

THE LIVING THOUGHT OF TROTSKY

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PROLOGUE TO THE MEXICAN EDITION OF 'THE LIVING THOUGHT OF TROTSKY'

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The thought of Trotsky is a live elaboration that still helps to understand the process of history. Trotsky's core analyses of the USSR, up to his murder in 1940, have become a little dated: the historic stages, the balance of class forces, the world relations between the Workers States ('Socialist countries') and capitalism - these things are different now. But Trotsky's essential grasp, his Marxist analyses and his dialectical materialism are still valid to interpret the process.

Trotsky's analyses sought to fortify the world proletarian vanguard, intellectuals, scientists, Communist/Socialist party leaders and Trade Unions. Arming them with his analyses. It was knowledge that he was passing on. He interpreted what happens when elements in the historic process of class and inter-bourgeois struggle become part of the relations between one lone Workers State (the Soviet Union) and the rest of the world in capitalism.

Some changes must be made in Trotsky's analyses. The organic elements to be found in social classes have not changed, but the world balance of class forces and the class relations have changed. And so have the relations between the capitalist countries. Add to this the combined weight of today's 'socialist countries', plus that of the Revolutionary States, and you find a good half of humanity preparing now to finish with every form of oppression.

Trotsky's perspective was to elaborate programmes for specific aims. His immediate programme was for the historic stage when a newly formed Workers State was looking at capitalist war directly in the face. Trotsky saw the Second World War coming a long time in advance. When war came, the warmongers were the capitalist countries and the Nazis. Capitalism needed a new war to settle its internal differences, and above all, to attack the Soviet Workers State and crush it to a pulp. Capitalism did set out to do this, but it failed. To launch this attack on the Soviet Union, it needed to set all its internal contradictions aside. But because the internal contradictions of capitalism reside in its nature, they are intractable and cannot be set aside. This is the reason why capitalism failed to smash the Soviet Union.

The economic and military power of the capitalist system has done nothing but increase since the Second World War, but its capitalist contradictions have done nothing but deepen. The conditions of today are different from Trotsky's. The class struggle is unchanged, but class confrontation has sharpened. There used to be only one Workers State facing the capitalist system – note how capitalism could not destroy it even then – and now there is a set of Workers States whose existence revolutionises the 'Third World' countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. This creates a balance of forces unfavourable to capitalism in the world, and in the capitalist countries as well. We face another world war of capitalism like Trotsky did, but we do it now in conditions that did not exist when Trotsky lived.

Class principles are historic and do not change, but the balance of world forces changes. This requires alterations in one's tactics and points of programme. The need to

prepare to oppose the capitalist regime is unchanged, but the programme must change. In aspects concerning the Political Revolution for instance, some programmatic aspects have had to change as well.

The Political Revolution is no longer developing as when Trotsky posed it. When he lived, the Soviet Union was isolated and close to collapse under Stalin. Today, the Political Revolution is part of the development and world expansion of the USSR and the other Workers States. Although with limitations, the Soviet Union now supports the progress of the countries of the world, and it is under this form that the Political Revolution is unfolding today.

Political Revolution facilitates the anti-bureaucratic struggle for democratic principles in the Workers State. Today, Political Revolution unites with the tasks posed by the confrontation Workers States vs capitalism. As capitalism intensifies its war preparations against the Workers States, the Workers State is affected at all levels: political, economic, juridical, intellectual. It was not like this in Trotsky's time.

The Soviet bureaucracy is still ensconced in apparatus, but Stalinism has gone. The world masses and their struggles have defeated Stalinism. Bureaucracy is still present, but with less force and control. As the struggle against bureaucracy becomes more tied to that against capitalism, fewer are the reasons to treat them separately. In the Soviet Union, the demands are still the same: more participation, greater revolutionary democracy, mass political involvement for the Soviet masses. A debate has started there, although still unresolved, about distribution 'to each according to their need'.

The above principles are such that the world proletarian vanguard can easily combine them with its own anti-capitalist demands. The demands of the workers' vanguard in every country must include points for the further development of the Workers States, speak of the need for Soviet democracy in the Workers States, create conditions favourable to the world development of Socialism.

The matter of Political Revolution in the Workers States is posed differently today. The aspect of Political Revolution is no longer as pressing as the need for socialist democracy: there must be more public Trade Union participation in the Workers States. The world needs to see the Workers' Centres and the general population intervening publicly in political, cultural and scientific life. Public meetings and debates must be allowed in the Trade Unions and the factories. People must be allowed to assess for themselves the situation they are in, and the level of anti-capitalist struggle in the world. From the Workers States, the working class must send messages of support to the masses of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The masses of the world want to see the cultural level and life of the Soviet masses. They want to see the Soviet workers and masses participating in the leadership of their society.

In the Workers States themselves, the masses want a greater cultural and scientific participation in the programmes and the policies. In the Soviet Union, the idea of ending wage differentials has been raised, along with whether to introduce 'to each according to their need'. The implementation of these ideas carry an economic cost, but it would give such an immense example to the masses of the United States.

A way must be found so that the Soviet Union and the

other Workers States address directly the masses of the US, of Japan, capitalist Germany. We reiterate that the masses of the world must see the cultural life of the Soviet masses, the blossoming of their cultural relations and their participation in the leadership of society. The world needs to see the Soviet masses holding meetings, giving ideas. If this happened, the authority of the Workers States would be so overwhelming, that in a short time, a class and mass anti-capitalist Party would appear in the United States.

Trotsky wrote to perpetuate the knowledge that the Workers State is a necessity of history. If he mentioned the errors of the Workers State, or the suicidal policies of Stalin, it was to show that they did not come from the Workers State but from its political leadership. Trotsky was teaching the world proletarian vanguard, the Communist parties, the Trade Unions, the intellectuals and the world intellectual vanguard. He was showing the need to distinguish between Workers State and Workers State's leadership. Trotsky shows how the Workers State as a structure is the acquired and necessary vehicle for the progress of history. The structure of the centralised/planned economy directs not only its own progress, not only art, culture and science, but the elevation without limits of the human relations.

Trotsky wrote to keep humanity confident in the certainty that Socialism is a necessity of history (and not just a necessity of the working class) and that the instrument of that necessity of history is the working class due to its function in history.

