members of such an organisation, all distinctions as between workers and intellectuals, and certainly distinctions of trade and profession, must be effaced. Obviously this organisation must not be very extensive and must be as secret as possible.” (Lenin, *What Is To Be Done?*, p. 140.)

As can be seen, at the beginning the relation between the Party and the class is primarily objective — that is, ideological. The foundation of the Party's vanguard role is ideological. At the beginning, what matters, in Lenin's words, is not whether Party members are workers or students, but that the Party consists of professional revolutionaries. What is essential is that the combat organisation made up of professional revolutionaries objectively represents the revolutionary will of the proletariat. Consciousness will be brought to the proletariat from outside through this

organisation, because this organisation represents the socialist movement.

“Revolutionary Social Democracy represents the Jacobins, inseparably connected with the organisation of the proletariat [the trade-union organisation is meant].” — Lenin

This organisation is semi-military in character. That is, in the principle of democratic centralism, the centralist aspect rather than the democratic aspect predominates. (This applies to all countries without bourgeois democracy.)

“The organisational principles of revolutionary Social Democracy are hierarchical structure as against democracy, or, in other words, centralism as against autonomy. These principles are the direct opposite of those advocated by the opportunists. The principle of the latter is to proceed from the bottom upwards, and therefore goes as far as possible towards autonomy and democracy... Revolutionary Social Democracy, however, because it begins the struggle for power from above, defends, as against the separate sections, the rights of the central organisation and the extension of its full authority.” (Lenin, *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*.)

This is the character and function of the Party organisation of which Lenin said, “Give us an organisation of revolutionaries, and we shall overturn Russia.” But for a party founded in accordance with the principles of a combat organisation actually to become a combat organisation, it must embrace broad proletarian masses in struggle. At the first stage, workers did not have to constitute the majority. What mattered was that, irrespective of class origin, the organisation consisted of professional revolutionaries. But at the second stage, it was necessary that workers constitute an absolute majority.[14*] Lenin, who in 1902 said that the Party had to be a narrowly constituted minority organisation, stated in 1905 that “hundreds of thousands of workers” should be included within Party organisation:

“At the Third Congress I expressed the wish that there should be eight workers to every two intellectuals on the Party committees. That, too, is already out of date. Now it is desirable that in Party organisations there should be several hundred Social-Democratic workers to every intellectual belonging to Social Democracy.” (Quoted in Cliff, *Rosa Luxemburg*, p. 58.)

Only when the Party has transformed itself into the political mass party of the proletariat can one speak of it as a combat organisation. And the members of this combat organisation possess a dual character:

“Lenin maintained that the Party’s structure and organisation should consist of two parts: (a) a close-knit regular cadre composed principally of leading Party workers who were professional revolutionaries, that is, workers engaged in no activity other than Party work and possessing the necessary theoretical knowledge, experience, organisational practice and skill in fighting and evading the Tsarist police; and (b) a broad network of local Party organisations and a large number of Party members enjoying the affection and support of hundreds of thousands of working people.” (*History of the CPSU[B]*, p. 353.)

This is the Bolshevik conception of the Party. The Menshevik theory of revolution, which erected a Chinese Wall between proletarian revolution and bourgeois revolution and postponed the revolutionary advance of the proletariat until some time when capitalism and democracy had developed in Russia and the proletariat constituted a certain majority of the population, was reflected in precisely the same way in its conception of the Party.

According to the Mensheviks, the Russian working class was still weak and immature. The clandestinely established RSDLP had not established organic links with the proletariat. It consisted merely of intellectuals who “represented the workers in principle”. For this reason, this Party could not yet be regarded as a genuine proletarian party. (As can be seen, the Menshevik

conception makes it a condition that workers constitute the majority at the first stage of organisation.) The bourgeois revolution would bring a certain bourgeois legality to Russia. Workers could make use of this bourgeois freedom to come together. Workers coming together would establish their own trade unions, organisations and party. The task of revolutionary intellectuals was merely to assist this process.

The concept of a party of professional revolutionaries, according to the Mensheviks, could not belong to Marxists who defended the socialist revolution as the revolution of the majority. That concept belonged to the Jacobins, to petty-bourgeois revolutionaries — revolutionaries of a minority revolution. It might be the party of conspiratorial Blanquists, but it could not be the party of those who sought to make a revolution of the majority, which necessarily had to rest upon the masses. Above all, the claim that people who did not come from proletarian origins could, under the name of professional revolutionaries, represent the proletariat and bring consciousness to it from outside was, for the Mensheviks, the product of a wholly non-Marxist conception.[15*]

According to Mihri Belli, at the first stage those who will raise the consciousness of and organise the proletariat are not professional revolutionaries. (For all this, see Mihri Belli, *National Democratic Revolution*, pp. 49–52.) As a socialist intellectual (!), Mihri Belli remained faithful to this conception as the principle of his life to the very end. For this reason, throughout his life he never concerned himself at all with the problem of raising the consciousness of and organising the proletariat, because according to his economist conception the proletariat would develop consciousness by itself.

The task of socialists who do not come from proletarian origins is not, according to this conception, to bring consciousness to the proletariat from outside. Then, according to this understanding,

the task falling to socialists (!) such as Mihri Belli who do not come from proletarian origins is to raise the consciousness of and organise the revolutionary classes outside the proletariat — for example, the petty bourgeoisie. And throughout his political life Mihri Belli was a “socialist” who worked with all his strength to fulfil this task successfully. It is sufficient to look at his book *Writings* to see his work on this question. The rule of the proletariat is the most democratic rule. Its Party too is the most democratic party and is built from below upwards in the most democratic manner.

In the atmosphere of freedom to be created by the 1905 bourgeois revolution, not only the workers but the masses of the people should be organised in broad, “non-partisan” soviets. The representatives of these self-governing municipalities and workers’ organisations would form the National Congress, which would constitute the transition to the Constituent Assembly. In this way a genuine bourgeois-parliamentary environment would become established in Russia, and the proletariat, participating in the elections of local self-governing municipalities, would draw the people to its side. For this reason, the Party should be open to all workers and socialist intellectuals and should be broad. This is the Menshevik conception of organisation. As can be seen, these two different conceptions of organisation are nothing other than the consequences of two different conceptions of revolution.

V. THE 1905 REVOLUTION AND THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE’S REVOLUTION ENVISAGED BY LENIN

The elements characterising the democratic revolution envisaged by Lenin are as follows: **1)** In the imperialist period, the locomotive carrying history forward is the proletariat. For this reason, the Russian liberal bourgeoisie has already missed history. The leader of the bourgeois revolution is the proletariat, the only consistently revolutionary class to the end.

“Since the proletariat, by virtue of its position, is the most advanced and the only consistently revolutionary class, it must play the leading role in the general democratic revolutionary movement in Russia.” (Resolution of the Third Congress of the RSDLP, Lenin, *Two Tactics*, p. 80.)

2) The principal forces of the Democratic People’s Revolution are the workers, peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie.

“...The only force capable of gaining a decisive victory over Tsarism is the people, that is, the proletariat and the peasantry — if we take the principal, major forces and distribute the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie among these principal forces, for the petty bourgeoisie too is ‘the people’.” (Lenin, *Two Tactics*, 2nd ed., p. 58.)

3) The fundamental revolutionary alliance of forces is the worker-peasant alliance. Let us dwell briefly upon this worker-peasant alliance. Analysing the countryside of Tsarist Russia, Lenin determines revolutionary policy in the following way:

“Actually, with their immediate and ultimate aims, we have before us three distinct social classes: the big landowners, the well-to-do peasants — and partly the middle peasants — and, finally, the proletariat. Under such circumstances the task of the proletariat must necessarily have two aspects... With the rural bourgeoisie against every manifestation of serfdom, against the agrarian feudal lords; with the urban proletariat against the rural bourgeoisie and all other bourgeois elements — such is the ‘political line’ of the rural proletariat and its Social-Democratic ideologist!” (Lenin, *The Proletariat and the Peasantry*, in *The Worker-Peasant Alliance*, p. 10.)

And Lenin, explaining to the poor peasants and the agricultural proletariat that they will be liberated through socialist revolution, states that their organisation is the proletarian party:

“...The RSDLP, the class party of the proletariat, tirelessly strives for the independent class organisation of the rural proletariat, never for a moment forgetting that its task is to

explain to the agricultural proletariat the contradiction between its interests and those of the rural bourgeoisie, and to explain that only the joint struggle of the rural and urban proletariat against bourgeois society as a whole can secure the victory of the socialist revolution — the only revolution capable of genuinely freeing the whole mass of poor peasants from poverty and exploitation.” (*Ibid.*, p. 13.)

After these analyses of Lenin, the question of the worker-peasant alliance in the Russian Democratic People’s Revolution becomes fully clear. The worker-peasant alliance has two forms: inside the Party and outside the Party. Within the Party, there is an alliance of the urban and rural proletariat with semi-proletarian elements and poor peasants. The alliance with the middle and wealthy peasants, however, will exist outside the Party and upon separate class foundations.

In other words, this alliance will be between the class parties of both sides. The revolution will be the result of the unity of forces of the workers’ and peasants’ parties. But within this alliance the proletariat occupies the dominant position. The party which will direct this alliance and establish hegemony in the revolution is the class party of the proletariat. Lenin says concerning this question:

“Our tactical slogan, formulated at the Third Congress of the RSDLP, accords with the slogans of the democratic-revolutionary and republican bourgeoisie. This bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie have not yet formed a great people’s party in Russia. But one must understand nothing of what is now taking place in the country to doubt the existence of the elements of such a party. Our intention, if the great Russian revolution is successful, is to lead not only the proletariat organised by the Social-Democratic Party, but also the petty bourgeoisie which is quite capable of marching alongside us.” (*Two Tactics*, 2nd ed., p. 46.)

THE REVOLUTION WILL FOLLOW A ROUTE FROM THE CITY TO THE COUNTRYSIDE

Tsarist despotism will be overthrown as a result of the uprising of the armed proletariat in the great cities. And the revolution will be organised — from above downwards — from the cities towards the countryside. Lenin says:

“Since this movement has already now reached the necessity of an armed uprising; since the proletariat will inevitably play the most energetic role in this uprising and its participation will determine the fate of the Revolution in Russia, the most energetic measures must be taken to arm the proletariat and at the same time to prepare plans for the armed uprising and for its direct leadership, and, for this purpose, special groups of Party militants must be formed wherever necessary.” (*Two Tactics*, pp. 80–81.)

According to Lenin, the proletariat will play the principal role in this uprising and the revolution will achieve victory largely as a result of the uprising of the workers’ militia and the workers’ army — the Red Army. But for the working class to secure victory, the support of the peasants is essential.

THE POWER TO BE ESTABLISHED WILL BE THE POWER OF THE PRINCIPAL FORCES: THE REVOLUTIONARY DICTATORSHIP OF WORKERS AND PEASANTS

“The decisive victory of the revolution over Tsarism is the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.” (Lenin, *Two Tactics*, p. 58.)

Let us briefly dwell here upon a question of considerable importance. A careful reader of *Two Tactics* will see that Lenin, on one occasion, counts the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie among the principal forces. Apart from this, however, he continually speaks only of the proletariat as the principal force in the revolution. Moreover, in *Foundations of Leninism*, Stalin counts only the proletariat as the principal force at the stage of

democratic revolution and refers to the peasantry as a reserve force. Did Lenin mistakenly count the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie among the principal forces in that paragraph? Was it a slip of the pen? Of course not. There is no incompatibility or contradiction between Lenin's formulation in that paragraph and the other formulations made by Lenin and Stalin. There is complete correspondence and identity.

The matter is this: the Democratic People's Revolution, whose principal forces include the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie, will achieve victory through an armed uprising of the people in the cities. In this uprising, as a class, the proletariat will play the most energetic and active role. By drawing the masses of the people into its ranks, the proletariat will seize power through armed uprising, and the revolutionary dictatorship of workers and peasants will thus be established. As can be seen, the principal mass force of this revolution is the working class. The role of the peasants in the revolution, considered as class participation, is secondary and relative.

The formulation of Lenin and Stalin that "the proletariat is the principal force, the peasantry the reserve force" follows from the fact that the centre of gravity of the revolution lies in the cities and therefore the principal mass force of the revolution is the proletariat. The same situation exists in Mao's formulation concerning the positioning of classes in the New Democratic Revolution. In Mao's formulation of the New Democratic Revolution, sometimes it is said that "the peasants are the principal force", and sometimes that "the workers, peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie are the principal forces". This formulation, which at first sight may appear contradictory, is no more contradictory than Lenin's. When Mao says "the peasants are the principal force", he is of course not underestimating the role of the urban petty bourgeoisie, and especially the proletariat, in the revolution.

The reason for this formulation is that the revolution follows the path of people's war from the countryside towards the cities — in other words, because the focal point of the revolution is different. Since the mass of the people in the countryside consists of peasants, the peasants become the principal mass force of the revolution. Because the principal mass force of the revolution is the peasantry, the formulation is made: **“the proletariat is the leading force; the peasants are the principal force.”** This is the fundamental difference between the Russian Democratic People's Revolution and the colonial and semi-colonial countries under imperialist occupation. This difference is extremely important.

The conception of revolution, the conception of organisation and the method of work envisaged by the two formulations are fundamentally different. This is not a difference of one or another secondary kind, but the principal factor determining our ideological-political and practical line. (We shall discuss this question in detail in later sections.) The formulation of uninterrupted revolution in *Two Tactics* is also being proposed for Turkey under imperialist occupation. Dr Hikmet Kıvılcımlı openly attempts to apply the formulation in *Two Tactics* to Turkey's particular class structure. We arrive at this conclusion from the analyses in Dr Hikmet Kıvılcımlı's books.

For example, in his books Dr Kıvılcımlı: **1)** makes it a condition that workers constitute an absolute majority in the Workers' Party. He also points to the existence, or the necessity of the existence, of a peasant party outside the class party of the proletariat. On these questions Dr Kıvılcımlı says:

“The People's Party is still very far from being a Peasant Party.”
(*Plans of the People's War*, p. 19.)

“Unless a large number of worker citizens enter the organisation of the TİP, which has so far spread its spots only to some towns and cities and to a few villages, and the organisations in reserve behind the TİP, and actually take

numerical predominance and leadership, it must not be overlooked that the Workers' Party still remains far from being a PROLETARIAN PARTY." (*Ibid.*, p. 19; italics in the original text.)

"It is necessary to make working-class members numerically predominant in the organisation." (*What Is Opportunism?*, p. 11; emphasis in the original text.)

2) He takes the cities as the principal arena of revolutionary struggle and, as a natural consequence, takes the proletariat as the principal force in the positioning of classes and defends its actual, rather than merely ideological, leadership. (That is, proletarians, as class participation, constitute the principal revolutionary mass force.) (See *Plans of the People's War*, pp. 188–89.) But the Marxist-Leninist theory of uninterrupted revolution has not remained frozen in the formulation of *Two Tactics*. From that formulation to the present, it has changed in the face of the various changes of life and has been enriched and deepened by new experiences.

The period in which we live is not the initial period of capitalism's crisis. Nor is Turkey, like Tsarist Russia, one of the world's five or six great colonialist countries. On the contrary, it is a semi-colony under imperialist occupation. To confine and freeze the Marxist-Leninist theory of permanent revolution within the formulation of *Two Tactics*, to take it as a universal model valid for every period and then attempt to apply it to the particular class structure of the country, places one in a right deviation, as we shall demonstrate in detail in subsequent sections. An approach close to the model formulated in *Two Tactics* can also be seen in Mihri Belli. (For example, his declaration of the CHP as the peasants' party and Ecevit as the peasants' leader, his taking the cities as the basis, and so on.)

But it is genuinely difficult to place Mihri Belli at any definite point, because he has no definite line, no internally consistent course. At one time he says that taking the leadership of the

working class as an absolute truth is dogmatism; at another he treats the leadership of the working class as actual leadership. Again, in some writings he says that under the conditions of “Philippine democracy” the party of the proletariat cannot be established, while in another writing he can comfortably accuse those who say the same thing of right opportunism.

In one article, by distorting the writing of a revolutionary who states that the ideological leadership of the working class is fundamental at the NDR stage, and through an astonishing piece of sleight of hand, he derives from this the conclusion that revolution is being proposed without the working class; while, on the other hand, he can comfortably say that even without the working class a revolution can take place under petty-bourgeois leadership! Countless examples could be added. In short, it is not clear what Mihri Belli says. The only thing that is clear is his lack of clarity. In reality, Mihri Belli is a “socialist” who believes in no one and nothing except himself — including Scientific Socialism and its founders — and who “finds the miracle in himself”. In pursuit of petty calculations, he is a complete *Realpolitiker* — a “realistic politician” in the bourgeois sense.

And, like every *Realpolitiker*, he wanders at the summit of aimlessness like a loose mine.

VI. THE STAGE OF EVOLUTION AND THE STAGE OF REVOLUTION

The question of the stages of evolution and revolution, and of the objective conditions of revolution, acquires much greater clarity in Lenin’s analyses. Undoubtedly, the fact that Lenin lived in the era of proletarian revolutions and experienced two revolutions played an important role in this. According to Lenin, in the imperialist period, within the conception of uninterrupted revolution, the objective conditions for proletarian revolutions exist in all countries. The level reached by the productive forces

on a world scale is mature for revolution. What does not exist ready-made are the subjective conditions of revolution. In one sense, the preparation of the subjective conditions of revolution constitutes the foundations of Leninism.[16*] We shall see in later sections that grasping this reality is the essence of the question.

Lenin introduced changes into Marx and Engels' distinction between the stages of evolution and revolution because of differences in concrete conditions. According to Marx and Engels, when the objective conditions for revolution have matured on a world scale, the language of socialists must be French. As is known, the imperialist age is the age in which the objective conditions for revolutions have matured on a world scale. According to formal logic, the natural conclusion of Marx and Engels' proposition would be that, in this period, the task of socialists is continually to speak French — to attack continuously, without stopping or tiring! (Trotskyist thought is, in one sense, based upon this.) But for dialectical logic the situation is not like this.

The world revolution will never take place simultaneously. It will first take place in one or several countries. For this reason the proletariat of each country must conduct a struggle by stages within its own boundaries. For the liberation of the proletariat of each country will be the work of that country's proletariat itself. Revolutions can neither be imported nor exported. For the objective conditions of revolution to exist in a country, in addition to capitalism's general crisis on a world scale, that country must also experience its own national crisis. According to the Leninist distinction, for a country to be at the stage of revolution:

a) the level of consciousness and organisation of the proletariat must be sufficient for revolution. (The subjective conditions of revolution must be suitable.) **b)** there must exist a national crisis affecting both the oppressor and the oppressed.[17*] This national crisis is nothing other than the sharpest reflection in that country

of the contradictions of capitalism's general crisis. The stage of revolution is a brief moment. The stage of evolution is a long process.

THE PERIOD OF EVOLUTION

The revolutionary language of the evolutionary period is German. During the period of speaking German there is no place for revolutionary advance. The revolutionary method of work of this period is to raise the consciousness of the proletariat, organise it, strengthen the links between the proletariat and its vanguard, win the labouring masses to the ranks of the proletariat and educate them for revolution. If the proletarian party has already been established, revolutionary work consists in transforming that party into the proletarian political mass party; strengthening its organic links with the masses through various occupational organisations; raising the class consciousness of the proletariat and the labouring people; marching on the extreme left of the democratic opposition; and exposing the ruling classes through intensive political propaganda.

If the proletarian party has not yet been established, the principal task is to create the vanguard detachment of the proletariat. At a stage in which the class party of the proletariat does not exist, even if a revolutionary situation exists, the proletarian revolutionary language cannot be French. Lenin summarises the proletarian revolutionary method of work during this period as follows:

“Propaganda and enlightenment, enlightenment and propaganda were at that time really pushed into the foreground by the objective conditions. Work for the publication of a political newspaper addressing the whole country, whose ideal form appeared to be a weekly publication, then appeared as the cornerstone of the work of preparation for revolution — and *What Is To Be Done?* posed the question in precisely this way. The slogan of enlightening

the masses [instead of armed action], the slogan of preparing the social and psychological conditions for an uprising [instead of local uprisings], were at that time the only correct slogans of revolutionary Social Democracy.” (*Two Tactics*, 2nd ed., p. 79.)

Stalin describes the tactics of retreat after the defeat of 1905–07 as follows:

“In the period 1907–12 the Party was compelled to adopt tactics of retreat, for the revolutionary movement had declined, there was an ebb of the revolution, and tactics necessarily had to take this fact into account. Consequently the forms of struggle and the forms of organisation again changed. Instead of the boycott of the Duma — participation in the Duma; instead of open extra-parliamentary revolutionary actions — intervention and work in the Duma; instead of general political strikes — partial economic strikes, or simply a lull.” (*Foundations of Leninism*, p. 83.)

As can be seen, during evolutionary periods, boycotting parliament, launching general political strikes and resorting to every form of armed action are not revolutionary methods. Resorting to such methods in this period is nothing other than left opportunism. The revolutionary methods of work in this period are raising the consciousness of the labouring masses, beginning with the proletariat; propaganda; partial economic strikes; and democratic opposition.

THE STAGE OF REVOLUTION

At the stage of revolution, the method of work and slogans of the proletarian party change completely. During the revolutionary stage of 1905, Lenin said the following concerning the slogans and tactics of the evolutionary stage:

“...events have now outgrown these slogans, because the movement has advanced; these slogans are now obsolete, worn out, articles which have completed their service.” (*Two Tactics*, 2nd ed., p. 79.)

This brief period, in which twenty years are compressed into a single day, must be assessed extremely well. It is necessary to understand that “the hour of revolution differs from ordinary, customary hours, from the hours in which history is being prepared, and that in the hours of revolution the mood simmering within the masses finds expression as conviction transformed into action.” These are rare days in which the masses sing revolutionary songs in chorus. The period is now the period of revolutionary advance. During this period the masses understand only one language: French. And speaking this language is itself an art.

The French heart, or the role of Russian revolutionary initiative, acquires importance here. Many successful revolutionaries of the evolutionary period, many scholarly revolutionaries lacking this initiative, swim during this period in the swamp of impotence, cowardice and betrayal. This brief period is itself divided into three stages: the transitional period, the period of tactical offensive and the period of strategic offensive.

a) The French of the Transitional Period

This begins immediately at the end of the evolutionary period. It is the tactic of speaking French during the stage in which the revolutionary wave gradually rises and begins to shake the masses, and in which the convictions of the masses are transformed into mass action. During the 1905 Revolution, the accent of this French language was: local political strikes, demonstrations, the general political strike and the boycott of the Duma. Stalin explains the Bolshevik tactics of this period as follows:

“To teach the vanguard street action through demonstrations and manifestations and at the same time to link the reserves with the vanguard through the Soviets in the rear and the soldiers’ committees at the front.” (*Foundations of Leninism*, p.

85. The passage quoted concerns the tactics of speaking French during the transitional period of the 1917 Revolution.)

b) The Period of Tactical Offensive

This brief period is the stage in which the vanguard has learned urban action and is therefore capable of leading the masses of the people and teaching them the correct tactics of uprising. This is the stage in which the revolutionary potential of the people has risen considerably, the revolutionary wave approaches its highest point, and the tactical offensives of the vanguard before the final assault intensify. The principal aim in this period is to create demoralisation and panic in the ranks of the enemy, to disintegrate the counter-revolutionary front and open breaches within it. The revolutionary tactics of the tactical-offensive period of the 1905 Revolution were barricade fighting — street fighting — and urban guerrilla warfare. The urban guerrilla consisted of the urban proletariat.

Concerning one of the various tasks of the urban guerrilla — teaching the masses the tactics of uprising — Lenin says in *Lessons of the Moscow Uprising*:

“The guerrilla warfare and terrible acts of violence that have continued throughout Russia since December will undoubtedly help the masses to learn the correct tactics of an uprising.”

c) The Period of Strategic Offensive, the Transition to the Regular Army and the Uprising

On 10 June 1905 Lenin says:

“Outbreaks — demonstrations — street fighting — units of a revolutionary army: these are the stages in the development of the people’s uprising. We have now reached the final stage.”

The economic and political crisis has greatly deepened and reached its highest point. To wait any longer is now, in Lenin’s words, a crime. Uprising has become the first item on the agenda. The strategic offensive is conducted with a regular army. For the final assault, all previously dispersed forces are first brought

together and the Red Army is created. (The Red Army is the proletarian army.) Barricade fighting and urban-guerrilla tactics now give way to the uprising tactics of the Red Army. Lenin sets out the tactic of the October uprising in the following way:

“...in order to treat insurrection in a Marxist way, that is, as an art, we must at the same time, without losing a single moment, organise a headquarters of the insurrectionary detachments, distribute our forces, send reliable regiments to the most important points, surround the Alexandrinsky Theatre, occupy the Peter and Paul Fortress, arrest the General Staff and the government, and send against the officer cadets and the Savage Division such detachments as will die rather than allow the enemy to penetrate to the vital centres of the city; we must mobilise the armed workers, call upon them to fight the last desperate fight, occupy the telephone and telegraph offices at once, place our insurrectionary headquarters at the central telephone exchange and connect it by telephone with all the factories, all the regiments and all the centres of armed fighting, etc.” (*Marxism and Revolution: The April Theses and Lessons of October*, pp. 167–68.)

This is the process followed by Soviet-type insurrection. Of course, life never flows in exact accordance with this or that schema. Every abstraction and schematic representation neglects one part of reality and, inevitably, exaggerates another. But theoretical analysis, by rendering the complexity and many-sidedness of life easier to understand, fulfils its function as a guide to action. For this reason, the periods in this schema must not be regarded as mechanically separate from one another, but as inner links of a single process, intertwined with one another.

NOTES TO UNINTERRUPTED REVOLUTION I

[1*] The concept of revolution is used here in the sense of proletarian revolution or democratic revolution under the hegemony of the proletariat.

[2*] In the socialist revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat is established; in the democratic revolution, the dictatorship of the people.

[3*] “The people” is a political concept. It is the composition of classes which come together according to the revolutionary stage in question and whose interests stand opposed to the existing ruling classes.

[4*] According to Marx and Engels, if a political revolution brings about social transformation, it is at the same time a social revolution. If it does not, it remains a political revolution. In the Preface to the 1888 English edition of the *Manifesto*, the communist worker is defined as follows: “Whatever portion of the working class had become convinced of the insufficiency of mere political revolutions, and had proclaimed the necessity of total social change, called itself Communist.” (*Manifesto*, p. 24.)

[5*] This criterion is also valid in the present age for distinguishing, in semi-colonial and colonial countries, between a renewal of government which is supposedly progressive and anti-imperialist but in essence nothing more than a change of government within imperialism, and a genuinely progressive, nationalist petty-bourgeois revolutionary government.

[6*] Quoted in Pomeroy, *Guerrilla Warfare and Marxism*, p. 52.

[7*] **The Deepening of the Social Crisis:** the impoverishment of the labouring people in society reaching its extreme point. In other words, the deepening of class polarisation in bourgeois society; the relations of production becoming a serious fetter upon the development of the productive forces.

[8*] The essence of the theory of permanent revolution which Trotsky attempts to base upon Marx belongs to Gottschalk, Weitling and the Crude Communists. In other words, the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution is not a Marxist theory.

[9*] This must not be interpreted as meaning that Marx was opposed to patriotism. According to Marx and Engels, whenever and wherever the homeland is in danger, the proletariat has fought in the

foremost ranks — and must fight. From this standpoint, the only class which is national to the end is the proletariat.

Marx, who said that the workers have no fatherland, says the following about the Paris Commune, a workers' government:

“The Commune was therefore to serve as a lever for uprooting the economic foundations upon which rests the existence of classes, and therefore of class rule. It was thus the true representative of all the healthy elements of French society, and therefore the truly national government of France. At the same time, as a working men's government and as the bold champion of the emancipation of labour, it was international in the full sense of the word.” (*The Civil War in France*, p. 86; emphasis in the original text.)

Faced with the invasion of the Prussian armies, it was not the French bourgeoisie but the proletariat which raised the banner of homeland and nation and heroically defended the country.

“The victory of Paris over the Prussian aggressor would have been the victory of the French workman over the French capitalist and his state parasites. In this conflict between national duty and class interest, the Government of National Defence [the bourgeois government] did not hesitate one moment to turn into a Government of National Defection.” (*Ibid.*, p. 46; emphasis in the original text.)

[10*] Planck's Quantum Theory and Einstein's Theory of Relativity laid the foundations of modern atomic physics. In addition, there was the introduction of mass production in industry — Ford's mass production of automobiles — the expanding use of electric and internal-combustion engines, and so on.

[11*] What is meant is the transformation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution: two revolutions being carried out within a single process.

[12*] As can be seen, the essence of Leninist uninterrupted revolution rests, in the imperialist period, upon the socialists of a country which has not completed its bourgeois-democratic revolution conducting, within a single process, the struggles of two revolutions

which are entirely different in their character, objectives and alliances.

In other words, in the imperialist period the only force capable of carrying this revolution to victory in all such countries is the proletariat. That is, only the proletariat can lead the democratic revolution. And in the imperialist period, a country which carries out the bourgeois-democratic revolution, whatever its conditions, proceeds towards socialism. This is the essence of the revolution. As we shall show in later sections, this thesis has deepened and been enriched since Lenin. In Turkey there are those who, in the name of Scientific Socialism, oppose the proposition that in the imperialist period, whatever the world conjuncture, a country which has carried out its democratic revolution faces not a crossroads but a single road leading to socialism.

One representative of this view — another expression of Menshevism — and the person who has formulated it most clearly is Mihri Belli. According to Mihri Belli, to pose the question in this way, as Lenin did, is fatalism. To say that the democratic revolution has only one leader and that this leader is the proletariat is to make an assertion and to turn the question into a matter of bargaining; the bourgeoisie cannot lead the revolution, but the petty bourgeoisie can perfectly well do so. (See *Counter-Revolution in Turkey*, *Türk Solu*, no. 64, p. 21; *Aydınlık*, no. 9, p. 270, etc.)

[13*] Taking into account the purpose of this article, we leave outside our analysis that aspect of the theory of permanent revolution which continues from socialist society to classless society — the process of Cultural Revolution.

[14*] This principle does not apply to countries which are obliged to wage a people's war. In other words, the requirement that workers constitute an absolute majority in the organisation at this second stage does not apply in such countries.

If a people's war is to be waged, the organisation must embrace the broad poor-peasant masses in the countryside. Among Party members of labouring origin, peasants will numerically outweigh workers in such countries. This is a natural consequence of the

Leninist conception of the Party deepening over time and of the voluntarist aspect in the theory of revolution acquiring greater weight.

[15*] The question of consciousness being brought from outside and the theory of the Chinese Wall are parts of the same ideological whole.

Those who erect a Chinese Wall between bourgeois revolution and socialist revolution always and everywhere oppose, in different words, the idea that consciousness is brought from outside. This is not peculiar only to the Economists of Tsarist Russia in the 1900s and to the Menshevik faction which later adopted this view. Menshevism is an opportunist current which, in every period of the imperialist age and in every country, has always found the possibility of living on the Left in one form or another.

For example, in Turkey Mihri Belli, one of the theoreticians of the Chinese Wall, also opposes the idea that consciousness is brought from outside. According to Mihri Belli, it is wrong to say that consciousness is brought from outside. Moreover, Lenin mentioned this idea, which he quoted from Kautsky, only once and then only very briefly, and never mentioned it again — in other words, Lenin later abandoned this idea! According to this view, Lenin defended not the bringing of consciousness from outside, but its transmission from within (!).

[16*] Concerning the preparation of the subjective factor of revolution as the foundation of Leninism, Dimitrov says:

“Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and the immortal Lenin, our Party participated in the establishment of the International. It adopted a new programme declaration and understood proletarian revolution not as an objective belonging to an indefinite future but as a task whose objective conditions had matured and whose solution depended upon the subjective factor of revolution — that is, upon the preparation and capacity of the Party itself to organise and lead the revolution.” (*The Principal Periods in the Development of the Party*, in *Towards the People's Republic*, p. 129.)

[17*] Lenin analyses the national crisis — the revolutionary crisis — in the following way:

“To the Marxist it is indisputable that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; furthermore, not every revolutionary situation leads to revolution. What, generally speaking, are the symptoms of a revolutionary situation? We shall certainly not be mistaken if we indicate the following three major symptoms:

1. When it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis, in one form or another, among the ‘upper classes’, a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for the ‘lower classes not to want’ to live in the old way; it is also necessary that the ‘upper classes should be unable’ to live in the old way.

2. When the suffering and want of the oppressed classes have grown more acute than usual.

3. When, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in ‘peace time’, but, in turbulent times, are drawn both by all the circumstances of the crisis and by the ‘upper classes’ themselves into independent historical action.

Without these objective changes, which are independent of the will, not only of individual groups and parties but even of individual classes, a revolution is, as a general rule, impossible. The totality of all these objective changes is called a revolutionary situation.” (V. I. Lenin, *Socialism and War*, pp. 118–19.)

UNINTERRUPTED REVOLUTION II-III

INTRODUCTION

As is known, for many years revisionism, with its intellectual analyses that shed no light on practice, its tailist method of work and its repugnant relations, was the effective and directing force on the Turkish Left. The limited democratic rights created by the 1961 Constitution provided this current with a material environment that it had possessed in no previous historical period. The revolutionary movement followed in the wake of a revolutionary-nationalist course and, under its protection and on the intellectual plane, political analyses written and developed years before by the masters of socialism — each of them the product of a particular revolutionary practice — were “rediscovered” as theory by local “theoreticians” through adaptations (!).

Years passed without anything concrete being written that would clarify the question, “Where and how must we begin?” in relation to the revolutionary struggle in the country. Publishing books and pamphlets — mixed with commerce — became an activity in itself. The young revolutionary generations that emerged also received their socialist nourishment in this environment and within its relations. A very interesting situation arose in the country, perhaps unlike that in any other colonial country. While theoretical polemics and ideological speculation raged at a terrifying level (!) — in reality concerning matters settled years earlier by the masters — practical activity remained the petty-bourgeois youth actions of three or five university students.

With a revisionist understanding, Americas were continually being rediscovered. “Leading theoretician cadres” plunged

headlong into the historical conditions of the country, which anyone who had reached even a certain level could broadly assess correctly. Step by step, the Left became absorbed first in arguments over whether the Asiatic mode of production or the feudal mode of production had predominated in the Ottoman Empire, and then over whether feudalism or capitalist relations predominated in the Turkey of the 1960s, or whether the existing relations of production were “capitalised relations”. For years, the factional struggle raged with the greatest intensity around journals publishing serials asserting either “feudalism predominates” or “capitalism predominates”. Accusations of revisionism and opportunism filled the atmosphere.

Every new journal, claiming to represent a “serious” movement, set out in its first issues — in pamphlets of eighty or a hundred pages, and sometimes even longer — everything from its political attitude towards this or that state within the socialist bloc to its views on the development of the relations of production from Osman Gazi onwards. (In reality, apart from differences in terminology and nuance, their assessments were more or less the same in substance.) Sincere elements on the Left were generally conditioned by this atmosphere. Everyone continually waited, in every new journal and every new split, for the discovery of a new America. Yet in no country in the world had a revolutionary movement first written thousands of pages on the theoretical plane and only afterwards passed to practice. Among the writings of the learned men, sincere elements no longer knew what to do. [1]

It was within this atmosphere, and to some extent under its influence, that we found the correct line, advancing slowly because our feet were in this swamp. With the same slowness, we passed to practice. (We read and learned theory in order to make revolution. This must not be interpreted as meaning that we became learned men. We are students of socialism, and this

studentship will continue throughout our lives.) We stated this reality in the first issue of *KURTULUŞ* as follows:

“This movement sprouted and developed in an environment in which revisionism had maintained its influence for many years. Consequently, it will also carry within itself, for a certain period, remnants of revisionism (passivism). These remnants will be cast off in struggle, through struggle.”