Trotsky wrote so that the proletarian vanguard should not feel crushed, or lose its trust in the ability of the Communist parties, the Socialist parties, the Trade Unions or the Workers State. He insisted to show how the

responsibility for the advent of bureaucracy in the Soviet Union had come from particular world forces and political relations specific to the time. He demonstrated that these forces and political relations had not come from a flaw in the Bolshevik Party, in the Communist Party or in the Workers State. They had come from particular world conditions at the time, which included the ebbing of the world revolutionary tide, and world relations that had favoured the rise of Stalinism. Trotsky foresaw that the historic world conditions of revolutionary retreat would wane, and that a new revolutionary flux would rise in the world Communists: This is what is happening now.

Trotsky's writings wanted to register his optimism, his confidence, his trust in the scientific method. The dialectical method had demonstrated that the Workers State is a necessity of history, a necessary stage of transition from capitalism to Socialism; this could not be done without errors, drawbacks and deficiencies, particularly when dealing, as in this case, with total class confrontation with capitalism. World capitalism does not sit back of course. It takes advantage of every problem, every difficulty and every error. It puts itself in the way of every attempt at building the adequate revolutionary leadership.

Trotsky wrote to help organise the proletarian vanguard, convince that vanguard that Stalin did not represent the world Communist movement or Communism. Stalin was a caricature representing bureaucratic layers that had come from conditions that could still hold the revolution back. Even then, however, the capitalist system had failed to recapture the USSR after 1917. With the Bolshevik Party, Lenin had allowed the Workers State to grow historic roots deep enough to wait for the return of the revolutionary tide in socialist construction.

Trotsky kept focused on preparing the vanguard with this necessity in mind. His analyses insisted that Stalin's perversion was not that of the Workers State. It was not the perversion of Communism. Stalin did not represent the future of humanity. Conditions had created him from the historic retreat which Trotsky called 'Thermidor' ⁽¹⁾. Today a new Thermidor is no longer possible.

Trotsky foresaw the German imperialist onslaught which was then being hatched against the Soviet Union (1938-39). He never tired of explaining his intransigent defence of the Soviet Union. Journalists demanded to know why he should support the Soviet occupation of Poland and Finland ⁽²⁾. To that, he replied that one must support this action; the Soviet Workers State has every right to keep its frontiers buffered against German imperialism which clearly wants to destroy it. "The Workers State is the most advanced and the most necessary instrument for the progress of humanity" he said. Baffled journalists kept interjecting: But Mister Trotsky, Stalin wanted to kill you! – And Trotsky to reply: "It is not my life that decides existence, but the life of the Workers State, because it is indispensable to the progress of humanity. It is necessary to defend the Workers State unconditionally! The Soviet occupation in Poland and Finland is not intended to subjugate countries. It is a strategic war to deal with German imperialism".

This thinking shows Trotsky's great objectivity. His analyses always return to demonstrating that Stalin was neither the result of the Workers State nor of the Bolshevik Party. The same historic conditions that had brought the retreat of the 1917 revolution had also brought the incapacity of capitalism to destroy the Workers State. Result: Stalinism. The same conditions that had caused the rise of Stalinism had also weakened the structure of the Bolshevik Party. Exhausted by war and civil war, the

Bolshevik Party was left with all the tasks of building the first Workers State.

Trotsky was essentially guiding the proletarian vanguard towards the human future, towards the years to come. He knew he was going to be killed. He was determined to impart as quickly as he could the logical optimism of history, which is the optimism of dialectical materialism: the Workers State is a necessity of history; Socialism is entirely irreplaceable and invincible; it represents the progress of human intelligence through the economy, science, culture and art; in the beginning, Socialism takes the form of the social relations of the Workers State.

The objective and historic necessity of Socialism is determined by the crisis of the capitalist system. In the evolution of capitalism, there comes a point when it starts injecting regression at every point of development, the economy, technique, science, art, culture, everything.

It is to keep going that capitalism retreats. It rolls back the economy, science and culture into gigantic whirls of regression. It monopolises the economy solely for market purposes. It throws poison and death at people while putting ever more riches in fewer hands. It discharges its pollutants in the waters; its factories poison the workers who develop blood, skin and lung diseases, when it is not cancer. It kills people every minute of the day. It has for ever less force, ability or interest in promoting the progress of art, culture or science. The worst is that, whilst all this goes on, you see in the economy, in art and in science, all the conditions and possibilities for the immense advance not only of the human being, but of the human relations as well. Here is the main reason why capitalism must be eliminated. There are plenty of means to do it thanks to the world proletariat and the Workers States.

The Workers States are the true bearers of the thought, the will and the historic disposition of the proletariat to succeed to the capitalist system, take its place.

Trotsky ordered his thoughts and activities to communicate to the proletariat the historic confidence that Socialism-Communism is a stage in the historic progress of humanity where the proletarian class constitutes the instrument of that progress. The proletariat can do this because of its weight and position in the economy: it cannot but uphold the objective need of progress, and no subjective interests.

The principle of 'to each according to their needs' was raised in the USSR in 1977, when the New Soviet Constitution ⁽³⁾ was discussed. In communist terms, this principle is particularly advanced. The fact that it was discussed shows that, somewhere in the course of its existence and development, the Workers State must eliminate the dependency on property as the central source of egoism. It elevates intelligence to the point where intelligence becomes detached from the property interests that spew egoism.

The present Chinese leaders, though based on a Workers State, have an anti-Soviet policy. They joined hands with capitalism and imperialism. They have befriended historically barbarous and retrograde people like Pinochet and South African racists. Now they threaten the rest of the Workers States with these alliances with capitalism. Bureaucratic camarillas like them could only have emerged from an absence of political life, and from the small proletarian weight in the Chinese Communist Party. We say that they will not be able to re-run the whole of the Stalin cycle! There is no historic time for this, and besides, the Chinese masses see, learn and wait for the time when to play again their full part in this process.

One of Trotsky's main aims opposed this sort of thing entirely: he insisted on people being massively involved and educated. He wanted them secure in that Socialism is a necessity of history - not a response plucked out of someone's head, Marx, Engels or Lenin's. Socialism responds to the necessity of history, which is represented by Marx, Engels, Lenin and the Workers State. Do not expect the capitalist system to preside over any progress in the economy, science, culture, art or technology. It only grabs hold of technical advances for the purpose of the market economy, competition, arms-manufacture and war - nothing whatever to do with helping to develop the human relations.

Even as champion of the anti-bureaucratic struggle, Trotsky never lost sight that the USSR, as the instrument for the progress of history, had to be defended unconditionally. He saw the USSR as the tool that the proletariat had forged for subsequent economic, social, political and State anti-capitalist advances. Trotsky put great store by the first historic conquest of power by the proletariat, and the display of its constructive ability.