(Because we do not have the text before us, we have written this not word for word but as far as we can remember.) [*] In the same issue, we also stated that theoretical writings from then on would be short, concise and clear, and that theoretical assessments would not be produced at a desk, but would arise from the rich experience and lessons of practice, processed under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism. At present, as we set out the ideological, political, organisational and strategic principles of our Party, whose general outlines have already been indicated, this revolutionary determination will be our point of departure.

It would, of course, be entirely possible to set out these principles in hundreds of pages, amid a mass of general truths and the formulations of Marxism. It would likewise be entirely possible to issue a stream of desk-bound pronouncements supposedly intended to illuminate practice. But no. There is no place in the structure of our Party for this kind of intellectual analysis. Our language, terminology and analyses must be the product, in general, of world revolutionary practice and, in particular, of our own practice. We must address the questions concerning our general line in the clearest, most concise and most direct way, so that they illuminate our practice. Our Party is a Leninist party founded upon the principles of dialectical and historical materialism.

Under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism, our Party, proceeding from a revolutionary assessment of the contradictions and relations of imperialism’s Third Crisis Period and of the

reflection of these contradictions and relations in Turkey — that is, of the historical, social, political, economic and psychological characteristics of our country — has determined the **Politicised Military War Strategy** as its strategy of revolution. This strategic line treats the countryside and the cities, armed propaganda and the other political mass forms of struggle as a dialectical whole.

As is known, the concept of guerrilla warfare does not by itself determine the qualitative character of a struggle. A local notable may wage guerrilla warfare against the central authority; an army whose regular units have been defeated may also wage guerrilla warfare against its enemy. When guerrilla warfare is conducted for revolutionary political aims, as an instrument of the campaign for explaining political realities — in other words, when it is treated as a political mass struggle — it is called the **Politicised Military War Strategy**. The theoretical sources and the line of movement of the Politicised Military War Strategy lie in the concrete analysis of concrete conditions: in general, in the distinguishing characteristics of imperialism's Third Crisis Period and, in particular, in the reflection of these contradictions and characteristics in the conditions of Turkey.

The organisational principle of an organisation which determines its revolutionary strategy in this way is likewise the organisational principle of this Leninist line: **the unity of political and military leadership**. Before briefly and concisely explaining these theoretical foundations, we believe that certain preliminary explanations concerning Marxist-Leninist theory will be useful in making the question concrete.

PART ONE

PRELIMINARY EXPLANATIONS

I. MARXISM-LENINISM IS A GUIDE TO ACTION

“Marxism is an extremely profound, extremely complex doctrine.”

Marxism is a doctrine which continuously deepens, enriches and surpasses itself in the face of the new realities of life. In Marxism, what is essential is not the wording but the content. The only thing in Marxism which does not change is, in Lenin’s words, its living soul: the dialectical method. If the concepts of time and place — the two most elementary elements of dialectics — are not taken into consideration, it becomes possible, according to Marx and Engels, to speak of Lenin as a revisionist; according to Lenin and Stalin, to speak of Mao Tse-tung as a revisionist; and according to Mao, to speak of the victorious proletarian revolutionaries of imperialism’s Third Crisis Period as revisionists. Opportunism, everywhere and at all times, resorts to two methods in distorting Scientific Socialism.

Either, without taking the concepts of time and place into account, it clings with both hands to theses which the masters of Marxism advanced for other historical conditions and which have become obsolete in the period being lived, and attempts to make these theses the basis of its own deviation. Or it revises Marxism by saying of the theses of Marxism-Leninism which are valid under all conditions, “Time and place have changed; therefore they are no longer valid.” (See *Uninterrupted Revolution I*.) Revisionism and opportunism treat theory as a dogma and scripture. This is the way revisionism approaches not only the conception of revolution, the combination of classes and organisational questions, but also methods of work. According to

the opportunists, the existence of methods of struggle other than those envisaged by the masters in an earlier period constitutes a revision of theory.

For example, during the 1905–07 period of uprising, in the stage when the revolutionary wave was ebbing, the Bolsheviks who resorted to guerrilla warfare were accused by the Cadets — the bourgeois party — and by the Mensheviks of anarchism, Narodism and Blanquism. The Mensheviks claimed that this form of struggle did not exist in the works of Marx and Engels. Likewise Mao, in the Chinese Revolution — in which the urban proletariat did not play the key role and victory was to be achieved not through an uprising but through People's War — took guerrilla warfare as fundamental and followed a line different from the model of the Soviet Revolution.

For this reason, the passivists accused Mao of not being Leninist, of being a Narodnik, and of revising Leninism. Their justification was that the path of revolution and forms of struggle envisaged by Mao did not appear in the books of Lenin and Stalin. In the Third Crisis Period the objections of the passivists are again the same. For opportunists who fail to take the changed historical situation into account, the line of Marxist-Leninists who treat theory dialectically and apply it to practice, and the active methods of struggle developed within practice, are anti-Leninist because they are not to be found in the books of Lenin, Stalin and Mao; they are the line of left deviation and anarchism.

In every historical period, right opportunism freezes theory from an “orthodox” standpoint, casts aside the living soul of Marxism — the concrete analysis of concrete conditions — and clings with both hands not to its essence but to its wording.

II. THE UNIVERSAL THESES OF LENINISM

Without broadening the subject and producing unnecessary words, we can state the universal principles relating to political

practice as follows. In summary, these principles lie in the theories of revolution, the Party and the state. Let us summarise them in order. The state apparatus, with its bureaucracy and militarism, is as a whole an organisation of repression of the ruling classes. Revolution is the seizure of political power through the revolutionary initiative of the people — from below upwards — by smashing the existing state apparatus, and, through that power — from above downwards — organising a more advanced system of production. For this, the following are necessary:

1. the existence of a national crisis; 2. the existence of a vanguard; 3. the conscious and organised participation of the masses in the struggle. In the imperialist period, revolution can take place in a single country. In this period the bourgeoisie has lost its revolutionary character. It is no longer capable even of carrying out its own revolution. In underdeveloped countries, the proletariat is confronted with a dual revolutionary task within a single process. This is the essence of **Uninterrupted Revolution**. There can be no proletarian revolution without the political party of the proletariat. The political party of the proletariat is the vanguard detachment of the proletariat. It is based upon dialectical and historical materialism, and it conducts struggle on three fronts: ideological, economic-democratic and political. The revolution is permanent and uninterrupted.

Revolution is not completed with the seizure of political power and the reorganisation of the economic base. Until all contradictions specific to class societies have been eliminated, the revolution continues in the superstructure as well. This is the process of Cultural Revolution. Those who claim that the universal theses of Leninism have become obsolete — whether from the “Left”, as in the case of Debray, or from the Right, as in the case of classical revisionism — are anti-Leninist and revisionist.

III. THE STAGES OF EVOLUTION AND REVOLUTION AND THE METHOD OF WORK

Marx, Engels and Lenin consider the revolutionary struggle in two stages: the **period of evolution** and the **period of revolution**.

“Marx and Engels formulate the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat in two stages: the stage of evolution and the stage of revolution. In both stages the revolutionary tactics of the proletariat are different.

“The stage of revolution is a brief period. This is the stage in which the existing social order is overturned. During this brief stage the tactic of the proletariat and its vanguard is attack; only one item is written on the agenda: **UPRISING**.

“During this period the tactic of the proletariat is to smash the existing state machinery and establish the revolutionary power of the proletariat. Marx and Engels, inspired by the revolutionary initiative and traditions of the French, called this tactic ‘speaking French’ (...)

“This is the tactic of the proletariat in the revolutionary period.” (See *Uninterrupted Revolution I*.)

The evolutionary stage, on the other hand, is a long period. During this period, the task of the party of the proletariat is to raise the consciousness of the proletariat and its allies, organise them and create the social and psychological conditions for the revolutionary stage. Marx and Engels set out the revolutionary method of work in this evolutionary period as follows:

“The revolutionary struggle of this long period embraces, internally, an uncompromising ideological struggle against opportunism and, externally, every form of action — from organising the everyday struggles of the masses, from the trade-union struggle of the proletariat to the economic and democratic struggles of the masses of the people, to directing political opposition against the existing reactionary

administration by taking a place on the extreme left of the democratic opposition (unarmed).

“Marx and Engels called the revolutionary language of the proletariat in this stage ‘speaking German’, because of the high ideological-theoretical level of the German proletariat and its ability to draw the masses of the people into its ranks.” (See *Uninterrupted Revolution I.*)

“The question of the stage of evolution, the stage of revolution and the objective conditions of revolution in Marx and Engels acquires much greater clarity in Lenin’s analyses. Undoubtedly, the fact that Lenin lived in the era of proletarian revolutions and experienced two revolutions played a major role in this.

“According to Lenin, in the imperialist period, within the conception of uninterrupted revolution, the objective conditions for proletarian revolution exist in all countries. The level reached by the productive forces on a world scale is mature for revolution. What does not exist in a ready-made form are the subjective conditions of revolution. The preparation of the subjective conditions of revolution constitutes the foundations of Leninism...

“Lenin introduced changes into Marx and Engels’ distinction between the stages of evolution and revolution because of differences in concrete conditions.

“According to Marx and Engels, when the objective conditions for revolution have matured on a world scale, the language of socialists must be French.

“As is known, the imperialist era is the era in which the objective conditions for revolutions have matured on a world scale. According to formal logic, the natural conclusion of Marx and Engels’ proposition would be that the task of socialists in this period is continuously to speak French — to attack continuously, without stopping or tiring.

“But for dialectical logic the situation is not like this. The world revolution will never take place simultaneously. It will first

take place in one or several countries. For this reason, the liberation of every country will be the work of the proletariat of that country itself. Revolutions can neither be imported nor exported.

“For the objective conditions of revolution to exist in a country, in addition to capitalism’s general crisis on a world scale, that country must also experience its own national crisis.

“According to the Leninist distinction, for a country to be at the stage of revolution: **a)** the level of consciousness and organisation of the proletariat must be sufficient for revolution. (The subjective conditions of revolution must be mature.) **b)** there must be a national crisis affecting both the oppressor and the oppressed. (...) ”

“The stage of revolution is a brief moment. The stage of evolution, on the other hand, is a long process...” (See *Uninterrupted Revolution I*.)

According to Lenin, the Bolshevik method of work corresponding to the evolutionary stage is as follows:

“The revolutionary language of the period of evolution is German. During the period of speaking German there is no place for revolutionary advance.

“The revolutionary method of work in this period is to raise the consciousness of the proletariat, organise it, strengthen the links between the proletariat and its vanguard, raise the class consciousness of the proletariat and the labouring people, and, by marching on the extreme left of the democratic opposition, expose the ruling classes through intensive political propaganda.”

If the party of the proletariat has not yet been established, the principal task is to create the vanguard detachment of the proletariat. At a stage in which the class party of the proletariat does not exist, even if a revolutionary situation exists, the revolutionary language cannot be French. Lenin summarises the

proletarian revolutionary method of work during this period as follows:

“Propaganda and agitation, agitation and propaganda were at that time really pushed into the foreground by the objective conditions. Work for the publication of a political newspaper addressing the whole country, whose ideal form appeared to be a weekly publication, then appeared as the cornerstone of the work of preparation for revolution. (*What Is To Be Done?* posed the question in precisely this way.)

“The slogan of enlightening the masses [instead of armed action], the slogan of preparing the social and psychological conditions for an uprising [instead of local uprisings], were at that time the only correct slogans of revolutionary Social Democracy.” (*Two Tactics*, p. 78; see *Uninterrupted Revolution I*.)

Having set out the evolutionary stage and its method of work in this way, Lenin says during the revolutionary stage of 1905:

“...events have now outgrown these slogans, because the movement has advanced; these slogans are now obsolete, worn out, articles which have completed their service [that is, they belong to the evolutionary stage].” (*Two Tactics*, p. 78.)

Even during the brief revolutionary stage, however, Bolshevik tactics and slogans do not immediately become simply **uprising**.

“This brief period is itself further divided into three stages: the transitional period, the period of tactical offensive and the period of strategic offensive.

a) The French of the Transitional Period: It begins immediately at the end of the evolutionary period. It is the tactic of speaking French during the stage in which the revolutionary wave gradually rises and begins to shake the masses, and in which the convictions of the masses are transformed into mass actions.

“During the 1905 Revolution, the accent of this French language was: local political strikes, demonstrations, the general political strike and the boycott of the Duma. (...)

b) The Period of Tactical Offensive: This brief period is the stage in which the vanguard has learned urban action and has therefore become capable of leading the masses of the people and teaching them the correct tactics of uprising.

“This is the stage in which the revolutionary potential of the people has risen considerably, the revolutionary wave is approaching its highest point and the tactical offensives of the vanguard before the final assault intensify.

“The principal aim during this period is to create demoralisation and panic in the ranks of the enemy, to disintegrate the counter-revolutionary front and open breaches within it.

“The revolutionary tactics of the tactical-offensive period of the 1905 Revolution were barricade fighting — street fighting — and urban guerrilla warfare. The urban guerrilla consisted of the urban proletariat.

“Concerning one of the various tasks of the urban guerrilla — teaching the masses the tactics of uprising — Lenin says in *Lessons of the Moscow Uprising*: ‘The guerrilla warfare and terrible acts of violence that have continued in Russia since December will undoubtedly help the masses to learn the correct tactics of an uprising.’

c) The Period of Strategic Offensive, the Transition to the Regular Army and the Uprising: On 10 June 1905 Lenin says: ‘Outbreaks — demonstrations — street fighting — units of a revolutionary army: these are the stages in the development of the people’s uprising. We have now reached the final stage.’

“The economic and political crisis has deepened considerably and reached its highest point. To wait any longer is now, in Lenin’s words, a crime. And uprising has become the first item on the agenda.

“The strategic offensive is carried out with a regular army. For the final assault, all previously dispersed forces are first brought together; the Red Army is created. (The Red Army is the proletarian army.) Barricade fighting and urban-guerrilla tactics now give way to the uprising tactics of the Red Army.”
(See *Uninterrupted Revolution I.*)

This was how Lenin formulated the revolutionary process and tactics of the proletariat in Russia, one of the six colonialist powers of the world. In *Foundations of Leninism*, Stalin calls the tactics of the revolutionary stage of 1905 the tactics of the **rising tide of revolution**. After the defeat of the 1905 Revolution, another long evolutionary period began and the **ebb of the revolution** commenced. As can immediately be seen, in Marx, Engels and Lenin the stages of revolution and evolution, and the tactics corresponding to them, are separated by clear lines. The process analysed by Marx and Engels concerned bourgeois society; Lenin’s analysis concerned Tsarist Russia, one of the six largest colonialist countries in the world, where capitalism — although relatively weak compared with the other European countries — was developing through its own internal dynamics.

Again, as can clearly be seen, revolutionary work, slogans and tactics are different in the two stages. The tactical slogans and methods envisaged in the evolutionary stage arise from **German**. Armed action is never the principal method of struggle of the evolutionary stage. In the revolutionary stage, however, parallel to the rise of the revolutionary wave, armed action becomes the principal form. In Marxism-Leninism, the forms of political struggle are diverse. In the literature these forms are considered under two headings:

a) Armed action **b) Forms of struggle other than armed action**
In countries where the revolutionary process is divided by clear lines into evolution and revolution, Marxist-Leninist parties always choose one of these two forms of struggle as principal

according to the stage concerned, while making the other subordinate — secondary — to it. (At the present stage, this clear-cut distinction is valid for imperialist-capitalist countries.)

However, the concrete practice of underdeveloped countries under imperialist hegemony, where a long and winding People's War is a necessary stage on the road to revolution, has altered the relationship between these stages of the revolutionary process. That is to say, in countries under imperialist hegemony — whether they are the feudal or semi-feudal countries of the Second Crisis Period, where imperialist hegemony was an external phenomenon, or the underdeveloped countries of the Third Crisis Period, where imperialist hegemony has become an internal phenomenon and imperialist-capitalist relations of production predominate — the stages of evolution and revolution cannot be separated by clear lines in the same way as in countries where capitalism developed through internal dynamics, even if weakly, as in Tsarist Russia.

In countries of this type, the revolutionary stage is not a brief stage but a considerably prolonged one. In practice, it is impossible to determine exactly where the evolutionary stage ends and where the revolutionary stage begins. The two stages are intertwined. Because imperialist hegemony in these countries prevents the development of an independent national bourgeoisie, even if the country is capitalist, the capitalism that exists is distorted, since it has not developed through its own internal dynamics; it has been shaped according to imperialism. Since imperialist hegemony prevents society from developing through its own internal dynamics, the country is in a national crisis extending from the relations of its economic base to its superstructure. This national crisis is not fully mature. But it exists to one degree or another.

The deepening and maturation of this existing crisis depends entirely upon the revolutionaries of that country. To summarise:

in all underdeveloped countries under imperialist hegemony, a national crisis exists even if it has not fully matured. This means the continuous existence of a revolutionary situation, the intertwining of the evolutionary and revolutionary stages — in other words, the existence of the objective conditions for armed action. In Turkey, a country under imperialist hegemony, our Party, which is waging an armed war of liberation, has set out its assessment of the evolutionary and revolutionary stages in the light of this reality as follows:

“The passivists in our country claim that we are at the evolutionary stage and that, therefore, the objective conditions for armed struggle do not exist at the present stage.

“These claims are fundamentally defective and incorrect. The sole purpose of analyses of this kind is to provide an ideological cover for capitulationism.

“In countries under imperialist occupation, the stages of evolution and revolution cannot be separated from one another with a knife in this way. These stages are intertwined.

“Furthermore, imperialist occupation means that the opposing side itself resorts to force, violence and arms. This means that the objective conditions for armed struggle exist.

“At present, our Party, which is engaged in the struggle for power, is not at the stage or level of strength at which it can seize power.

“Only at the stage of regular armies can there be any question of taking over the administration throughout the entire country.

“And we never claim that we are living through this stage today.

“We claim only that guerrilla warfare is necessary in order for our people’s revolutionary war to reach this stage, and it is for this purpose that we fight.” (*THKP Revolutionary Strategy*, Party Communiqué No. 1.)

Opposition to this revolutionary assessment is not peculiar to the passivists of our country. It is an assessment fiercely opposed by passivists on the Left in all underdeveloped countries under imperialist hegemony. This is the essence of the matter. The passivists of all underdeveloped countries who oppose guerrilla warfare — including those who accept it in words but oppose it in practice — cling with both hands to Lenin's classical definition. According to them, this revolutionary way of approaching the question in the light of the concepts of time and place is adventurism, anarchism, focoism, and so on. Their justification is that there is no national crisis in the country corresponding to Lenin's classical definition.

Let us give an example. In Algeria, while petty-bourgeois revolutionaries took up arms against French imperialism and waged a People's War, the Algerian Communist Party clung firmly to Lenin's classical definition and, arguing that the objective conditions for an armed war of liberation did not exist in the country and that they were living through the evolutionary stage, took the forms of struggle belonging to the evolutionary period as fundamental.

As is known, the Algerian People's War achieved victory under the leadership not of the Algerian Communist Party but of petty-bourgeois radicals. After the war, the self-criticism made by Bashir Hadj Ali, secretary of the Algerian Communist Party, was interesting. Bashir Hadj Ali says:

“One of the immediately apparent reasons why we failed to assess the situation correctly... was the superficiality of our assessment concerning the development of a revolutionary situation.

“The Communist Party believed that in November 1954 the conditions had not reached sufficient maturity for us to wage a war of national liberation.

“For we forgot that the conditions laid down by Lenin related to capitalist countries and forgot the distinction between military actions and a general uprising.” (See Pomeroy, *Guerrilla Warfare and Marxism*, p. 320.)

Such is the tragic confession of passivism — after everything is over!

PART TWO

IMPERIALISM'S THIRD CRISIS PERIOD AND THE LENINIST LINE

I. IMPERIALISM'S THIRD CRISIS PERIOD

American imperialism emerged from the Second War of Redistribution as the imperialist country which had suffered the least damage and obtained the greatest profits. Through exports and transfers of capital on a scale incomparable with previous periods, it brought the economies of the other imperialist-capitalist countries under its hegemony. Against People's Wars and the socialist bloc, it assumed the role of gendarme of the imperialist bloc. It would probably not be wrong to say that, during this period, the world capitalist bloc was transformed into an **American Empire**. (The USA produces two-fifths of world capitalist production.) During this period, called **imperialism's Third Crisis Period**, imperialist relations and contradictions underwent changes in form on two fundamental fronts:

1) The possibility that competition among the imperialists — their antagonistic contradictions — would lead to a new war of redistribution among the imperialists disappeared. 2) The form of imperialist occupation changed. (Today there are almost no countries in the world remaining in the form of full colonies. Open occupation has given way to hidden occupation.) After the Second War of Redistribution, the world entered an age which bourgeois researchers call the "Second Industrial Revolution" and Marxist researchers call the "**scientific and technological revolution**".

"Today no one doubts that humanity has entered an era of scientific and technological revolution connected with the utilisation of atomic energy, the conquest of space, the

development of chemistry, the automation of production and the other enormous achievements of science and technology.”

Alongside the enormous development of the world socialist bloc, imperialism — and Yankee imperialism in particular — made use of scientific and technological discoveries to increase production to a certain extent and, with its nuclear striking forces — the world socialist bloc also possesses these forces — reached a level at which it was capable of destroying the world. [2] According to the formal logic of bourgeois economists, this “scientific and technological revolution” became a remedy for the crisis of capitalism. In reality, the situation is exactly the opposite. The “scientific and technological revolution”, by raising the existing contradictions inherent in the capitalist system to an unprecedented level, is bursting the framework of capitalist relations.

The increasing concentration of production, the concentration of capital, the interpenetration of private monopolies and state monopolies, and an abnormal deficiency of demand have created terrible chaos. On the one hand, the enormous concentration and centralisation of capital and, on the other, the fact that one-third of the world has moved outside capitalist exploitation have led to an extreme contraction of markets outside the metropolitan countries for capitalism. This is what has driven the crisis of capitalism to its extreme point and made capitalism a frenzied and aggressive force. It has sharpened and deepened the contradictions among the imperialists to a terrible degree.

“The rhythm of development of the capitalist economy is determined by the condition of the capitalist market.”

The level reached by nuclear striking forces on a world scale and, as the principal determining factor, the existence of the enormous world socialist bloc prevent the antagonistic contradictions among the imperialists, which have reached an extreme point, from passing from the economic plane to the

military plane. Thus, while the contradictions on the one hand sharpen and deepen, on the other hand integration takes place. The fact that the antagonistic contradictions among the imperialists have reached an extreme point, while at the same time they are unable temporarily to resolve these contradictions through a war of redistribution and are therefore compelled to move towards integration, means that the crisis of capitalism is passing through its most deadly stage. Today Yankee imperialism is in a complete crisis.

Yet in the years following the Second War of Redistribution, Yankee imperialism, having brought its European and Japanese friends under complete economic control, was able for a long period to maintain the “stability” of its economy and to dictate its own economic and political demands to them. The dollar remained the fixed unit of the capitalist world.

However, during this period the law of uneven development of capitalism continued to operate, and European and Japanese imperialism reached the point of threatening American hegemony. As a result of the functioning laws of capitalism, the American economy entered a complete crisis over the last ten years, and in recent years this crisis reached its extreme point. The crisis in the American economy increased to such an extent that the Yankees, unwillingly and with a delay of two years, broke the inviolability of their legendary dollar. America should have devalued the dollar in 1969. For two years it exerted pressure upon its friends, but apart from securing certain concessions it obtained no positive result, and devalued the dollar in 1971.

Had it not been for the characteristic of the Third Crisis Period which we have described, the Yankees would not have contented themselves with the concessions of their friends but would have preferred to resolve the market problem by force of arms. (In this way they would have killed two birds with one stone, because war

is at the same time a remedy for capitalism's disease of insufficient demand.)

However, the existence of the world socialist bloc and the enormous level of development reached by technology remind them that such a policy would at the same time mean their own destruction. (The extraordinary prestige acquired by socialism during this period among the labouring classes in both the metropolitan and colonial countries must also be taken into account. This factor too is extremely important.) In this period, faced with the extreme contraction of imperialism's internal and external markets and the impossibility of resolving the problem through a war of redistribution, imperialism in general and Yankee imperialism in particular resorted to two methods, internally and externally. Internally, it militarised its economy. Externally, in addition to the old colonial method, it began to apply **neo-colonialism**.

As is known, the internal market can be expanded by increasing the individual consumption of the labouring people. But the internal market can expand only through substantial increases in the real income of the working population. This, however, is contrary to the nature of capitalism. The pursuit of increasing profits is inherent in the very nature of monopolies. The concentration and centralisation of capital result in the decline of the real incomes of the worker and labouring classes in capitalist society. From 1952 onwards, the real income of the American proletariat continuously declined. Faced with the contraction of the internal market, the formula found by the Yankees for insufficient demand was the further militarisation of the economy. [3] (Life has today demonstrated that this formula too cannot save capitalism.)

The extraordinary concentration and centralisation of capital transformed monopoly capitalism, in the fullest sense, into **state-monopoly capitalism**. [4] This means the interpenetration of the

power of the monopolies and the power of the state and their transformation into a single mechanism. (As is known, Lenin characterised the stage of state-monopoly capitalism as the stage in which the material conditions for the transition to socialism are most mature. In other words, the antagonistic contradictions of capitalism are at their most extreme.) As a natural result of the extraordinary militarisation of its economy, Yankee imperialism increased its aggression and ferocity on a world scale to a terrible degree.

On the one hand, through CIA conspiracies, the Pentagon caused even representative democracies in colonial and semi-colonial countries to be shelved and militarist regimes to be established. On the other hand, it mobilised all its forces to turn into hell the countries in which wars of national liberation were being waged. This is the meaning of imperialism increasing its strength and aggression on the tactical plane while collapsing on the strategic plane. We said that in the age of the “scientific and technological revolution”, international capitalism, in order temporarily to alleviate its crisis — which had reached a terrible level because of the contraction of markets — made changes externally in its old methods of exploitation. (This must not be interpreted as meaning that it abandoned its old methods. Today both forms operate together. But the new forms predominate.)

Let us deal in detail with this question, which directly concerns our practice. During the First and Second General Crisis Periods, the markets of international capitalism had not contracted to the extent that they have in the Third Crisis Period. As we have already stated, technology and the concentration and centralisation of capital had not reached their present level. For this reason, international capitalism was able to resolve its market problem through the export of commodities and the export and transfer of money capital to colonial countries. The world had therefore not yet become so small — the markets had not

contracted to this extent — and the shortage of demand had not reached its present terrible level. From this standpoint, imperialism had no problem of expanding the market in colonial countries.

By preserving the existing structure — although feudalism was, of course, dissolved to a certain degree and a comprador bourgeoisie was created — imperialism entered into alliance with feudalism and was able comfortably to continue its exploitation. When the comprador-bourgeois-feudal-notable administration — the weak central authority — became incapable of preventing the struggle of proletarian revolutionaries who organised the spontaneous explosions and rebellions of the people exploited under the feudal whip, especially the peasants who were almost in the position of serfs, and where the contradictions were extremely sharp — as frequently happened in practice — imperialist occupation assumed an open form.

In any case, in these countries the imperialist states maintained actual control by stationing their troops at strategic points, particularly in ports and principal communications centres, in order to secure their commercial operations and prevent other imperialist countries from encroaching upon their markets. (Imperialism was therefore already physically present at the strategic centres of the country.) In the Third Crisis Period, however, changes occurred in relations among the imperialists. Secondly, the “insufficiency of demand” created by the extreme concentration and centralisation of capital in the metropolitan countries, together especially with the anti-imperialist and national currents which spread after the Second War of Redistribution, necessarily brought changes in imperialism’s methods of exploitation.

These changes are the methods of **neo-colonialism**, aimed at concealing the ugly face of imperialism and expanding the market in colonial countries. At the basis of neo-colonialist methods lies

the expansion of the commodity market in colonial countries in a manner responding to the rapacious exploitation policy of the imperialist monopolies. This has resulted in “capitalism from above” becoming the dominant mode of production in these countries and in the establishment of a strong central authority. A “democratic revolution from above” has been carried out to a certain extent. While feudal relations are generally preserved in the superstructure — the feudal exploitation of labour continues and feudal ideologies are maintained — capitalism has become the dominant element in the economic base: production for the market.

This means the establishment in these countries of light and medium industry and the formation and development of a domestic monopoly bourgeoisie — as imperialism’s most favoured ally. However, the developing domestic monopoly bourgeoisie did not develop through internal dynamics. From the very beginning it developed integrated with imperialism. Thus imperialism, which in the First and Second General Crisis Periods was an external phenomenon for these countries, has in this period also become an **internal phenomenon**. [5] (This is the essence of **hidden occupation**.)

Let us briefly summarise the neo-colonialist method of imperialism which produces the result described above. Yankee imperialism developed the method of neo-colonialism particularly after 1946. It organised this neo-colonialist policy through the Truman and Marshall doctrines, military pacts and bilateral agreements. The essence of this policy lies in satisfying, to a greater degree, the problems of imperialism at a higher stage through methods which provide wider market opportunities at lower cost, in a more systematic manner and without giving rise to national wars. Its most fundamental method is the change in the composition of the export and transfer of capital. A new ratio was created among the five or six elements of capital.

Before the war, the export of money capital occupied a far greater place than other elements of capital such as brand names, patent rights, spare parts, technical knowledge, technical personnel, and so on. In the post-war period, and especially after 1960, this process was reversed. The elements of capital other than the export of money capital, summarised above, acquired greater weight. Today, in underdeveloped countries, there are many industrial enterprises in which the proportion of foreign money capital is very small in comparison with domestic money capital, but which are nevertheless completely dependent upon foreign capital. (The automobile industry, for example.) A few basic industrial plants which are one hundred per cent externally dependent are established, and light and medium industry, condemned to dependence upon them, is developed to a certain extent. [6]

(The basis of these industrial enterprises lies in the elements of foreign capital other than money capital.) The neo-colonialist method which we have briefly summarised has, on the one hand, resulted in imperialism becoming firmly established within the country — that is, imperialism becoming not only an external but also an internal phenomenon. On the other hand, in underdeveloped countries, compared with previous periods — compared with the old colonial period in which feudalism was dominant — it has increased social production and relative prosperity to a certain degree in parallel with a relative expansion of the market.

As a result, the contradictions within the underdeveloped country have apparently softened in comparison with the feudal period, and an **artificial balance** has been established between the reaction of the masses of the people against the existing order and the oligarchy. Because imperialist occupation has been concealed — because imperialism has at the same time become an internal phenomenon — the nationalist reactions of the masses of

the people, their “allergy to the foreigner”, have been neutralised. The central state apparatus has become much stronger than in the previous period. Through alliance projects, bilateral agreements and military-pact relations, the oligarchic state apparatus has been militarised with revolutionary civil war in mind. (Three-quarters of imperialist aid consists of military aid.)

Parallel with the expansion of the market within the country, urbanisation, communications and transport have developed greatly and spread across the country like a network. The weak feudal control over the people characteristic of previous periods — when imperialism’s physical presence existed not throughout the whole country but in commercial centres and principal communications points — has given way to a much stronger oligarchic state authority. The army, police and every kind of pacification and propaganda instrument of the oligarchic state have established their domination in every corner of the country.

To all this must be added the fact that, on a scale incomparable with the First and Second General Crisis Periods, imperialism and the oligarchy have developed their propaganda instruments in these countries to an enormous degree, improved their methods of pacification and accumulated experience from the wars of national liberation of previous periods. The oligarchic state apparatus in underdeveloped countries has now reached a level at which it can preserve the existing relations of production for a long period. Since capitalism in the country did not develop through its own internal dynamics, it would not be incorrect to call these **imperialist relations of production**. By pacifying the reactions of the masses of the people — particularly the broad labouring masses — an artificial balance has been established between these reactions and the oligarchy.

(This situation constitutes the material basis of passivism and revisionism in these countries.)

II. OLIGARCHIC DICTATORSHIP

The government in imperialist-capitalist countries which have passed through the industrial revolution, and the government in underdeveloped countries, are both oligarchic governments. However, in the imperialist-capitalist countries capitalism did not develop in a reactionary manner — from above downwards — but developed and became established in the revolutionary sense, through its own internal dynamics.

Consequently, bourgeois-democratic relations became dominant not only in the economic base but also in the superstructure, and feudal relations were eliminated. But in the monopoly period, capitalism cast aside the principles of free competition, nationalism and democratic government, replacing them with monopoly, cosmopolitanism and oligarchic dictatorship.

However, in previous periods the proletariat and the labouring masses had won their democratic rights and freedoms through long and bloody struggles. The labouring classes are strong both qualitatively and quantitatively. For this reason, the oligarchy in these countries can restrict classical bourgeois democracy and freedoms to a certain extent, but it can never touch their essence. The character of the oligarchy in these countries is that of a **financial oligarchy**. The oligarchic dictatorship in countries like ours, however, does not bear only the stamp of finance capital. Because capitalism in the country was developed not through its own internal dynamics but from above downwards.

Consequently, the domestic monopoly bourgeoisie developed from the very beginning, while still in embryonic form, integrated with imperialism. (Since imperialism has become an internal phenomenon, it is itself part of this oligarchy.) However, this developing monopoly bourgeoisie is not powerful enough, by itself and in alliance with imperialism, to preserve the imperialist

relations of production. It therefore shares power with the landed bourgeoisie and the remnants of feudalism, which are necessarily dependent upon foreign and domestic monopolies. Within oligarchic rule, although the collaborationist monopoly bourgeoisie constitutes the principal support of imperialism, it is not the only domestic class which preserves the imperialist relations of production.

In countries like ours, oligarchic rule can quite easily govern the country through a complete dictatorship in which the workers and labouring masses possess no democratic rights and freedoms. We may also call this **colonial-type fascism**. This rule is exercised either through a “representative democracy” which has nothing whatsoever to do with classical bourgeois democracy — **hidden fascism** — or it is exercised openly, without attaching importance to ballot-box democracy.

However, its open form is not permanent. Generally, it is a method resorted to when the ruling classes lose control of the situation.

III. THE REVOLUTIONARY LINE AND REVISIONISM

We have briefly set out the characteristics of the Third General Crisis Period and the differences between imperialism in this period and in the other general crisis periods. In this period, revisionism and opportunism have appeared on the Left in two forms. The first, looking at the characteristic features of this period, argues that the universal theses of Leninism — which will remain valid until imperialism collapses as a system — have lost their validity, and puts forward peaceful, passivist theories of revolution.

However, the essence of imperialism has not changed. What has changed is the form of relations and exploitation among the imperialists. From this standpoint, the universal theses of Leninism — the Marxism of the imperialist period — remain valid

until imperialism collapses as a system. The second type of social-reformist line, by failing to take into account the changed forms of imperialist relations and exploitation, treats theory not as a guide to action but as a complete dogma. According to them, **armed propaganda** cannot be the principal form of struggle. There is no such form of propaganda in Leninism. Armed propaganda is not an organising force. To approach the question in this way is to look at everything through the barrel of a gun, and so on...

Let us dwell upon this question. As is known, Marx and Engels stated in the second half of the nineteenth century that the struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie could advance to a higher stage, and that the first proletarian revolution in the world could become possible, through a world war among the capitalists. (See *Uninterrupted Revolution I*.) In the imperialist period, Lenin and the Bolsheviks, taking this brilliant observation into account, carried out the world's first proletarian revolution. As early as the 1900s — long before writing *Imperialism* — Lenin stated that the law of the uneven and leap-like development of capitalism would inevitably produce a war among the imperialists and that this would lead to revolution in Russia, the weakest link of capitalism.