When he became isolated, Trotsky set out to resist and to organise the Fourth International⁽⁴⁾. He had done his utmost to stay in the Third International, in the worst conditions of accusations, threats and murder attempts - all this ending up with his expulsion from the USSR (1929). If he had tried to stay in the III International for so long, it was to remain linked to the Workers State and to the Communist masses of the world.

Trotsky's aim was to stand up as a rallying point whilst helping to support and develop the Workers State. His long experience and great theoretical, political and scientific ability told him the Workers State was still the instrument

of history for the construction of Socialism. This is what animated his 'unconditional defence of the USSR'. When he looked at the USSR, he saw beyond Stalin and the Soviet bureaucracy, beyond the extermination of the Communists and all the murders. He saw the USSR as the instrument of history which it had fallen to a leadership with a counter revolutionary policy. Trotsky remained adamant about the unconditional defence of the USSR.

Trotsky held fast to his confidence in the future of the Soviet Workers State. In 1938, he knew that the isolation of the USSR was beginning to end; that imperialism was going to break its teeth on the rampart of Soviet progress. When he posed the unconditional defence of the USSR, things had never gone so bad for him personally. There had already been several attempts on his life. He felt the murderous hand of Stalin coming near. How the Soviet Union would resist the coming war (1939) was not clear. He trusted in the Soviet proletariat which had already frustrated many previous capitalist attacks. He surmised that the contradictions in the capitalist camp had grown immensely more than its ability to eliminate the USSR: this was already evident at the time in the conflicts between British, German, French and North American imperialism.

In 1938, Trotsky said that 'in the coming war, millions of revolutionaries will move heavens and earth, and the USSR will no longer be alone. It will create new conditions in history'. This is the gist of his thought even if his words were somewhat different. He posed that the unconditional defence of the USSR was part and parcel of revolutionary policy and represented the most elevated scientific conclusion regarding that moment in human history.

The other aspect to consider is the programme of the IV International. Whilst it remains generally correct, it is

changed by the fact that, as far as the Soviet Union is concerned, Stalinism is no longer the problem that is posed. Stalinism has disappeared, swept away by the world revolution. What is left, at an inferior level, is the Soviet bureaucracy whose existence is now being challenged as part of the Workers States' struggle against world capitalism.

The struggle against bureaucracy, therefore, is tightly combined to the defence of the Workers States. It advances as part of the United Front of the Workers States and the masses of the world. The struggles of the masses of Africa, Asia and Latin America unite with the revolutionary movements of the Revolutionary States - the anti-capitalist advances of the Communist and Socialist parties included. Capitalism responds by pitting itself against the course of history, and this is why it deploys its means of war all over the world. But its inner contradictions stop it using those means just as it likes. Whilst it must cope with this restriction, plus its internal contradictions and disputes, it has to confront also the world competition of the Workers States. The social superiority of the Workers States is substantial, greater even than the economic superiority the capitalists still retain in certain aspects.

The programme of struggle Trotsky elaborated for the capitalist countries is still valid today: the sliding scale of wages and of working hours, no worker to be out of work, not a factory to be closed. Since the life of people must trump the financial interests of the boss, let the State expropriate the factory. Let there be workers control, the sliding scale of working hours, and not a worker to be sacked. The working hours must be equalised and salaries maintained. Let the State take charge of the enterprises to ensure that production corresponds to what people need or

can be exchanged. Let women and youth be in the leaderships! Trotsky elaborated this programme with the looming 1939 war in mind, but it is still valid today.

Today, there is no 'problem of Stalinism' standing by itself and on its own. What is left of it will be engulfed with the capitalist system. Stalinism has already disappeared, defeated by the progress of the world revolution. In the Workers States, the divergences you observe now come from conflicting interests between various bureaucratic layers. The proletariat has not yet been allowed to weigh sufficiently: As a class, it still depends on Party, Trade Unions, bureaucratic apparatuses and workers aristocracies – all holding back the masses' revolutionary disposition. But in the Workers States, social and human relations are valued; people are no longer unemployed or starving as in capitalism. Life in the Workers States, in all aspects – health, science, technology or human relations – is infinitely superior to life in capitalism. The Workers States are poles of attraction for the masses of the world.

Trotsky had no doubt at all. This is the meaning of what he said in 1938: 'In 10 years, millions of revolutionaries will know how move heavens and earth, and the USSR will no longer be alone'. This is one of the most important political conclusions that he ever drew.

This is essentially what Trotsky was about. He was a master of history. Our texts pay homage to him, to Marx, Engels, Lenin and the Bolshevik masses. We render homage to the masses of the world fighting for Socialism against the capitalist system. See how they, too, make an unconditional defence of the Workers States ('socialist countries'). The masses understand well that the Workers States are necessary in history. When seen as a whole today, the Workers States correspond to what the USSR

once represented - the instrument needed by the progress of humanity.

The dialectical method is the tool we use to understand our present stage of history. It is the method Trotsky handed down, although he could not give us the exact formulae for the concrete and organisational political situation of today. What has not changed is the dialectical method, the nature of class and the capitalists' turn of mind. The Workers States are still not unified as they should be: faced as they are by capitalism, they are going to need a United Front. This necessity is so logical that it cannot be far away. It is already happening, in fact, in aspects. There is already enough of a Front to supplant the capitalist system.

Trotsky has handed down the dialectical method of analysis to interpret the process. Political and organisational conditions have changed, but the world balance of forces is more favourable to the Workers States, to the Revolutionary countries, to the 'Third World'. It is more favourable also to the proletariat of the large capitalist countries and to the big Communist parties of France and of Italy – partly of Japan too, Spain and Greece. All these are vital centres for the progress of history.

Trotsky held fast to his task of organiser and craftsman of the instruments of progress, just as our masters Marx, Engels and the Bolshevik masses did. Trotsky was committed to centralise the proletarian vanguard around those instruments. He knew the method of analysis would make the vanguard confident and secure in the face of the coming historic stages. And the stages came! They brought long new Workers States and advances in the Communist parties. The latter showed what leaps the world masses are capable of as soon as they can unite to destroy the capitalist system.

Today is the stage when the masses of Iran are making a stand. Although they are very limited in the way of Trade Union and Party functioning, see with what great confidence they mobilise for the social transformation of their country. What gives them such a resolve in Iran? The world balance of forces! It teaches them to receive and welcome the influences of history. And behind the world balance of forces, note that the essential motor is the USSR. This, and the struggle of the Workers States. But there is also the force of the anti-capitalist struggles in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. There is the struggle of the masses centralised in Trade Unions and big Communist & Socialist parties in France, Italy - partly Spain and Japan.

The struggles of the British, German and Japanese proletariat are important aspects of the world balance of forces. They are natural and objective allies of the Workers States although in a form that is not direct, programmatic or organisational. The German proletariat delivered a particularly big blow to the capitalist system through the metal-workers strike ⁽⁵⁾. Capitalism was quite challenged by it because this strike was telling the world that progress must benefit the workers, and not just to the capitalists. It caused serious difficulties to capitalism, weakening its structure, its force, its social and economic authority. The British proletariat too launched big struggles and movements in opposition to the Labour leadership - this most corrupt agent of British imperialism. In Japan, the proletariat has powerful Communist and Socialist parties. With these parties, it opposes Japanese capitalism, hindering its reactionary and counter-revolutionary plans. These things are bedrocks in the world balance of forces.

Trotsky urged confidence in the dialectical method, and in the future democratic rebirth of the Soviet Union. The

proletariat is the future leader of society, but it has been granted little opportunity so far. When you compare capitalism from its inception up to when it took the helm, you see how much it was involved and trained in the economy. Capitalism gained its original confidence, dominion and influence through the role it was already playing in the economy. It drew the best of society to itself through the economy, making it serve. This is not the way for the proletariat which has to prevail entirely without any previous involvement in economic directorships or governorships. The proletariat only comes to its leading role through the struggle that brings down the capitalist system. It can only gain its leading position in the direct course of the class struggle. It is there that it forges its instruments to win its own demands, bring progress to society and the social transformation of society.

Trotsky's writings dwell on these questions. They seek to give confidence to the proletarian vanguard, to the Communist and Socialist parties, to the Trade Unions. They demonstrate that Communism is a necessity for the progress of history.

Technique, science and the economy have progressed up to a point, and art also. Boosted by those advances, human intelligence is now looking for a new sort of human relations. It is there that the proletariat has started to find the elements and the relations to play its proletarian historic role. The proletariat connects with the social layers that had already been searching for a response to art, culture, science and intelligence. A proletariat-art-culture-science United Front has formed with intellectual and scientific layers of the petty bourgeoisie.

Trotsky's role was to explain this. He was conscious of a future he would not see; and of the need to pass on this

historic experience. He never made any defence of himself. In *'My Life'* and in *'The History of the Russian Revolution'*, he stressed that his role was not about a dispute with Stalin but about the necessity for ideas. Stalin did not come from a perversion in the Bolshevik struggle or in the Soviet Communist Party. He came from historic conditions which cannot recur today because they have lost the bases from which to reproduce.

Bureaucracy in the Workers States is partially the result of the backwardness those countries started from. It is also the result of an unfavourable, once-upon-a-time balance of forces with capitalism. Such stumbling blocks can be overcome by developing the Party, the role of the working class within the Party, and the accession of the working class to the leadership of the Party. There must be political education and the development of the experience of the masses for themselves. The masses must become involved in the exercise of their own understanding; they must act on the terrain of ideas, programme and tactics. They must develop their own capacity and start leading the Party.

In capitalism, the working class is shut out of the experience of leading society. It can only lead by bringing capitalism down. To do this, it must combine the tasks of political leadership with those that transform society and the economy. The political parties of the working-class do not have the historic experience of this today, but it is in Trotsky that one finds the explanations, the apprenticeship and the forms of preparation required by the process.

For the proletariat, its lack of [previous] historic experience in social leadership is an enormous drawback. This shortcoming does not let the objectivity of the working class weigh sufficiently on society. But there is only one class, the working class, that is objective in

history. Individual elevation does not attract the working class. Due to the conditions in which it must struggle, there cannot be a difference between the interests which it defends and those that serve human progress. Mind that the proletariat has no choice in this matter! What we call 'the function of the working class' is not a deduction, a reckoning or a political precept. It is an actual role through which the proletariat can only advance itself by advancing society; the whole of society is taken forward by its economic conquests and its actions of leadership. There has never been another class like the proletariat in history. Trotsky was unswerving in his determination to lay the ground for the next time when the proletariat would return to play its historic role.

Stalinism capitulated to history because it was an obstacle and a hindrance in the development of the USSR. This is why Stalin disappeared. Regardless of how he died, he disappeared because he was surplus to requirement in the Soviet Union.

For an entire period, the bureaucracy of the Workers States sought compromises and agreements with capitalism. Even in times of struggle. This imposed huge limitations on the Communist parties, particularly those of the Workers States. Trotsky taught us that bureaucracy is not an automatic, continuous and permanent product of the Workers State. Bureaucracy arose in the Soviet Union within a historic stage, at a time when the balance of forces contained an unbalance between the proletariat, which weighed little in the political leaderships, and the intellectual, bureaucratic and bourgeois sectors that took charge of the Party and of society.

Trotsky reasoned on the basis that bureaucracy would be made to retreat by the greater advance of the Soviet

Workers State, the struggle of the world masses, the advance of the Communist parties and that of the class struggle. The disappearance of bureaucracy therefore, does not simply hang on a direct struggle for Soviet democratic rights in the Workers State. With just the demands for scientific, economic, political rights. It is a struggle that needs, on top of this, to impel and develop the Workers State in its opposition to the capitalist system. Making it oppose the capitalist system. If anything, it is this, in the end, that creates the conditions for the elimination of the bureaucracy. The struggle against bureaucracy is not a struggle in itself, therefore, because it cannot be separated from the struggle against the capitalist system. Trotsky is a teacher in the matter of making deductions.

Trotsky shows how to identify the most important aspects of a historic period, to combine their necessary strands. In 1940, some months before his assassination, he was still defending unconditionally the entry of Soviet troops into Poland and Finland, arguing that this protected the Soviet borders from German imperialism. If the Soviet Union comes to win that war, he said, history will leap ahead. Should German imperialism prevail, history will make a shocking retreat. But the Soviet Union triumphed. History leapt ahead, bringing new 'socialist countries' as well as progress in culture, science and the human relation.

Trotsky taught how not to see the struggle against bureaucracy in isolation, but as part of the means to develop the Workers State. It was necessary to combine the anti-bureaucratic struggle with the defence and development of the Workers State by impelling the class struggle on a world scale. He taught never to ally with the class enemy against bureaucracy! He advised to always seek one's support in the workers', socialist and communist movements. And seek the preservation of the

Workers State above all, since it is the basis for the conquest of Lenin's Soviet democracy and the return to it. In his historic work, Trotsky never tried to justify himself. Never tried to show he had been right. His focus was on the progress of the Workers State and of Socialism.