At the foundation of the form of revolution envisaged by Lenin lies the view that the contradictions among the imperialists would inevitably be reflected on the military plane. (See *Uninterrupted Revolution I* and *Foundations of Leninism*.) As is known, during the upheaval created by the First World War among the imperialists, the world proletarian movement made a great leap forward and one-sixth of the world became socialist. During the upheaval created by the Second World War among the imperialists, one-third of the world became socialist and socialism acquired enormous prestige on a world scale. After the Second World War, capitalism entered a new crisis period. In this period, it is

impossible for contradictions among the imperialists to lead to war. (For the reasons stated above.)

The Cuban Revolution, in its method of work and the route it followed, was a product of the characteristics of this historical period. In other words, it was a result of applying Marxism-Leninism to the practice of this historical period. (Apart from the Cuban proletarian revolution, all revolutions took place within the upheavals created by the two world wars.) The fact that **armed propaganda became the principal form of struggle**, and the **war of the revolutionary vanguard**, constitutes the Bolshevik line of the proletarian revolutionaries of all countries under imperialist hegemony, arising from the application of the universal theses of Marxism-Leninism to this concrete historical situation.

Thus our Party, which takes armed propaganda as the principal form of struggle and determines that the revolutionary struggle will achieve victory through a People's War by drawing the labouring masses into the ranks of revolution through the Vanguard War, has reached this conclusion under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism, in the light of the relations and contradictions of the historical situation in which we live and the reflection of these contradictions in our country. The passivists both in our country and throughout the world say of the struggle of revolutionary organisations which wage the Vanguard War by taking armed propaganda as the principal form of struggle:

“This is a duel between a handful of men and the ruling classes. This is the line of anarchism and Narodism. There is no such form of struggle in Lenin. To approach the question in this way is to look at everything through the barrel of a gun...”
etc.

These claims, which in reality are nothing other than an ideological cover for capitulationism, have nothing serious about them. Let us merely say this: A revolution has taken place in this

period. And those who made this revolution began by taking armed propaganda as the principal form of struggle and by waging a Vanguard War. Revolutionary movements which take this Leninist method of work, arising from this historical situation, as their basis are today writing the epics of the liberation of peoples in the rural regions of the world. The passivists, meanwhile, both throughout the world and in our country, as a handful of groups constituting the extensions of imperialism and the oligarchy on the Left, engage in verbal duels against those who are writing epics of liberation against imperialism with blood and fire.

The best answer to these passivists who say that this type of struggle does not exist in Lenin is given by Lenin himself. Let us leave the word to Lenin:

“Marxism demands an absolutely historical examination of the question of forms of struggle. To treat this question apart from the concrete historical situation shows an insufficient understanding of the fundamentals of dialectical materialism.

“At different stages of economic evolution, depending upon changes in political, national-cultural and living conditions, different forms of struggle arise and become the principal forms of struggle; and in connection with them the secondary, supplementary forms of struggle also change.” — Lenin

Yes, those who, without taking into account the changes in political, national-cultural and living conditions within the concrete historical situation being experienced — the Third Crisis Period of imperialism — and at the different stages of economic evolution, mechanically determine methods of work from the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao, divorced from practice, may be excellent **Marxologists**, but they can never be proletarian revolutionaries. The fundamental difference between every form of opportunism and the revolutionary line emerges in the choice of the **principal form of struggle**.

As is known, the proletarian revolutionary struggle conducted against the ruling classes is many-sided. In the literature this many-sided struggle is grouped under two principal headings: **a)** Peaceful methods of struggle (This does not mean conciliatory methods.) **b)** Methods of armed action. How is the struggle against imperialism and the oligarchy to be waged in countries under imperialist occupation? By taking which form of struggle as fundamental will the artificial balance between the oligarchy and the dissatisfaction and reactions of the people be broken? Which method of struggle will we choose as fundamental in order to draw the people into the ranks of revolution? Which form of struggle will be the principal instrument of a broad campaign for explaining political realities?

Here lies the fundamental criterion distinguishing the revolutionary line from the opportunist line, revolutionary theory from “orthodox” ideological-political verbosity. The answer given to this question by international revisionism and passivism — which, in the period in which we live, separates the revolutionary struggle into evolutionary and revolutionary stages by clear lines — is as follows:

(Whatever their differences among themselves, from those who take the cities as the basis to those who take the countryside as the basis.)

“To go among the masses, organise and mobilise the masses around their immediate needs, and bring political consciousness to and organise the masses; that is, to organise the labouring masses around their economic and democratic rights and demands and direct them towards the political objective.”

In all underdeveloped countries where democratic rights and freedoms cannot be exercised — have been shelved — or, more accurately, where the oligarchy does not “permit” them to be exercised, and where a complete policy of repression is pursued

against the labouring masses by means of the army, police and other forces, organisations which seek through this type of classical “mass work” to transform economic and democratic struggle into political struggle will become powerless in the face of the enemy’s military superiority and repression, and will gradually move further and further to the Right. This path, “instead of breaking the artificial balance established between the oligarchic dictatorship and pressure from the people, will maintain it.” (Che)

Yes, it will maintain it. Of course, by following this road there will also appear to be certain advances. But the advocates of this road, even if they initially possess militant qualities, will gradually lose those qualities, degenerate and increasingly become bureaucratised. The revolutionary essence that has been lost and five or ten labouring people who have been pacified — reduced to its simplest form, this is where this conception leads. [7] Organisations which take this form of struggle as fundamental will gradually come under the wing of revolutionary nationalists and will begin to believe that their rule will secure democratic rights and freedoms in the country, and that in such an environment they will organise and raise the consciousness of the masses around economic and democratic struggles.

For example, while group (x) in our country gathered around a publication explaining political realities, attempted to establish bases in factories and similar places, entered economic and democratic mass movements and, proceeding from these, attempted to draw the masses into the ranks of revolution — that is, while taking this type of struggle as fundamental — it also carried out one or two robberies in order to obtain money for its organisation and attempted one or two acts of sabotage and assassination. (However, these armed actions were not armed propaganda.) And group (x), with this method of work, placed all its hopes in a revolutionary-nationalist junta. For this junta would

make the Constitution of 27 May function in practice, abolish Articles 141–142 and create an environment suitable for the form of struggle which they had taken as fundamental.

THE REVOLUTIONARY VIEW

The principal method of struggle for breaking the artificial balance established between the oligarchy and the dissatisfaction and generally unconscious reactions of the people against the existing order, and for drawing the masses into the ranks of revolution, is **armed propaganda**. In these countries, where the economic and democratic struggles of the labouring masses are suppressed through terror by the oligarchic dictatorship — even where it appears in a representative form — where the central authority appears before the masses of the people as “gigantically” powerful through its army, police, etc., and where hidden occupation exists, the principal method of struggle for establishing contact with the masses and winning them to the ranks of revolution through a broad campaign for explaining political realities is armed propaganda.

Armed propaganda is not military struggle but **political struggle**. It is not an individual but a **mass form of struggle**. In other words, armed propaganda is definitely not terrorism, as the passivists claim. It differs from individual terrorism both in aim and in form. Proceeding from a particular revolutionary strategy, armed propaganda moves from tangible, visible, material and concrete actions towards the abstract in addressing the labouring masses. By explaining political realities around material events, it raises the consciousness of the masses and shows them a political objective. Armed propaganda agitates the dissatisfaction of the people with the existing order and gradually frees them from the effects of imperialist brainwashing. It first shakes the masses and then gradually raises their consciousness.

It demonstrates that the central authority is not as strong as it appears and that its power rests above all upon noise, intimidation and demagoguery. Above all, armed propaganda draws the attention of the masses — who are lost in the daily struggle to make a living, conditioned by imperialist propaganda and who have attached their “hopes” to one or another party of the existing order — to the revolutionary movement. It creates movement among the drugged and pacified masses. In the first period, under the influence of intensive right-wing propaganda — including opportunist publications — the confusion and hesitation among the masses gradually turn into sympathy for the revolutionary movement.

Seeing, in the face of the actions, the ugly face of the oligarchy, which casts aside its mask of “justice” and increases its repression and terror against the people to an unprecedented degree, this sympathy turns into antipathy towards the oligarchy. The organisation which takes armed propaganda as its basis gradually becomes the sole source of hope of the oppressed. While increasing unemployment and the rising cost of living push the dissatisfaction of the people towards an extreme point, the oligarchy, which further intensifies its repression and terror in the face of armed propaganda and increasingly shelves all democratic rights of the people, loses its standing in the eyes of the whole people, beginning with the intellectuals.

The party which successfully conducts guerrilla warfare will first gather around itself the conscious sections of the people which had previously remained under the influence of various opportunist factions on the Left, and will gradually clear away the parasites on the Left. The elements — workers, peasants and students — whose minds have been confused by the passivists will gradually gather around armed propaganda. That is, armed propaganda will first unite the Left. Sincere elements who at the beginning were under the influence of various tendencies will

gather around a single strategy. Armed propaganda includes **rural and urban guerrilla warfare, psychological warfare and war of attrition**. To take the principal form of struggle in this way does not, of course, mean neglecting other forms of struggle.

The organisation which takes armed propaganda as fundamental also takes up other forms of struggle in proportion to its strength. But the other forms of struggle are secondary. Armed propaganda is the principal form of struggle. This does not mean remaining a spectator to economic and democratic mass movements. In proportion to its strength, the organisation attempts to organise the masses around economic and democratic rights and demands. It concerns itself with directing every form of reaction against the oligarchy. But in the beginning it does not run everywhere and does not enter mass movements which exceed its strength and which cannot be secured by arms. In proportion to its strength, it engages in consciousness-raising, political education, propaganda and organisation outside armed propaganda.

Classical political mass struggle and armed propaganda follow one another and exist within one another, dependent upon one another; each mutually influences the other. The other political, economic and democratic forms of struggle outside armed propaganda are subordinate to armed propaganda and take shape according to armed propaganda. (The secondary forms of struggle are shaped according to the principal form of struggle — that is, according to the methods of armed propaganda.) The revolutionary strategy which takes **armed propaganda as fundamental**, and treats the other political, economic and democratic forms of struggle as subordinate to this principal form of struggle, is called the **Politicised Military War Strategy**.

(The organisation of this strategy also does not treat ideological struggle as an instrument of polemic. It treats ideological struggle as the political education of its own cadres.) These, in summary,

are the views of the revolutionary and revisionist lines on the Left in countries under imperialist occupation during the Third Crisis Period. To summarise briefly, two types of deviation appear in these countries under the name of “proletarian revolutionary”:

1) The Revisionist, Classical “Orthodox” Line — its characteristics:

It sees the military and political aspects as though they were opposed to one another and underestimates the military aspect. It excessively exaggerates the political function of the urban proletariat by viewing it in the light of the Soviet model, in which the proletariat plays the key role. When armed propaganda gains prestige and these organisations lose prestige on the Left, they later open a branch which supposedly carries out guerrilla warfare. Naturally, this “guerrilla warfare” remains a fiction. Although a national crisis exists in the country, taking peaceful methods of struggle as fundamental, separating the stages of evolution and revolution by clear lines and rejecting the Vanguard War constitute **spontaneism**.

2) The militant left line which emerged as a reaction to this view and as a result of an incorrect interpretation of the Cuban Revolution — the Focoist View:

This view does not regard the relationship between city and countryside, armed propaganda and the other forms of struggle as a dialectical whole. It takes the countryside and armed propaganda alone and as an absolute whole, and disregards the secondary role of the cities and other forms of struggle. At the foundation of this view lies the assessment that the national crisis in underdeveloped countries is fully mature, and the belief that with the struggle of the vanguard the peasants will immediately take up arms and the struggle will in a short time be transformed into a People’s War.

Consequently, this line too is a “left” spontaneism. However, faced with the realities of life, the advocates of this view

recognised that their interpretation was unrealistic and rapidly abandoned it. Today, throughout the world, there are almost no armed-propaganda organisations remaining within the focoist conception.

PART THREE

THE HISTORICAL-SOCIAL-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF TURKEY AND QUESTIONS CONCERNING OUR PRACTICE

I. THE CENTRALISED FEUDAL OTTOMAN STATE

The Ottoman state must be considered in two stages: **a)** The Military Centralised Feudal Ottoman Empire **b)** The Comprador-Feudal Ottoman State Although Ottoman society did not possess a classical feudal structure, it was a feudal state. More precisely — especially after the fifteenth century — the social structure was a **military centralised-feudal structure**. The reaya tied to the land produced; the surplus product was appropriated by the central authority through secondary feudal lords. The fact that the strategic trade routes were in the hands of Ottoman feudalism, and external plunder, ensured that internal plunder — internal exploitation — was not acute. This situation, together with the fact that the existing feudal structure was not of the classical type, softened the internal contradictions to a certain extent.

(In other words, the contradiction between the productive forces and feudal relations of production did not sharpen to such an extent that it reached an extreme point within a short period.) Just as capitalism was beginning slowly to emerge and the contradictions were entering a process of sharpening, this development was prevented by the external intervention of European capitalism, and domestic capitalism was unable to develop. [8] This weak internal dynamism undoubtedly played an important role in Ottoman society becoming an area of exploitation for European capitalism. Ottoman society became an open market for European capitalism towards the end of the eighteenth century. (This situation was formalised with the 1838

Treaty of Balta Limanı.) These were also the years in which the central authority weakened and the power of local feudal units increased.

From the eighteenth century onwards, Ottoman society entered a rapid process of colonisation. The state rapidly became compradorised; embryonic domestic capitalism, unable to withstand competition from European capitalism, was scorched, and the economy acquired a feudal-comprador structure. One of the important characteristics of this feudal-comprador economic structure was the absence of a revolutionary bourgeoisie powerful enough to carry forward the process of national formation, mobilise the masses of the people who were dormant under the influence of the social, psychological and cultural formation arising from the character, traditions and customs of feudal or semi-feudal society, and spread progressive and democratic thought. This task was necessarily placed upon the shoulders of the petty bourgeoisie. [9]

In other words, the weak internal dynamism created by the non-classical character of Ottoman feudalism, together with the rigid centralism of the military-feudal state, produced the capacity of the broad privileged bureaucracy to act almost like a class. During the eighteenth century, as the centralised feudal state gradually lost its effectiveness internally and the power of the local notables increased, while external intervention forced the centralised feudal state into an alliance which compradorised it, two currents emerged within this privileged *kapıkulu* stratum. The privileged upper layer of the *kapıkulu*, which received shares from European capitalism, together with the Sultan's family, rapidly became compradorised.

The Galata bankers, the compradorised Palace and the upper section of the *kapıkulu* — the feudal-comprador state — formed a privileged reactionary alliance which received a considerable share from Western exploitation. The section of the *kapıkulu*

which was rapidly losing its former privileges through the plunder of Western European capitalism, and which longed for its former “glorious” and privileged days, was dissatisfied with this new course of the state. (The growth in the power of the local notables also played a role in this.) Longing for the old privileged days, they first took a position against the feudal-comprador current under the banner of “Ottomanism”, and later, under the influence of the current of nationalism developing in Europe, under the banner of “Turkism”.

However, because of the character of this stratum, its objectives were always blurred and its actions were not actions directed straight towards a definite result. European capitalism, by finding agents within this stratum, was frequently able quite easily to channel it towards false revolutionary objectives — such as Turanism — which in essence further expanded its own exploitation. At times it was even able to use this stratum as an instrument of threat against the reactions of feudalism.

In conclusion: **1)** At the stage when Europe benefited from geographical and technological discoveries and passed to capitalism, the Ottoman state lagged behind because of its weak internal dynamism. Consequently, it entered a process of colonisation. **2)** Because of the character of Ottoman feudalism — the lack of a clear and definite feudal-serf relationship in the classical sense, and the relatively mild and concealed character of internal exploitation — a tradition of rebellion did not develop among the labouring people. Since the centralised feudal state based itself upon external plunder and carried out internal exploitation in a relatively concealed and mild manner, it was able to appear to the people of Anatolia as a great father, a protector.

3) The fact that the centralised feudal authority was extremely strong — and the local notables very weak — established among the masses, almost to the level of a fixed idea, the belief in the

“invincibility” and “irresistibility” of state authority. To summarise, during the period before the feudal state became compradorised, the state appeared to the masses as the **“father of the people”** and the **“benevolent state”**. During the period of the comprador-feudal state, however, the image of the state in the eyes of the masses became tyrannical, while the belief in its “irresistibility” and “indestructibility” continued.

It was only during the First National War of Liberation that the successful actions of the **Kuvayı Milliye** against the comprador-feudal state, which had openly taken its place in the ranks of the occupying enemy, destroyed this image of the Ottoman state as tyrannical, “indestructible”, “irresistible” and “deriving its power from God”. 4) A revolutionary bourgeoisie arising from the womb of feudalism under the influence of internal and external dynamics was unable to develop. Its task was therefore necessarily assumed by petty-bourgeois intellectuals.

II. KEMALISM

Kemalism is the banner of national liberation of the revolutionary nationalists of a country under imperialist occupation. The essence of Kemalism is its stand against imperialism. It is absolutely wrong to regard Kemalism as a bourgeois ideology, as the ideology of the entire petty bourgeoisie, or as the ideology of the entire military-civilian intelligentsia. Kemalism is the anti-imperialist stand, on the basis of nationalism, of the most left-wing and most radical section of the petty bourgeoisie. For this reason, Kemalism is of the Left; it is national liberationism. Kemalism is the radical political position taken by revolutionary nationalists against imperialism. [10]

At a stage when there was no revolutionary, national-radical class movement to its left against imperialism within the country, and when there was no world socialist bloc, as there is today, supporting wars of national liberation throughout the world, the

radical nationalists who waged the world's first victorious People's War against imperialism constitute, in this respect, a particular characteristic of our country — one whose origins lie in the progressiveness of the lower Ottoman bureaucracy. We may describe the Kemalists as the **Jacobins of the military-civilian intelligentsia in our country.**

III. THE 1923 REVOLUTION, THE PERIODS 1923–42 AND 1942–50

The 1923 Revolution was a national revolution reflecting the character of the leading class. Imperialist occupation was broken, the comprador bourgeoisie was liquidated, imperialist exploitation was generally eliminated despite certain privileges granted to foreign capital, and the ideological and political power of feudalism was broken. This was a revolution whose content was bourgeois. (Stalin and Mao call the 1919–23 Anatolian movement a revolution. Likewise, Mao uses the concept of **National Democratic Revolution** for the Algerian Revolution, which in terms of content was not very different from the 1923 Anatolian Revolution.)