Just now, Vietnam is struggling against the counter-revolutionary leadership of Cambodia. The leadership of Cambodia is not very different from that which used to be around Stalin. The struggle of Vietnam against Cambodia is not a struggle between Workers States; it is the Vietnamese Workers State defeating the counter-revolutionary leadership of Cambodia. The latter kills the revolutionaries of Cambodia and carries out an 'enforced collectivisation'. This is no collectivisation however, and the enforcement aims at making people produce under the whip of a camarilla. The Pol Pot regime has murdered more than one million people. It allows no political life, and there is no economic or social development under it. The Chinese bureaucracy uses Cambodia as a vassal fiefdom, manipulating it to guard China and Cambodia from the revolutionary influence of Vietnam. This is how China has become involved against Vietnam.

In times previous, China had supported Vietnam. It had been a natural thing to be doing between Workers States, but China had done this mainly to keep imperialism at arms' length. It had supported North Korea previous to that, again to stop imperialism charging in. The present Chinese bureaucratic leadership is different. It liquidated the old Mao Tse Tung's team, marking the point of change. Mao's team had defended and improved the Chinese Workers State. The Mao's leadership had presided over economic and social advance in China, even if it had often been wrong, nationalistic and backward from the cultural, economic and scientific point of view. But the present

bureaucratic Chinese leadership is something else. It is rolling everything back: it wants the development of the economy at the expense of the social organisation of the Workers State. Time will show that this cannot be done. There cannot be economic development in China outside the form of the Workers State.

In Cambodia, there is a similar process. The Pol Pot leadership comes directly from the bourgeoisie, from Buddhism. Its first step was to murder the Communist Party leadership and wipe out the Communist Party. It then adopted inwards-looking bureaucratic measures, aristocratic even, to serve sectional interests. There never was anything Communist about this leadership. Its aim was to satisfy only some bureaucratic layers.

In China, the present leadership is similar to the one that used to exist under Stalin in the USSR. It is a bureaucratic camarilla rooted in the Workers State's structure, but in no way does it represent the Chinese Worker State. This camarilla is not inherent to communism. It does not come from some flaw in socialist construction. It is not true that the process of socialist construction reproduces the same evils as those that exist in capitalism. The question here is that this Chinese leadership – and not Chinese society – has made an alliance with capitalism. This alliance is the dagger in the back of the world revolution, in the back of the Soviet Union. What is counter-revolutionary here is the leadership, whilst China itself has remained a Workers State. The remedy is not to roll back the Workers State but to change the leadership. Trotsky never said that the USSR should be rolled back. Now the same goes for China where the basic social revolution is no longer required. The leadership needs to be removed. It has become counter-revolutionary in siding with capitalism against the Workers States. And through its alliance with the Pol Pot counter-

revolutionaries in Cambodia, it looks for bases and conditions to stop revolution spreading in South East Asia, in the hope of serving what it thinks are its interests. This is a counter-revolutionary leadership that has nothing to do with the Chinese revolution.

Trotsky formulated all this about Stalin. He viewed Stalin as the product of historic circumstances and not as a product of the Workers State. In the same way the Chinese leadership - or Pol Pot's in Cambodia - is not the product of the Workers State. As to why such people can come about at all, one must consider the lack in a sufficient level of historic experience. There is also an insufficient proletarian weight in the life of the workers' parties - and above all, in the communist parties and their leaderships. And there is not exactly abundance in the development of the revolutionary ideas around these questions either. As far as the masses are concerned, the proletariat and the communist leaderships, there has not been enough historic experience. Our present epoch is dealing with this. It is creating a new world structure with the Communists, the Socialists, the Workers States and the masses of the world.

The leadership of the Chinese Workers State corresponds to that of Stalin's - a counter-revolutionary leadership. It works hard at the laying of foundations that only serve the economic interests of a bureaucratic layer. The latter consists of intellectuals, teachers, professors, production experts, technicians and a workers' aristocracy similar to that which ushered in Stakhanovism under Stalin. These people hope to gain enough world acclaim to eventually have their Stalinian conceptions accepted as 'main stream'.

The Chinese leadership introduces in China a series of regressive measures inimical to the economic, social, cultural and scientific development of the Workers State. It

takes advantage of what was already culturally backward; it uses what was already socially limited under Mao to give acceptability to capitalist policies and relations. As opposed to this however, there is still a very great development of socialist social relations in the Soviet Union, in Cuba, East Germany, Czechoslovakia.

The progress and authority of the Workers States have already produced more elevated human relations. As the Workers States give more importance to the human being, their level of intelligence is higher. They see people more and more as part of humankind, and less and less as individuals coming from this or that other society. The Soviet Union is pushed along by the logical necessity of its own development. This stimulates it towards thoughts, preoccupations and projects not entirely opposed to capitalist overthrow. But it was the reverse in Stalin's epoch: Stalin used to actively coordinate and plot with the capitalist system to destroy revolutionary processes.

In China, the present bureaucratic leadership rests on the social and political backwardness of the country. There is an immense progress in the economy and in social relations, but there is also an immense lack of advance compared with what could be done considering that China threw capitalism out in 1948, and has another 20 Workers States by its sides.

There is no future for the present Chinese policy. The bureaucratic body that it rests upon is similar to that which created Stakhanovism under Stalin. Surrendering Party and State to ex-bourgeois and petty bourgeois representatives tied to a previous bourgeois apparatus. By the end of the Second World War, in the USSR, none of these characters remained outside the Communist Party! Similarly now in China, the leadership is giving power to layers linked to

the old oligarchy, mandarins and feudal types, former landed proprietors and the likes. The Chinese leadership purchases from these people some semblance of social support, but at too big a price: Huge concessions made to capitalism, political alliances infinitely more dangerous than all the imperialist investments in China. These alliances with the capitalist system aim at making the Workers States fail, to fail the world revolution. It is not as if the Chinese leadership were mistaken. It deliberately welcomes the bureaucratic interests patronised by big proprietor and petty bourgeois layers.

The bureaucratic apparatus in China, like that of Pol Pot in Cambodia - and partly still in Yugoslavia and Rumania - turns out much worse than in other Workers States. It contains a mix of sectors with tentacles as much in the communist movement as in the old oligarchies. And alongside them, there are also those who became attracted to the revolution when the old regime was decomposing, but who never had an iota of communist programme, policy or experience.

Ethiopia makes its revolutionary experience in conditions much inferior to those of China or Cambodia; yet it has a leadership that genuinely develops the country. It distributes the land to the peasants, increases internal democracy. The same can be said of Cuba which emerged from much inferior conditions. Today's Algeria is engaged in a revolutionary process on the way to Socialism without any need to massacre people, enforce collectivisation or resort to forced labour! The Pol Pot leadership in Cambodia is a clique rooted in capitalism. It took power when it realised that the revolutionary movement would overtake it. Full of tribal notions, it tried to develop the economy in the most backward way imaginable; and then, it teamed up with the Chinese who had started doing much the same.

The Deng Chinese leadership comes from bourgeois layers, capitalists, proprietors, ancient nobles whose hope was, and still is, to keep China cut off from the world. This leadership goes right against the grain of history. It wants the proletariat, petty bourgeoisie, students and teachers, to improve themselves by clinging to the capitalist ways, but this produces an immense social retreat.

It is a delusion to think that, in a Workers State, production will rise through a part of the population being harnessed to it without any need for a political, social, cultural and revolutionary life. In such brutal conditions, not even the economy makes any progress. If the economy appears unscathed for a time, it is because State ownership and centralised planning allow the State to resist. In due course however, bureaucratic layers get formed to divert production, hinder economic programming and oppose planning. The intervention and control of the masses is necessary to prevent managers, technicians, workers aristocracies, Party leaders, Party functionaries and others helping themselves and planning for what just suits them.

The Chinese [leaders] believe that an eventual war between the USSR and imperialism will not involve them! But while imperialism prepares against the Soviet Union, it has China firmly in its sights. It is aware that arming China against the USSR would soon turn China into a rival as big as the USSR. The disputes between the Soviet Union and this Stalinian Chinese bureaucracy allow imperialism to continue to advance its own interests.

This is a process that Trotsky could not have foreseen. In the conflict between the USSR and China, the clash is between bureaucracies, not between Workers States. The Soviet leadership has a bureaucracy too, but it impels anti-

capitalist revolutionary movements. Since this is not the case about China, the conflict between them boils down to USSR versus a counter-revolutionary Chinese leadership. The latter is in direct alliance with capitalism and opposes the revolutions. It does not represent the Chinese Workers State. It is a counter-revolutionary political leadership. Workers States cannot come to blows between themselves due to their identity and nature. They cannot even survive without constantly improving levels of mutual identification and concentration. Differences between them do not come from their being Workers States, but from the bureaucratically motivated layers in their leaderships.

Trotsky could not have foreseen this, but he left us the method to analyse it. We use his method to explain the nature of the Chinese Workers State, its bureaucracy and the way it came about. Trotsky's method in these matters enables us to interpret the current process despite all the changes. It is the scientific method of dialectical materialism that allows this update.

Trotsky's programme started from the distinction he made between the Workers State on a one hand, and the leadership of the Workers State on the other. The Workers State is a structure that the progress of history has secured. Trotsky's programme teaches us not to confuse the structure of the Soviet Workers State and the counter-revolutionary policy of Stalin who made an alliance with Hitler. It follows that, as Trotsky taught us, we do not confuse the structure of the Chinese Workers State and its counter-revolutionary leadership.

This is the sort of thing that used to concern Trotsky. He never wrote to justify himself, but to explain the effect on the USSR, of the world ebbing of the revolutionary process after 1917. This ebbing left the Russian Revolution isolated

and open to capitalist pressures. Under the force of those pressures, revisionist and nationalist layers gained enough strength to start weighing in the Bolshevik Party.

See how the Soviet Union survived that period anyway, in spite of it all, and went on to defeat Hitler. For the Soviet Union went on to defeat fascism and the capitalist system, both! See here what a great historic necessity underpins the existence of the Soviet Union! The fact that it could become such a powerful source of development for other revolutions - including the Chinese - shows the paramount role of the Workers State when it comes to the future of humanity and Socialism.

In China and Cambodia, partly in Rumania too, those who rule at the moment represent bureaucratic layers perverted early in the formation of their leaderships. This is what happens when the masses cannot intervene. But these bureaucratic layers represent neither the force of Rumania and China, nor the future. They are transitory, like Stalin's power. What is not transitory however, but permanent, is the need for Socialist development, Soviet democracy, planning, workers control and the intervention of the masses in all the aspects of the life of the country.

Trotsky insisted on the unconditional defence of the Workers State as tool for the progress of history. Trotsky knew Stalin was going to assassinate him but he still defended the Soviet Union unconditionally. He never had a thought against the Soviet Workers State, even when he said, when dying: "Stalin is the one who killed me. I trust in the triumph of the IV International. Forward!". The content of these words councils our present (Posadist) IV International in not competing with the Soviet Union. What we want is to protect the scientific ability to understand the present process, in a stage when the Communist

parties have dropped the programme for the revolution.

Things have changed since Trotsky. The Posadist IV International upholds Trotsky's determination to defend the Workers State as an instrument of history. It is with this in mind that we characterise the process of 'Partial Regeneration' in the Workers States. Partial Regeneration forms part of the struggle of the Communist parties, the Socialists and the Trade Unions against the capitalist system. And we, ourselves, intervene in the process of Partial Regeneration by elaborating and developing the necessary scientific ideas. This is how we carry forward the centralised experiences made in the world against capitalism and its war preparations, as part of the struggle for Socialism.

By fulfilling Trotsky's forecasts, history has handsomely honoured him. His forecasts have held a light to the necessity of history. On this occasion of the centenary of his birth, we place Trotsky by the side of history's greatest scientists. He is a Master of Marxism, like Marx, Engels and Lenin who all contributed the very best to the progress of history.

Through this present publication, we pay our own homage to Trotsky, to Marx, Engels, Lenin and the Bolshevik masses. We render homage to the Soviet Union, to the 'Socialist countries', to the Communist and Socialist masses, for they are tools of human progress. Trotsky proved that he did not waste his time when he chose to stay on the necessary road even if this should cost him his life. The result is the clear path he blazed, ready for use by the proletarian vanguard and future Workers States.

The historic conditions have changed since Trotsky. So have the policies and the concrete tactics. What is still the same is the class nature of the capitalist system. Changes

must now be made to organisational matters, to positions, to programmes and tactics, but the aim is still the same: defeat the capitalist regime, put an end to it and build Workers States.