However, because of the character of the leading class, this revolution could not be made uninterrupted; it underwent pauses and even reversals, and eventually the country once again entered a process of colonisation. To say that the leader of the First National War of Liberation and of the 1923 Anatolian Revolution was the big bourgeoisie is contrary to the facts. [11] For in the imperialist period the bourgeoisie throughout the world has lost its revolutionary, nationalist and democratic character. Its ideology is no longer nationalism, but cosmopolitanism. It has thrown the banner of homeland and nation overboard. In the imperialist period, this banner is raised by proletarian revolutionaries on the basis of internationalism and patriotism,

and by petty-bourgeois radical elements on the basis of nationalism.

In the national and secular Republic of Turkey established in 1923, the administration was the joint rule of the petty bourgeoisie and all factions of the bourgeoisie, with the Kemalists occupying the upper levels of the hierarchical structure. The feudal notables were suppressed; however, although their political and ideological power was broken, their economic power could not be eliminated.

To summarise briefly, the feudal-comprador state mechanism was smashed and, in its place, under one-party rule, the dictatorship of the petty bourgeoisie was made dominant. Lenin describes the characteristics of a government in which the petty bourgeoisie occupies the highest level of the hierarchy as follows:

“...the placing of authority and state power at the service of maintaining this class at the head of the economic, social and political hierarchy, and the establishment of a petty-bourgeois dictatorship in place of the dictatorship of capital and feudalism allied with imperialism, and for this purpose the placing of the repressive state mechanism at the service of the interests and ideology of this class.”

This was the ideological and political character of the administration of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. Its administration on the economic plane may be summarised as follows: A national economy, based on small-scale production, founded upon private property and profit — as anything else would have been contrary to the nature of things — was created. It expanded the class and economic organisation of the petty bourgeoisie and increasingly aimed at developing a “national bourgeoisie”; in essence, however, it was an empty national economy. Concerning this type of economy, Lenin says:

“...The establishment of the urban economy upon the basis of light industry, or more precisely the establishment in the countryside and towns of a consumption economy [an

economy based upon the principle that ‘whatever is produced is consumed’ and serving primarily the consumption needs of the petty bourgeoisie; since the petty bourgeoisie retains a large part of the surplus value obtained from the labour of the proletariat and poor peasants, it possesses relatively considerable purchasing power].”

The Kemalists who occupied the upper levels of the administration in the years following 1923 were initially cautious in their economic relations with imperialism. On the one hand, while the comprador bourgeoisie, the extension of imperialism, was being liquidated, many strategic enterprises belonging to foreign monopolies were nationalised through purchase, and extreme caution was exercised in borrowing. On the other hand, Turkey nevertheless remained within the capitalist world and certain privileges were granted to foreign capital. The economic power of feudalism, whose ideological and political power had been considerably broken, could not be touched to any great extent.

In other words, because of its class character, the petty-bourgeois administration could not destroy all bridges with imperialism and feudalism.

“...The expansion of the organisation of the petty bourgeoisie, together with the establishment of a bridge which will preserve its class and political relations with feudalism.” —
Lenin

The leader of this administration, G. Mustafa Kemal, conscious that the road to an *İstiklâl-i Tam Türkiye* — a fully independent Turkey — passed through complete independence in every sphere, acted with great sensitivity concerning the national economy. Through customs protection, nationalisation, compulsory use of domestically produced goods, and similar measures, the Republican administration, which was attempting

to create a national capitalist class, used all the possibilities of the state for the development of national capitalism.

However, the gradually developing organisation of the petty bourgeoisie on the political and economic planes increasingly produced a bureaucratic bourgeoisie which collaborated with the commercial bourgeoisie and used the resources of the state in these areas. For example, the founders of İş Bankası, established to support and provide credit for national private investment, were politicians of the Republican period who had participated in the National War of Liberation, together with merchants and local notables. (See *Defence*.) The establishment of İş Bankası as a kind of politicians' bank marked the beginning of an "aphorism epidemic" in the Republican period. (F. R. Atay; see Doğan Avcıoğlu, *The Order of Turkey*.)

Gradually, the transformation of one section of the Republican administrators into a bureaucratic bourgeoisie, and their undertaking economic investments together with the commercial bourgeoisie and local notables, caused them slowly to increase their political influence over the state, which had initially opposed private cartelisation and trustification in the economy and foreign-capital assistance and collaboration. Gradually, privileged laws concerning this question were passed by parliament, "co-operation" with foreign capital developed, and, as a result of collaboration between the reformist bourgeoisie and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, a movement towards monopolisation in the economy began.

"In reality, the İş Bankası group, which controlled industry, involved itself in large investments and obtained monopolies, while at the same time establishing companies behind the scenes which imported the products of those factories and placed them on the market at the high prices maintained by the factories. This gradually led one wing of the reformist

bourgeoisie within İş Bankası to come to the fore and become monopolised.

“The most influential group in the emergence of the monopoly bourgeoisie in Turkey was the İş Bankası group.” (See *Defence*.) [12]

To summarise: We can summarise this period in three stages:

1) The Period 1923–32:

The stage in which the country was independent and its economy was a national consumption economy. This was the stage in which the bureaucratic bourgeoisie was born. It was also the stage in which the Kemalists had the greatest weight within the administration.

2) The Period 1932–42:

This was the stage in which the bureaucratic bourgeoisie united with the commercial bourgeoisie and foreign monopolies and slowly began to transform itself towards a monopoly bourgeoisie. This stratum benefited extensively from the economic shock created by the 1932 world crisis and began to grow fat. (See the 1932 National Protection Law; *Defence*.)

3) The Period 1942–50:

During the war years, particularly in the Saraçoğlu period, the Saraçoğlu administration’s freeing of prices created galloping inflation in the country. Under the cover of Marshall and Truman aid, American imperialism penetrated deeply into the country, and extensive privileges were granted to foreign capital.

This marked the beginning of the country’s process of recolonisation.

IV. THE PERIOD 1950–71

These were the years in which American imperialism left its mark upon the country in every sphere, from the economy to politics, from culture to art, and in which it itself became part of the

oligarchy. (Imperialism becoming an internal phenomenon.) During these years, imperialist relations of production became dominant even in the most remote corners of the country. To put it briefly, the petty-bourgeois national economy was transformed in accordance with the requirements of imperialist exploitation and became the non-national economy of the oligarchy in which imperialist relations of production predominated. The petty-bourgeois dictatorship gave way to oligarchic dictatorship, and the national ideology and politics of the petty bourgeoisie gave way to the non-national ideology and politics of the oligarchy.

It was during this period that the domestic monopoly bourgeoisie, which had emerged from the beginning integrated with the imperialist monopolies, developed and became widespread in the real sense. Especially after 1960, parallel to the deepening and spread of imperialist relations of production, the domestic monopoly bourgeoisie also became the principal support of imperialism within the oligarchy.

However, despite everything, during this period a relative balance continued to exist in the country between the oligarchy and the petty bourgeoisie. In other words, during this period the oligarchy did not yet completely dominate the state. For this reason, revolutionary nationalists, particularly within the bureaucracy and the army, were able to continue exercising a certain influence during this period. But especially after 1963, as domestic and foreign capital became increasingly centralised and concentrated in our country, and as commodity production penetrated even into the villages, the oligarchy gradually increased its power. Finally, in 1971, by drawing the right and centre wings of the petty bourgeoisie into its own ranks, it dealt a major blow to the power of the Kemalists within the army and the bureaucracy.

V. 12 MARCH AND THE CHANGING RELATIONSHIP OF CLASSES

With the 12 March coup, a complete change took place in the combination of classes in the country. The relative balance between the revolutionary nationalists and the oligarchy was destroyed, and the oligarchy came to dominate all the institutions of the state completely. The petty-bourgeois revolutionary tradition of the Turkish army, whose origins lay in the Ottoman state and in the twenty-five-year petty-bourgeois administration of the Republican period, came to an end, and the army became directly an instrument of the colonial policy of imperialism and the oligarchy. (This must not be interpreted as meaning that no revolutionary nationalists remained within the Turkish Army. The consequences of social events do not appear all at once. Revolutionary nationalists will continue to exist for some time within the army and bureaucracy. But they have now lost their former strength.

And they will increasingly be rapidly liquidated.) The occurrence of the 12 March military coup in our country was not accidental. In general, it was a result of imperialism's Third Crisis Period and, in particular, of the reflection in our country under Yankee occupation of the terrible crisis into which the American economy had entered since 1967. The militarisation of the regime in our country and the increase in its aggression were the reflection in "Little America" of American imperialism's extraordinary increase in the militarisation of its economy and its intensification of terror at home and abroad. The crisis of American imperialism reaching an extreme point, and the increase in the rapacious exploitation of the monopolies in our country, caused imperialist relations of production to become deeply rooted.

This, in turn, greatly deepened the social, economic and political crisis in our country. Our currency was devalued. Prices rose to an unprecedented level. The poverty and misery of the labouring people reached an extreme point. America made two recommendations to the Süleyman Demirel government in Turkey. It recommended that it adopt a series of “rationalisation” measures which would increase American exploitation in the country — and therefore favour the collaborationist monopoly bourgeoisie — (see OECD Reports), and that it suppress the rapidly developing democratic struggle by bringing the army into government. Since one foot of the Süleyman Demirel administration rested upon the non-monopolised profiteering Anatolian bourgeoisie and the remnants of feudalism, it was unable properly to implement these measures. It was unable to provide “peace and order” for the monopolies.

It was therefore overthrown. And a military dictatorship was established. Thus, on the one hand, a series of “reforms” would be carried out which would further increase the exploitation of the rapacious monopolies and discipline exploitation at the expense of the other ruling classes and strata. On the other hand, revolutionary nationalists within the army and bureaucracy would be extensively purged, the reactions created by the appalling increase in the misery of our people would be suppressed through terror, and “peace and order” would be secured for the rapacious exploitation of the monopolies. We can summarise the consequences and stages of the 12 March military coup in order as follows:

- 1) The military dictatorship in our country is the latest form assumed by the occupation of our country by American imperialism. This means the shelving of representative democracy and the reduction of the role of the parties of the existing order to a minimum. The Turkish Army has now become the open and

direct instrument of the policy of repression conducted by the oligarchy against our people. [13]

However, the characteristic determining the lower-ranking officers of the Turkish army is nationalism. The majority are of petty-bourgeois labouring origin and come from military high schools. For ten years imperialism, working systematically, has extensively altered the petty-bourgeois revolutionary tradition of the army and, with 12 March, has carried out extensive purges. In the large Turkish army, which is not organised in a form suitable for civil war as in Latin America, traces of the revolutionary tradition may continue to be seen for some time. But the oligarchy is rapidly transforming the army, through purges and reorganisation, into an army of civil war and into its direct striking force.

2) Taking into account the strength of the petty bourgeoisie in our country, the oligarchy carried out the 12 March coup under “Atatürkist”, “nationalist”, “progressive” and “reformist” slogans which would not directly antagonise them, and the First Erim Government paid particular attention to appearing as a reformist government. This was a method employed to break the alliance between the radical wing of the military-civilian intelligentsia and the right wing, to isolate it and at least neutralise it through these slogans, and to draw the “neutral” and right wings within the bureaucracy and army into its own ranks. Because of the relative balance existing in the country, the oligarchy was compelled to employ this method.

For, as a result of the historical development of the country, the Turkish Army had not yet become the striking force of the oligarchy in the same way as the armies of Latin America, nor had it been organised in that form. In order to use this mechanism as a direct instrument of its own policy, it was necessary to proceed under such slogans. In addition, in order to expand its exploitation still further — and naturally also in favour of the collaborationist

monopoly bourgeoisie — that is, in order to discipline exploitation, American imperialism also needed the support of the petty-bourgeois intellectuals within the bureaucracy and army.

That is to say, this operation to discipline exploitation greatly disturbed the other reactionary classes and strata which, although they had lost their former influence within the oligarchy, still possessed a certain strength and, in particular, constituted a considerable majority in parliament — the commercial and agrarian bourgeoisie and the remnants of feudalism. They therefore initially reacted very strongly against these yellow “reforms”. *Milliyet*, in which the theory of imperialism and the domestic monopoly bourgeoisie was formulated, summarised this reality as follows:

“...the group constituting the leading nucleus of the big bourgeoisie also possesses more advanced views than certain sections of the private sector.

“The demands particularly disturb traditional commercial and agrarian capital, since they will affect them in a way that shakes their power within the pre-capitalist environment.

“However, the capitalist mode of production brought about by existing conditions makes it necessary to adopt more rational measures in Turkey.

“As early as the first days of 1970, the OECD had recommended a series of rationalisation measures of this kind for Turkey.”
(Ali Gevgilili, *Turkish Capitalism and Its New Demands*.)

The First Erim Government — the pure government of imperialism and the domestic monopoly bourgeoisie — attempted to break the resistance of these pre-capitalist classes and strata to the “reforms” aimed at disciplining exploitation by presenting itself as “progressive, Atatürkist and reformist”, gaining the support of petty-bourgeois intellectual circles and using these circles as an instrument of pressure against those strata. And in the first period it succeeded in gaining the support even of the

most radical petty-bourgeois wing on this question. **3)** However, armed propaganda exposed the true face and aims of the First Erim Government and revealed it to be the most reactionary, most ferocious and terrorist administration of the oligarchy.

It thus overturned the game of American imperialism and the collaborationist domestic bourgeoisie, tore down its mask and disrupted its gradual plan. By causing open fascism, concealed beneath a “progressive, reformist and Atatürkist” appearance, to be born prematurely, it opened the eyes of public opinion, including petty-bourgeois intellectual circles. Today, almost all petty-bourgeois revolutionary intellectuals clearly understand the character of the First Erim Government.

4) Having lost the support of petty-bourgeois intellectual public opinion, the imperialist-collaborationist monopoly-bourgeois duo was this time compelled to make concessions on a series of rationalisation measures — the yellow reforms — aimed at disciplining exploitation, and once again reached agreement around common interests with the other reactionary classes and strata which would be harmed by these measures. Today there is a complete atmosphere of celebration within the oligarchy. The Second Erim Government is the government of this agreement and of peace among the reactionaries. These, then, are the changes which took place in the combination of classes in our country with 12 March. In crude terms, the meaning of all this is that our country has become no different from the countries of Latin America.

The limited democratic environment of the 1961–70 period has now passed into history, and the relative balance has been destroyed. Turkey has become a country in which imperialist occupation and exploitation are maintained through the Turkish Army, every kind of movement for economic and democratic aims is silenced through terror, all legal roads are blocked and revolutionary politics is silenced by arms. From now on, because

all legal roads have been blocked and the policy of repression against the labouring masses is being carried out in the most brutal manner, the principal form of struggle for establishing dialogue with the masses and drawing them into the ranks of revolution is **armed propaganda**. The principal specific differences between our country and the Latin American countries and other underdeveloped countries are as follows:

(Many secondary factors may also be added alongside these fundamental factors.)

1) THE GEOPOLITICAL POSITION OF OUR COUNTRY

Since this is a military and tactical question, let us say only this much: For revolutionaries, the geopolitical position of our country is a very important advantage. The disadvantage is that anti-communist propaganda is based upon the historical “enmity towards the Muscovite”.

2) THE CHARACTERISTIC CREATED BY HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Because of the distinguishing characteristics of the Ottoman feudal structure — its rigid centralism, powerful state apparatus and weak internal dynamism — the concept of the state became established in the mind of the Anatolian people as something irresistible and indestructible. Likewise, the broad bureaucratic mechanism and one-party conception of the petty-bourgeois dictatorship which held power in the country until 1950, and the petty-bourgeois domination from above downwards, reinforced the centuries-old established belief that state authority was an “irresistible, invincible and indestructible” force. Furthermore, the Anatolian people, crushed and suffocated under the pressure of the central state authority, remain politically passive within the rigid moulds of fatalist thought, with the belief that “this is how it has always been and this is how it will continue”.

(In imperialism's Third Crisis Period, the artificial balance established in underdeveloped countries between the oligarchy and the reactions of the masses against the existing order is much stronger in our country because of its historical and social characteristics.) Having been deceived and cheated for years, the people no longer believe in words, speeches and so on. For this reason, they do not believe what is said to them until they see those who say it putting it into action themselves. After the Second War of Redistribution, and especially after 1960, the economic, social and political crisis created by American hidden occupation drove class polarisation and the dissatisfaction of the labouring masses in the country to an extreme point.

Today, in many parts of Anatolia, the conscious sections of the people have lost hope in all the parties of the existing order and have come to understand that the only way to escape this misery is to rebel. The conscious sections of our people are aware of how the landlords, bosses and moneybags collaborating with the American "infidel" exploit them to the bone. Hostility towards wealth among the masses has reached an extreme point. The only thing they do not understand is the hollowness and rottenness of the oligarchic state apparatus which, in their eyes, they magnify into an invincible force. (The oligarchy continuously emphasises precisely this question through noise, intimidation, shows of force and demagoguery in order further to reinforce, almost to the level of a fixed idea, the belief in the consciousness of the masses that "the state cannot be resisted".)

For this reason, five or six revolutionary military actions, despite the absence of propaganda around them, created profound astonishment and sympathy among the masses. In no underdeveloped country, including the countries of Latin America, has a guerrilla struggle still at its embryonic stage possessed such influence and prestige among the masses. The reasons for this are clear. Firstly, in no other underdeveloped

country has the mistaken belief that “the state cannot be resisted because it is invincible” taken shape in the minds of the people in the way that it has in the minds of the Anatolian people.