Addressing himself to the proletarian, intellectual, cultural and scientific vanguard of the world, Trotsky's main aim was to impart a sense of complete security in the Marxist method. Dialectical materialism is the instrument indispensable to the progress of human history. The economy, science and technology play their part in transforming society, but it is Marxism that puts the human relations at the heart of progress. No other method makes of the *human relations* the condition without which there cannot be any more human progress.

Socialism is a necessity of humanity, and the working class is the representative of this necessity. As such, the working class is both the servant and the ruler of history. It does this through the Workers States, the Socialist and Communist parties, the Trade Unions. It is the working class that expresses the inexhaustible craving of humanity for progress, and Trotsky was preoccupied with nothing else. He did not mount a personal defence for himself against Stalin, or tried to prove the purity of his intentions. He just did everything to bring the ability of scientific thought to the proletarian vanguard, to the Communist movement and to the Communist leaders.

Trotsky had no doubt that Socialism is a necessity of history, and that this necessity would revive the Soviet Union. He based himself on the contradictions of capitalism. One of his sayings shows this thinking well, and his confidence in the socialist future of humanity: "Since we could pass from Ape to Man, we can pass from the Workers State to Socialism. On we go, in spite of Stalin!"

Trotsky based his confidence on the logical historic need for the economy, science, culture and art to develop. For this to become completed now, a leap in the human relations is required. A leap that capitalism cannot make because it putrefies instead. Where you see capitalism continuing, you see culture, science, art and the human relations trampled. It is only Socialism now that can develop these.

Every development in science, culture and art invites more elevated forms of human relations. As development is necessary to human progress, it looks up to Socialism whose objective finality is complete purity in the field of the human relations.

J. POSADAS

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(1) – Thermidor: Term used by Trotsky in 'The Revolution Betrayed' to characterise the moment when the USSR's bureaucracy finally dislodged the proletariat from power to install its own dictatorship and Stalin. The Thermidor concept draws a parallel between this bureaucratic retreat in the USSR and the forces in the French Revolution that turned against the original revolutionary aims, in order to impose their own power.

(2) Poland – Finland: The Soviet army entered Poland on 17 September 1939 and Finland on 30 November 1939 to prepare the USSR against Nazi advance. Trotsky supported this measure which he saw as a bureaucratic impulse to the Polish Socialist Revolution: See Trotsky's: 'From Scratch to Gangrene', 24.1.1940.

(3) The New Soviet Constitution: 1977, introduced changes in Soviet policy that went against bureaucracy. See Posadas' analyses in 'The Soviet Union: Its evolution from Stalin to today'. It included Soviet support for the colonial anti-imperialist struggles of the world.

(4) IV International: Faced with the degeneration of the III International, Trotsky founded the IV International in 1938. This was to uphold the fundamental principles of Socialist construction.

(5) Refers to the German metal-workers strike for 35 hour week.

THE LIVING THOUGHT OF TROTSKY 36 YEARS AFTER HIS ASSASSINATION

J. POSADAS

25 August 1976

Thirty-six years have already passed since Trotsky's assassination⁽¹⁾. In hope of blocking the realisation that war breeds revolution, along came this murder, the blasting of this citadel of Marxist ability.

When wars shake societies and test all their structures, the broad popular masses move and become involved. A common drive for programming and organising gets hold of them. They start acting as they only do on special occasions, in times of crisis or when they join protests to make demands.

In our present historic stage, matters have evolved beyond protests and demands. Humanity has reached a level of maturity that unifies it. In times previous to Trotsky, mass mobilisations lacked in a sufficient degree of identification with the necessity of history. The experience of humanity was still limited, but now, the necessity of history is represented by the Workers States, and human experience is immense.

Entire populations today pass directly from the tribe to the building of Workers States. This is a gauge of the maturity, the intelligence and the vivacity of humanity. In Trotsky's time, the movement of Trade Unions, political parties and other mobilisations trudged against forces that slowed the masses down. Now the Workers States and the masses have gained the intelligence and experience to make up for the deficits. This happens even in the big capitalist

countries. Having witnessed directly that it is possible to destroy capitalism and build Socialism, humanity feels sure that the conditions to do it are very simple and direct.

Humanity has leapt over historic ground to a point where it has gained much in intelligence and experience. People do not generally struggle to take the place of finance-capital. They simply oppose it. And it is not to become landed proprietors that peasants join the fight. Today's historic winds blow the human aspiration towards the forms of production and of property that improve life for everyone.

From Trotsky's murder to today, humanity has covered a distance so immense that it corresponds to centuries. The existence of the first Workers State of the Soviet Union gave a demonstration of towering authority to the world, even at its weakest point, under Stalin. Neither capitalism and fascism, nor their wars, could defeat the resolve of the Soviet masses. The latter stood up solidly to defend the Workers State - and this, in spite of Stalin. The world proletarian vanguard joined hands with the Soviet proletariat. Together, they stopped world capitalism cutting down the Soviet Union.

On the anniversary of Trotsky's murder, we remember. We return to the particular events that he foresaw in writing, like the necessary expansion of the revolution, and the coming confrontation between the Workers State (USSR) and the capitalist system. It is from Trotsky's thinking that we have drawn the phrase "final settlement of accounts". By this, we mean that capitalism prepares for war against the Workers States, to eliminate them, not because they are competitors but because they are historic antagonists.

It is not out of contradiction that capitalism wants the Workers States dead. It is out of antagonism. Antagonism means that, in the coming war, one of the two will be

destroyed. We (Posadists) call this "the final settlement of accounts". The coming war is not one more war. If it were, it would not be the final settlement of accounts, and capitalism would still have some perspective and some historic time. But it has not. This is the final settlement of accounts because capitalism can no longer put up with things as they are. Trotsky did not phrase this like this, but he saw that capitalism wanted to destroy the Soviet Union.

The Second World War failed to destroy the Soviet Union however; and Trotsky couldn't say more because he was assassinated. He outlined two fundamental aspects regarding the 1939 war.

The first aspect regarded whether the Soviet Workers State was capable of surviving. If the USSR survived, Trotsky said, humanity would then go further than it. He never thought that the triumph of the USSR was pre-ordained, but he saw that, should the USSR pass the historic test of the (second) war, humanity would quickly muster the means and the confidence to retake the socialist road.