Secondly, hatred towards parliament, the parties and politicians of the existing order, and aversion towards speeches and propaganda that remain merely words, exist among the labouring masses of our country at a level almost incomparable with that among the masses of other underdeveloped countries. Thirdly, the conscious sections of our people are tired of the “leftists” who follow a passivist and tailist method of work and have understood that nothing useful will come from them. For years this section has longed for a militant organisation which takes the question of revolution seriously and to which it can attach its hopes. (This is also the source of the present prestige of the THKP-C.)

For these reasons, in order for revolutionary propaganda to be effective and for the masses to be drawn into the ranks of revolution, armed propaganda is even more necessary and indispensable for our country than for all other underdeveloped countries, including the countries of Latin America. In order for the dissatisfaction and stirrings of the masses against the existing order to turn into action, we must first be convincing. We must show them through our own actions what we tell them. Revolutionaries must above all, on the one hand, demonstrate to the masses through their military actions that the repressive organisation of the ruling classes is not as it has been shaped in their minds for centuries, that in reality it is rotten and hollow and that all its power consists of noise, intimidation and demagogy.

On the other hand, in order to make the masses receptive to revolutionary propaganda and through this to bring revolutionary consciousness to them and draw them into the ranks of revolution, they must conduct propaganda based upon military

actions. Even at the risk of repetition, let us briefly summarise what we have said:

As a result of the economic, social and historical development of our country — in other words, because of the character of the state in previous periods — an artificial balance has always existed between the reactions of our people and the state. The changes which imperialism made in its methods of exploitation during the Third Crisis Period also aim at creating such an artificial balance. From this standpoint, American imperialism found extremely favourable ground in our country.

Therefore, the principal method of struggle for breaking this artificial balance — which is much stronger than in all other underdeveloped countries, including the Latin American countries — is not peaceful forms of struggle but armed propaganda. Passivist and revisionist forms of struggle can do nothing except maintain this artificial balance. And for all the reasons we have listed from the beginning, as a result of the February–May urban guerrilla actions, the dissatisfaction felt by the conscious sections of our people towards the existing order was transformed into revolutionary sympathy. [14] Everything new is initially met with reaction. Gradually it takes root and is accepted. Although the counter-propaganda conducted by the oligarchy throughout the country was initially effective to a certain degree, it has now lost its former effectiveness.

The hatred of our people towards the existing order is at such a level that five or six military actions conducted against the oligarchy immediately created considerable prestige in favour of the revolutionaries. At the stage when there was a concrete movement towards the armed revolutionary front and the struggle was about to make a complete qualitative leap, armed propaganda was struck while still in its embryonic form. Our task at present is to create among the masses who believe in the

necessity of changing the existing order in one form or another the confidence that such a change is possible.

We can create this confidence by demonstrating within revolutionary practice itself to the unorganised masses — who, from the perspective of idealist thought, see the power of the oligarchic state as “gigantically” strong and invincible — that the central authority is in reality not as powerful as it appears, that it is hollow, and that all its strength rests upon noise and intimidation.

Yes, we must show the masses that the armed revolutionary front fighting against the oligarchy is strong; in one sense, through a show of strength, we must wear down the enemy and break its morale. The only road to this is a series of military victories by the vanguard. This is the only way to prevent the potential that has been created from disappearing and instead gradually to expand it. A central revolutionary publication can only become a question after a series of military actions. (This must not be interpreted as meaning that revolutionary publication will be suspended during this period. During this period, revolutionary publications based upon military actions will of course be directed towards the masses.

However, at this stage they will not be periodical. In addition, pamphlets intended to educate political cadres and illuminate our practice will also be published.) Agitation and propaganda, whether carried out through publications or through propagandists, must be based upon something which exists. Today several so-called revolutionary publications are being issued. From time to time, various “leftist” factions distribute declarations calling upon the masses to take up arms. What effect do they have? Their effect is nothing. Because this is propaganda of the abstract. The masses want to see those who call them with a series of sharp words to rise up and take up arms themselves actually engaged in the struggle. The people of Turkey in particular attach

absolutely no importance to abstract propaganda, to “we shall do this, we shall do that”.

Since 1961 the masses have become accustomed to such journals and declarations. “Words alone do not move the cheese ship.” The masses want to see their vanguard itself in the struggle. They must see this in order to believe in your sincerity. And even this is not enough. They must believe that you are an important force before they will incline towards you, before their sympathy turns into confidence and their confidence gradually into support. The passivists in our country say in particular:

“The actions that have been carried out create sympathy among the masses, but that is all...”

That is true. Although the masses feel sympathy towards us, they do not yet actively support us and have not yet entered the struggle. This is entirely natural. What was expected? That as a result of five or six military actions the masses would rise up and make a revolution in the country? This is proof that these passivists regard revolutionary struggle as a short process and understand nothing of social development. We have said until today, and we still say:

The road of revolution is rough, winding and steep; it is a struggle of decades. Today we are still only at the beginning of the war. And even this sympathy among the masses at the present embryonic stage is a great gain for the armed revolutionary front. For the road to support passes through sympathy and confidence. The masses will first feel sympathy towards the armed revolutionary front. But because of the central state authority which they magnify in their eyes, they will watch the actions with hesitation and great curiosity, believing that the armed revolutionary front will be crushed. As guerrilla warfare is successfully conducted, they will see that the armed revolutionary front is an important force, that it cannot be destroyed or

eliminated. Then their sympathy will turn into confidence. This is the second stage.

The transformation of sympathy into confidence does not mean that the support of the majority has been won. Only after guerrilla warfare has been made continuous and stable will confidence slowly turn into support. Everything depends upon our determined, convinced and consistent militancy. We must never become discouraged. Blows and defeats must not create discouragement; on the contrary, they must sharpen our revolutionary conviction and anger. They must enable us to fight more consistently and with fewer mistakes.

3) THE CHARACTERISTIC CREATED BY THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF OUR COUNTRY AND THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ORGANISATION OF THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE

The economic and political organisation of the petty bourgeoisie in our country is stronger than in the other underdeveloped countries under imperialist occupation. For this reason, the oligarchy in our country has until now necessarily conducted its affairs without coming too sharply into conflict with this stratum. Even after 12 March, despite increasing its ferocity and terror, it still does not openly reject legality and democracy in the manner of the reactionary administrations in Pakistan, Greece or Brazil, and in appearance makes certain minor concessions. Secondly, compared with most other underdeveloped countries under imperialist occupation, our country possesses stronger medium and light industry, even though it is one hundred per cent externally dependent.

Alongside the historical-social-political and psychological factors which we stated under the second fundamental characteristic, these two factors also play a principal role in pacifying the spontaneous explosions of the masses. This also provides the revisionists and passivists on the Left with a

justification for their peaceful and conciliatory so-called struggles. The passivists attempt to justify and excuse their conciliatory and capitulationist position by saying:

“Our country is not like the countries of the Far East or Latin America; the masses there possess a tradition of rebellion. In our country, however, the situation is different; there is no such tradition.

“Therefore, let us first raise the consciousness of and organise the masses through forms of struggle other than armed action — that is, let us first achieve the minimum (!) organisation necessary for armed struggle — and then we shall begin the armed struggle.” [15]

To a certain extent, although not significantly, this creates confusion on the Left. Because this revisionist and passivist interpretation is very logical (!) according to formal logic, it confuses those who are not yet able to examine questions in the light of dialectical materialism. Guevara explains in the following way how the economic and social conditions of countries like ours constitute a material basis for the static organisation — institutionalism — of revisionism and passivism:

“In countries where there is intensive urbanisation and, even if not genuine industrialisation, a more or less developed light and medium industry, it is more difficult to form guerrilla groups.

“The ideological influence of the cities restrains guerrilla warfare by creating hopes of mass struggles organised through peaceful methods.

“This creates a kind of ‘organisationalism’ or ‘institutionalism’ [revisionist organisation], characterised during periods which may be considered more or less ‘normal’ by the fact that the living conditions of the people are not quite so harsh as under other circumstances.”

4) THE CHARACTERISTIC CREATED BY THE 1919-23 MOVEMENT

Among the people of Turkey, who experienced open imperialist occupation and waged a victorious anti-imperialist war of liberation, anti-imperialist sentiments and aversion towards foreigners are much stronger than in the countries of Latin America. These sentiments constitute a very important potential for revolutionaries. An organisation which takes armed propaganda as its basis and is able correctly to explain the meaning of hidden occupation can place the potential created by these sentiments and this aversion upon a class basis. (If this potential is not worked upon correctly, the oligarchy can use it against revolutionaries as an instrument of its demagogic weapon of anti-communism. Indeed, today the oligarchy is attempting particularly to exploit this question.

In addition, the oligarchy also uses this issue as an instrument of exploitation in order to set the Turkish and Kurdish peoples of our country against one another.) These, in summary, are the fundamental characteristics which our country shares with the other underdeveloped countries under imperialist hidden occupation, and the fundamental characteristics specific to our country which distinguish it from them and which illuminate our revolutionary practice.

PART FOUR

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST AND ANTI-OLIGARCHIC REVOLUTION

Until today, strategy has always been misunderstood on the Turkish Left; the **strategic objective**, the **plan of strategy**, and **strategy itself** have continually been confused with one another. As is known, the strategic objective is the ideological, political, social and economic platform for resolving the fundamental contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production. Since monopoly capitalism in our country did not develop through its own internal dynamics, and since the domestic monopoly bourgeoisie emerged from the beginning integrated with imperialism, our strategic objective is the **anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic revolution**. (The concept of the anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic revolution is, as a concept, not very different from the National Democratic Revolution.

However, it expresses a broader content and character. This concept is more consistent in terms of expressing the form of imperialist occupation in imperialism's Third Crisis Period. The concept of the National Democratic Revolution generally characterises the period in which the old methods of imperialist exploitation predominated.) Before the Second War of Redistribution, as a result of the imperialist method of exploitation, the domestic ruling class allied with imperialism in the underdeveloped countries was feudalism. (The comprador bourgeoisie is nothing other than an extension of imperialism.) As we explained in detail in Part Two, imperialist control and physical presence were generally concentrated in coastal regions, ports, strategic points and principal communications centres. The central authority was very weak.

Three-quarters of the country and of the population were under the control of weak local feudal statelets, which also had contradictions among themselves. Since capitalism was not dominant, urbanisation, transport and communications were weak. For the country, imperialism was an external phenomenon, while the social process was a feudal process. For this reason, the principal contradiction within the country was between the weak feudal units controlling three-quarters of the country and population and the peasants who were in a semi-serf condition. (**Democratic struggle.**)

At the stage when the spontaneous struggles and explosions of the peasants were organised, proletarian revolutionary consciousness was brought to them, and the peasant army established under the leadership of the proletarian party began to break the power of the weak local feudal authorities, establish base areas and gradually bring the country under its control, imperialism occupied the country as a whole in order to protect its exploitation. At that point, the principal contradiction in the country was between imperialism and the whole nation, apart from a handful of traitors. (**National Struggle.**) While during the period of civil war the struggle was generally conducted on a class plane and under class slogans, during the stage of revolutionary national war the struggle is conducted on the national plane and under national slogans.

In imperialism's Third Crisis Period, however, in countries like ours the social process is not a feudal process. Nor is imperialism merely an external phenomenon. The extension of imperialist relations of production into even the most remote corners of the country has made imperialism an internal phenomenon as well. Weak local feudal authorities have been replaced by a powerful oligarchic state authority within which imperialism itself directly participates. So much so that, in these countries, imperialism, through organisations such as the CIA, FBI, etc., can whenever it

wishes make every kind of intervention and arrangement in accordance with its own interests — from changes of power among the various factions of the oligarchy to directing the policy of repression conducted by the oligarchy against our people.

Therefore, in this age of nuclear striking forces, imperialist control over these countries is not merely economic but also political, ideological and military in character. For example, in Turkey, which is within the NATO military organisation, American imperialism has established complete hegemony extending from directing the oligarchic dictatorship to the economy of the country. (This is the essence of **hidden occupation**.) For this reason, in our country it is in practice impossible to separate the domestic ruling classes and American imperialism from one another by sharp lines. The principal contradiction in our country is between the **oligarchy and our people**. [16] Since imperialism itself is directly situated within the oligarchy, the revolutionary war will not be conducted solely on the class plane. The struggle will be conducted on both the **class and national planes**.

Undoubtedly, until the militarised power of the oligarchic state apparatus proves insufficient and American armies openly enter the war, the class aspect will predominate. The revisionists and passivists in our country overlook the change which imperialism made in its methods of exploitation after the Second War of Redistribution — that is, the economic, political, ideological and military essence of hidden occupation.

Therefore, like the revolutionaries of underdeveloped countries in the periods when the old method of imperialist exploitation predominated, they regard imperialism as an external phenomenon and separate it from the ruling classes by sharp lines. Whether they are opportunists who locate the principal contradiction between feudalism and the peasants, or opportunists who locate it between the domestic monopoly bourgeoisie and the labouring masses, through these assessments

they are playing into the hands of American imperialism. The American occupiers themselves use all their strength and every kind of subtle method to conceal their occupation. This sharp separation does nothing other than reinforce, “from the Left”, the efforts of American imperialism in this direction. Determining the strategic objective does not resolve the question.

Determining the strategic objective means determining the direction of the principal blow of the revolution. In other words, it is only one part of the strategic plan. For this reason, the question does not end simply with the correct determination of the strategic objective; the **principal forces, leading force and reserves** must also be correctly determined. Our revolution will achieve victory through **People’s War**.

However, as we have stated before, because of the historical conditions in which we live and the characteristics of our country, People’s War will pass through the stage of **Vanguard War**. In the light of the **Politicised Military War Strategy**, the revolutionary route will follow the following course:

Stage 1: Creation of the urban guerrilla.

Stage 2: Development of the urban guerrilla; creation of the rural guerrilla and a show of force.

During these first two stages, the psychological and war-of-attrition aspect of the struggle will predominate.

Stage 3: Expansion of the urban guerrilla; development of the rural guerrilla.

Stage 4: Expansion of the rural guerrilla.

WHY WAS GUERRILLA WARFARE BEGUN WITH THE URBAN GUERRILLA?

There are two reasons why we began the war with the urban guerrilla.

A) Objective Reasons

a) It was more possible in the cities to make the existence of a militant organisation known to the masses. For, in terms of opportunities for propaganda and public recognition, the city was initially more advantageous than the countryside. **b)** The revolutionary acts of violence and mass actions carried out by **Revolutionary Youth (Dev-Genç)** in the large cities — even if in the petty-bourgeois sense — had created a suitable environment in which armed actions of a harder and higher level would not appear strange.

B) Subjective Reason

Because we handled matters loosely during the period of preparation for armed propaganda, and because we were late in taking up arms, we lacked the material and moral preconditions necessary for rural guerrilla warfare, such as equipment, experience and ammunition. It was because of these objective and subjective conditions that our Party began guerrilla warfare with the urban guerrilla. From now on, after a long period of inactivity, our Party will follow this previously determined route. According to the **Politicised Military War Strategy**, we can list the leading and principal forces of the revolution and its reserves as follows:

LEADING FORCE: THE PROLETARIAT

On the question of the leading force, since our Party has determined that the revolution will achieve victory through People's War, it has taken the **ideological leadership of the proletariat** as fundamental. (This follows from the fact that the principal area is the countryside.) At the stage of the Vanguard War, our Party makes no distinction between those who come from labouring-class origins and those who do not. What matters is that the fighters are **professional revolutionaries**. As the war expands, special attention will be paid to ensuring that labouring

people increasingly predominate, including at the levels of leadership.

PRINCIPAL FORCES: THE PEASANTS

(All peasant elements apart from the remnants of feudalism and the agrarian bourgeoisie.) In order:

- The rural proletariat
- The rural semi-proletariat
- Poor peasants
- Middle peasants

The urban proletariat is, of course, also among the principal mass forces of the revolution. However, its decisive role in the revolution comes at the stage when the revolution rises. And it will have the final word.

“New forces continuously and gradually join the struggle begun by small fighting nuclei [the Vanguard War], mass movements begin to emerge, the old order gradually wears away and collapses; it is precisely at this point that the working class and the urban masses determine the fate of the struggle.” — Che Guevara

DIRECT RESERVES

- Kemalist intellectual circles
- The world socialist bloc
- National liberation movements in colonial countries, particularly in the Middle East

INDIRECT RESERVES

- The right wing of the petty bourgeoisie
- Democratic Western countries and public opinion
- Contradictions within the oligarchy itself

The order within both the direct and indirect reserves changes according to circumstances.

PART FIVE

THE TURKISH LEFT AFTER 12 MARCH

As we stated in the Introduction, as a result of the objective and historical conditions of the country, revisionism and passivism became the effective and directing force within the “socialist front”. Because the economic and political organisation of the petty bourgeoisie in Turkey was strong and widespread, because our country remained under a petty-bourgeois dictatorship until the 1940s, and because the petty bourgeoisie continued to possess a certain influence within the bureaucracy and army until 12 March, petty-bourgeois revolutionism acquired a broad field in our country. Because of the worldwide prestige of socialism in the third quarter of the twentieth century, the radical petty bourgeoisie in underdeveloped countries entered the political arena under the name of socialism.

The strength of petty-bourgeois radicalism in our country and its influence upon the state created within the “socialist front”, in one form or another and under various appearances, the hope of relying upon passivism and petty-bourgeois radicalism. In this environment, the socialist movement in our country was unable to become independent. It remained continually intertwined with petty-bourgeois radicalism and attempted to develop beneath the umbrella of legality provided by the petty bourgeoisie. It was in this environment that the military coup of 12 March took place. The relative balance which had existed since 1923 — first in favour of the revolutionary front and, after 1946, against it — was destroyed.

The oligarchy in the country broke the political power of the petty bourgeoisie, established its domination over all institutions of the state and dispersed the Left through a policy of repression

and violence. The Left, which before 12 March consisted of seven or eight factions, is today divided principally into two camps:

- **The armed revolutionary front**
- **The passivist front — the extension of the oligarchy on the Left**

The atmosphere before 12 March, when opposition to armed propaganda and guerrilla warfare was regarded as treachery and almost everyone constantly spoke of war and passing to armed action, and the atmosphere after 12 March are like two different worlds. Many of the legal period's sharp "guerrilla experts", who understood the highest form of revolutionism as appearing the most militant, who never ceased speaking of armed propaganda and who accused everyone who did not defend armed propaganda of treachery, after 12 March — when no road remained except taking up arms — began saying that before 12 March they had not thought sufficiently about the question of revolution, that armed propaganda was in fact not an organising force and was wrong, that previously they had not understood the questions properly, and that only after 12 March had they learned the theory.

They then clung with both hands to the line of international revisionism which they had previously cursed as passivism. This is entirely natural. For every blow brings right-wing and passivist tendencies to the surface. (The defeat of 1905 temporarily strengthened the Menshevik line.) After 12 March, two opposite developments took place within the Turkish Left. On the one hand, many new and consistent elements, generally coming from various sections of the people outside the student movement, gathered around armed propaganda. On the other hand, some of the sharp "attractive celebrities" of the legal period voluntarily enrolled themselves in the passivist front, saying that they had thought incorrectly in the past.

This development on the Left also affected our Party, and a small group from within our Party, describing our Party's ideological, theoretical and strategic views and actions as the theory and practice of Narodism and anarchism, became the extensions of the passivist front within the Party. According to these right-wing elements:

- Party and Front Communiqués No. 1, which explain the ideological-strategic foundations of the THKP-C, and the articles entitled “The Positioning of Classes in the Revolution” in *KURTULUŞ*, are theories of anarchism, focoism and Narodism.
- The February–May guerrilla actions — that is, the armed revolutionary actions which introduced our Party to the masses — are the practice of this Narodnik ideology. At their foundation lies a left-opportunist ideology.
- The THKP's war of the revolutionary vanguard of the people is a duel between a handful of men and the oligarchy.
- The Politicised Military War Strategy is a focoist strategy. Armed propaganda is wrong, is not an organising force and can never be taken as fundamental.
- In the period in which we find ourselves, the revolutionary task is to organise around a central publication and direct the economic and democratic struggles of the workers.

These, in essence, are the criticisms put forward by the right-wing line within our Party. These criticisms are exactly the same as those directed against our Party by the passivist Kivilcimlı and Şafak groups. (This article, which explains the views of our Party, is also the criticism of these passivist views.) This small group, which followed a course contrary to the ideological-practical principles of our Party, was expelled from the Party by a majority vote of the members of the Party General Committee. We consider it an unnecessary effort to criticise their objections one by one separately. The decision of the Party General Committee is that the line of our Party is the proletarian revolutionary line created by

the application of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of the world and our country.

And its actions are the reflection in practice of this Leninist ideological and political determination. No matter how much the terror and violence of the oligarchy increase, our Party will continue guerrilla warfare.

The road of our Party is the road of revolution.

The road of revolution is the road of our Party.

The war will continue from where it left off after the May blow. It is not programmes or glittering words that make an organisation an organisation and introduce it to the masses, but **revolutionary action.**

**LONG LIVE THE ARMED WAR OF LIBERATION OF OUR
PEOPLE!**

**LONG LIVE THE THKP-C!
WAR UNTIL LIBERATION!**

NOTES TO UNINTERRUPTED REVOLUTION II-III

[1] In this atmosphere, the oligarchy's 12 March coup came and scattered all the false heroes, the "militant Don Quixotes", of the environment.

[*] The original text reads exactly as follows:

"This movement sprouted, developed and strengthened in an environment in which revisionism had been effective for many years. Therefore, no matter how tightly matters are handled, at the beginning it will inevitably carry, to one degree or another, the traces of this environment. To think otherwise is idealism. These remnants will be cast off in struggle, through struggle."

[2] Proceeding from this, international revisionism argues that the essence of imperialism has changed and that, therefore, one of the universal theses of Leninism — the thesis of "revolution based upon violence" — is no longer valid.

But what has changed is not the essence, but the form. Until imperialism collapses as a system, the universal theses of Leninism will preserve their validity.

[3] The American war machine has grown to a strange and excessive degree.

In October 1961, the American magazine *Nation* published Fred Cook's study, *Juggernaut: The Warfare State*, as a special issue.

"The industrial-military complex — that is, the group of professional military men and the capitalists enriched through war materials — is increasingly determining American policy.

"The billions flowing into it give the Pentagon an economic power extending throughout the entire country.

"The assets of the armed forces are three times greater than the combined assets of United States Steel, American Telephone and Telegraph, Metropolitan Life Insurance, General Motors and Standard Oil of New Jersey.

“The number of those receiving wages and salaries from the Department of Defense is three times greater than the total number of workers and employees working in these great companies.”

According to Cook, approximately 21 billion dollars of the 1960–61 military budget was spent on purchasing war materials and military equipment. These orders and undertakings made the American economy tightly dependent upon the military programme. This was the situation in 1960–61. During the last ten years, however, the militarisation of the economy has reached a terrible level.

[4] At this stage, organisations “concerned with money operations”, such as banks, are no longer sufficient for the financial oligarchy.

In this sphere, organisations such as pension funds, reserve funds and insurance companies are increasing their power.

[5] According to so-called “socialist” analyses which fail to take this change into account, Turkey is not like other colonial countries.

According to some of them, occupation is even relative. While some derive strategies of socialist revolution from this incorrect assessment, others draw pictures of revolution corresponding to the Soviet model.

[6] Che Guevara, one of the victorious proletarian revolutionaries of the Third Crisis Period, describes the change made by imperialism in its method of exploitation during this period — that is, neo-colonialism — in the following way in his article “Cuba: An Exception or Vanguard in the Struggle Against Imperialism?”, published in *Verde Olivo* in 1961:

“...It is also in their [the imperialists’] interest to destroy the old feudal structures which still remain standing and to establish alliances with the most advanced elements of the national bourgeoisie.

“They have no objection to carrying out certain financial reforms, making certain changes in the system of land ownership, and undertaking moderate industrialisation preferably based upon consumer goods whose technology and raw materials are imported from the United States.

“The most perfect formula is the collaboration of the national bourgeoisie with foreign interests; together they establish new industries in that country, obtain customs concessions for them and thereby completely eliminate competing imperialist countries, while at the same time ensuring that the profits thus obtained are taken out of the country under the protection of loose foreign-exchange regulations.

“Through this very new and more intelligent system of exploitation, the [nationalist] country itself assumes responsibility for protecting the interests of the United States by adopting privileged customs tariffs which permit enormous profits. [Naturally the Americans take these profits back to their own country.]

“With competition thereby eliminated, the price of the commodity is determined by the monopolies.

“All of this is reflected in the Alliance for Progress project. This alliance is nothing other than an attempt by imperialism to distribute a small part of the profits among the national exploiting classes in order to halt the development of the conditions for revolution in the country.

“The purpose is to transform these classes into firm allies of imperialism against the most exploited classes.

“In other words, the alliance attempts to eliminate internal contradictions as far as possible.”

After saying this, Che states that in the period in which we live it is impossible for contradictions among the imperialists to be resolved through war, and says that, for countries like ours, the terrible crisis of imperialism and its domestic allies — Che uses the term “national” rather than “domestic” — constitutes the necessary objective condition for the decisive political and economic crisis:

“Today, the decisive element is the ferment within the front of imperialism and the national bourgeoisie.”

[7] The policy of this line for raising the consciousness of the masses consists of:

- A central periodical publication — as an instrument of the campaign for explaining political realities;

- Pamphlets;
- Establishing the bureaucratic levels of the organisation on the basis of neighbourhood units within the distribution network of the central organ which performs the transmission function;
- And the minimum organisation of so-called military actions — which are not armed propaganda.

The revisionists call all this **strategic organisation**. First, work is carried out for this so-called strategic organisation. But under the harsh conditions created by the oligarchy's severe policy of repression and suppression:

- publishing a central periodical organ and pamphlets;
- creating the “fresh forces” of the revolution through classical so-called mass work;

concentrates the work of the leaders and prominent members of the organisation — which is still only in the process of formation and is by no means at the stage of strategic organisation — upon producing and distributing magazines and pamphlets. Under the conditions of counter-revolutionary repression, the organisation can never reach the level at which it takes up arms. Time passes. The conditions for the minimum organisation are somehow never completed. Gradually the organisation sinks completely into the swamp of bureaucratism. The militant spirit of the members — if there is one — disappears; the members become newspaper vendors waiting for the central organ to appear.

The “worker-peasant regional committees”, functioning as newspaper vendors for a paper which is difficult to distribute and has few readers, become bureaucratic mechanisms in which two or three so-called passivist leaders engage in chatter, intellectual discussions, receiving reports and issuing reports. Extreme secrecy and laxity go hand in hand. The wheels of illegality turn in the name of passivism. If, from time to time, there is an opportunity for a ready-made money expropriation, the centre appoints a few people and organises the operation. Thus the conclusion is reached that the organisation is successfully conducting many-sided work. Weeks and months pass amid chatter and writing, in an atmosphere of “great things are being

planned”, with stories about completing strategic organisation and the minimum organisation required for military actions.

This is, in practice, the method of work of the passivism which supposedly says yes to armed struggle. All that it actually does, behind the screen of ideological struggle, is criticise and attempt to slander the revolutionaries who are conducting the people’s revolutionary war against imperialism and the oligarchy, and attempt to disperse, by confusing minds, the sympathy created by armed propaganda. This is the meaning of opportunism being an extension of imperialism on the Left.

[8] In the eighteenth century, in Ottoman society — despite the existence of factors obstructing the internal dynamics of society — the formation of capitalism, a more advanced mode of production compared with the feudal mode of production, began to appear.

a) Agriculture, handicrafts and trade became differentiated from one another, and a certain accumulation of commercial and usurer capital emerged; **b)** a mentality directed towards productive investment developed; **c)** free labour power emerged; **d)** a nucleus of a domestic bourgeoisie possessing a certain accumulation of capital and turning towards productive investment came into being. It may be said that the internal dynamics of Ottoman society — although not strong — were favourable to the independent development of capitalism and to the carrying out of an industrial revolution. We can summarise the reasons why the transition to the capitalist order did not take place and why Ottoman society became an area of exploitation for European capitalism as follows:

a) With the discovery of new sea routes, Anatolia, which had been a centre of world trade, lost this characteristic and maritime trade gained importance; **b)** Europe accumulated enormous capital through the plunder of the human and natural resources of Asia, Africa, America and India; **c)** professional armies equipped with firearms possessing great striking power were established in Europe, etc. While all these became a springboard for the forward leap in the social structures of the Western European countries and for the formation of modern capitalism, they constituted an external obstacle

to Ottoman society's transition to the capitalist order. (For more extensive information, see *Defence*.)

[9] The petty bourgeoisie, which is not a modern social class — except under conditions of open occupation — does not possess the capacity to create a powerful revolutionary movement capable of awakening the labouring masses of the people and freeing them from centuries of feudal lethargy.

For this reason, the movements of the Ottoman nationalist military-civilian intellectuals towards vague national and revolutionary objectives always remained weak and feeble, were unable to exercise any significant influence over the masses of the people, and generally the masses remained spectators to these movements.

[10] Defining this question in this way is extremely important for the alliance policy of our Party — which is waging guerrilla warfare in the Turkey of 1972 — at the present stage of the revolutionary Vanguard War.

With whom among petty-bourgeois intellectual circles will we share a minimum common ground? The answer to this question lies in the correct definition of Kemalism. This definition is also important in determining the mass line. If we treat Kemalism as an ideology — the ideology of the military-civilian intelligentsia — the mass line to be followed will be one thing. If we treat Kemalism as the national-liberationist political position adopted by the left wing of the military-civilian intelligentsia against imperialism, on the basis of nationalism, the mass line will be another. Because of the worldwide prestige of socialism in our age and because the USSR is the principal supporter of radical revolutionary-nationalist movements, today revolutionary nationalists also present themselves as socialists. For this reason, many Kemalists in our country today call themselves socialists.

As is known, the character of the petty bourgeoisie in underdeveloped countries is different from that in capitalist-imperialist countries. The attitude of this class towards imperialism and the domestic ruling classes is not homogeneous. In terms of attitude, this class must be considered in three groups. One of these

groups takes its place within the reactionary alliance. Another climbs the “control tower” and waits for the result. The third group participates in the movement of the “radical-national” classes and adopts an anti-imperialist position on the basis of nationalism. Kemalism is precisely the national-liberationist political position of the most left-wing, most enlightened wing of the petty bourgeoisie.

At the stage of the Vanguard War, the section among petty-bourgeois intellectual circles with which the THKP-C can share a minimum common ground, towards which we shall apply the principle of **“both friendship and struggle”**, and which we shall regard as an ally, is this Kemalist wing. To regard all petty-bourgeois intellectuals who possess an evolutionary outlook as Kemalists and, looking at the negative attitude they adopt towards our actions today, to say, “Alas, we have broken away from democratic circles; we have deviated to the Left,” means completely failing to understand the essence of Kemalism. Today the right wing of the military-civilian intelligentsia in particular, and of the petty bourgeoisie in general, is definitively in the ranks of the oligarchy.

Before 12 March, the centre wing, watching from the “control tower” for a radical change of government, had thrown itself towards the Left. Now, however, it has quietly moved considerably towards the Right. The left wing, meanwhile, by its nature — because of its coupist-revolutionary tradition — had been dreaming of coming to power through an alliance with the right wing of the military-civilian intelligentsia. The 12 March coup struck it on the head like a sledgehammer. The fact that the evolutionary wing of the military-civilian intelligentsia, which had been its ally before 12 March, abandoned it completely, entered the arms of the oligarchy and went on a post-March honeymoon, had an effect as great as the oligarchy’s sledgehammer. Today, within this demoralised atmosphere, it has withdrawn and is attempting to regroup.

At the stage of the Vanguard War, the THKP-C’s allies among petty-bourgeois intellectual circles can only be the Kemalists. In our relations with them, we must explain, together with the reasons, that the right wing is the definite ally of the oligarchy and can at any time

betray the revolutionary ranks at a historical moment. A common front with this wing will become possible when it understands that coupism offers no way out and no longer regards the right wing as its friend.

[11] To deduce the leading class of a revolution from the social content of that revolution is contrary to dialectical materialism.

[12] Parallel with this development, imperialism also began to find supporters within the bureaucracy.

For example:

“Meanwhile, commissions received in return for business dealings became widespread, and the circle around İhsan Bey, former President of the Independence Tribunal and a member of the Board of Directors of İş Bankası, was showered with bribes by foreign arms monopolies in connection with orders for the Naval Forces.” (See *Defence*.)

[13] This means the breaking of the power of the revolutionary nationalists and the end of the relative balance.

[14] The armed actions of the THKO, as well as those of the THKP-C, were also effective in this respect.

[15] In plain Turkish, the passivists’ formulation of the question in this way in our country under imperialist occupation means:

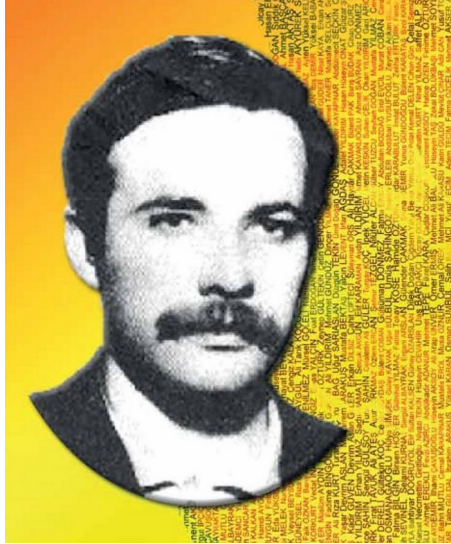
“First let us organise the masses and ourselves through revisionist work, and then we shall begin the revolutionary struggle.”

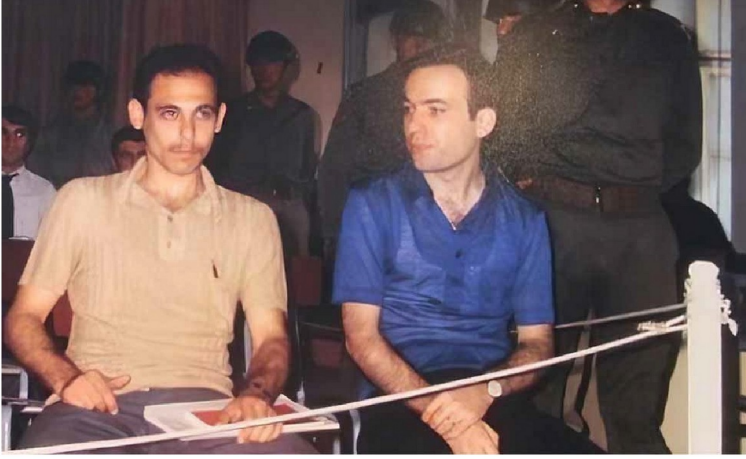
Yet organisation carried out by taking peaceful methods of struggle as fundamental can never pass to the stage of fighting. The example of Greece is clear.

[16] Its practical appearance is the contradiction between the revolutionary vanguard of the people and the oligarchy.

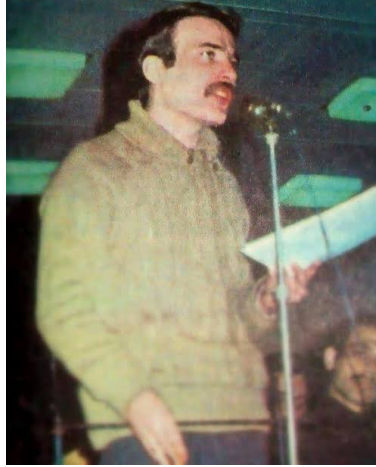
PHOTOGRAPHS

MAHIR ÇAYAN





Mahir Çayan during the THKP-C trial.



Mahir Çayan reading his defence.

HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Student mobilisation in Istanbul, late 1960s.



Anti-imperialist youth demonstration, late 1960s.



DEV-GENÇ congress period, early 1970s.



THE MUD-BRICK HOUSE IN KIZILDERE



Press coverage of the Kızıldere Massacre, March 1972.



Our Path Is the Path of Mahir Çayan and His Comrades
Revolutionary Left