Although Trotsky was hugely preoccupied by these questions, he never lost sight of the anti-bureaucratic struggle. On the whole however, he considered that the most pressing task was to pass on his confidence in the socialist future. He wanted to communicate his confidence to those who would come after him, the revolutionary cadres, at whatever level of organisation. He never worked in his self-defence, but to serve the necessity of history.

Trotsky considered that, since humanity could go from ape to man, it would surely make Socialism. In 1939 however, there was no world leadership for Socialism, no policy or programme. As capitalism was making a great show of military and economic superiority, the confidence of

everyone in the capacity of the Workers State to survive was hanging by a thread. So was the idea of this Workers State's superiority, or that it would come out on the winning side. That thread was only as strong as one's trust in the ability of the world proletarian vanguard to preserve the Soviet Union. It was only as strong as the belief that the proletariat would hold back the bourgeoisies when they attacked the Soviet Union.

The second fundamental aspect of Trotsky's forecast is connected with his defence of the Soviet Union. He analysed that, by the manner of its resistance to Stalin, the Soviet proletariat had the highest historic understanding and consciousness. This fortified Trotsky in his determination to stand for the 'unconditional defence of the Soviet Union' as a principle – a matter in which Trotsky turned out to be completely vindicated: for no political or militant leader, no other theoretician or member of any Communist Party has left such a correct written record of forecasts about that period. Very far from this. The Communist International would only be dissolved in 1943, but just before the war, the Communist parties were already declaring themselves independent. The Communist Party of the United States decided to defend Yankee imperialism against the Soviet Union. Elsewhere, Communist parties were smashed, undone, broken up. Some opted for the capitalist camp, others for a policy of national conciliation with it, and in the end, no one stood up to foresee the obvious, never mind having a programme for it. The Communist parties had melted away.

During the war however, from 1944 onwards, other Workers States started coming to life, even in Poland. When the Nazis had to halt in front of the heroism of the Polish masses, that was because the nature of the war had changed. It had changed so much that it became

acknowledged. The heroism against the Nazis was no longer of the ordinary bourgeois, national or Jewish kind: it was the heroism of the proletarian vanguard in preparation for greater and higher things.

The masses of Yugoslavia and Tito had no material means apart from the extremely limited Soviet help. In spite of being short of every essential, they set up an army and they started defeating the Nazis. When they finally triumphed, the proof had arrived that the European masses and the proletariat of Europe, although led by a small Communist nucleus, were now using the capitalist war to create new Workers States.

The thinking of the masses in those days was entirely at variance with that of the communist leaders. The latter had dissolved the Communist International, to fall in line they said with the Teheran and Yalta agreements ⁽²⁾. Through those agreements, the Soviet bureaucracy had joined hands with world capitalism, with the intention to stop the extension and further development of the world revolution. The Soviet army however, and the Communist vanguard that had survived the war in various countries, took it upon themselves to act as Communist leadership. They imposed on Stalin to recognise China and Yugoslavia, as well as the other Workers States - something that Stalin had never wanted to do.

This could only have happened, and made possible, by the Soviet Workers State having survived: the USSR and its army, its cadres (when let out of prison) and sundry Bolsheviks who had remained in the Party that Stalin had been throttling. These forces united. They insisted in having the new Workers States of Eastern Europe recognised, supported and given some structures. It was the authority of the Soviet Workers State that imposed

this, its leading cadres included, as they faced the absolute necessity of the Workers State to expand.

The world proletariat itself had refused to believe in the destruction of the Soviet Union. Idiot Churchill says in his 1945 Memoirs that, some time in 1944, before the German capitulation, he had discussed with Roosevelt the idea of turning all the guns of the West against the Soviet Union. Roosevelt had answered that this was needed, certainly, but that to do it now would be folly. Should the West invade the USSR now, he said, the populations would be turn against. There had been hints of military defeat for Germany since 1942, and in 1944, the social situation had change. Seized by panic in the face of rolling revolutions, the capitalists could not hold on to Churchill's idea. Roosevelt's answer is testimony and proof of their alarm on observing that the masses had the resolve, and the force, to bring capitalism down. This was so not only in countries with weak bourgeoisies like Rumania and Czechoslovakia, but in the large capitalist countries too, like France, Germany, Italy and Britain.

Trotsky could not have foreseen these events in the form which they took; but his general orientation had pointed him correctly in this direction. He could not have said in advance how, or in what exact way new Workers States would be created. But he never gave up on the principle that the Soviet Workers State – and the masses of the world who had long acclaimed it – would be launching pads for more Workers States. He foresaw that the world vanguard and the USSR would join hands in some way against both capitalism and the Soviet bureaucracy. He never doubted that victory would go to the masses and not to capitalism or bureaucracy, even with all the limitations signified by the great shortfall in political leadership.

The documents Trotsky elaborated aimed at maintaining composure and confidence. He wanted the world Communist vanguard to remain sure that Socialism is necessary and inevitable; that when leadership is lacking, it can get created. Trotsky showed prescience when he said to the North American people in 1938: 'In ten years, millions of revolutionaries will move heaven and earth; they will know how to make history'. Trotsky may have worded this slightly differently, but this is the thought. He could not say precisely how, but he counted on the masses. He knew they would intervene to defend the Soviet Union and "move heaven and earth". In 1948, 12 new Workers States had been born. The masses had moved heaven and earth.

Trotsky's forecasts came from his ability to grasp the essential aspects of a process even when there was no telling how those aspects would combine. He did not look for ways to save himself. All he wanted was to be useful. To do that, he had to respond in the way which he did, knowing it would cost him his life. Had he kept quiet, not spoken out or intervened, the bureaucracy would have ignored him. The bureaucracy decided to murder him when his theoretical and political ability showed it could educate and influence the resolve of the proletarian vanguard, in the world and in the Soviet Union.

The Soviet bureaucracy confronted Yugoslavia and Tito more bitterly than the other Workers States. Tito's resistance held firm, albeit empirically. He stood his ground in a principled and unbending way - he would not capitulate to capitalism, even on Stalin's demand. Tito was going to conciliate with capitalism himself, later on, but that was because he could not help it, and his Party was not prepared enough. When he resisted, Tito demonstrated to the world proletarian vanguard that one could take on

Stalin and Stalinism, and world capitalism, both. Of all the Balkan countries, Yugoslavia had been the weakest from the economic point of view, and the most exposed, but Tito had been amongst the staunchest of leaders. And when Stalin called for Tito's destruction, no one in the USSR listened, and the Soviet army refused.

The Communists who launch accusations against the Soviet Union nowadays may have certain justifications. But they must consider that even under Stalin, in 1948, a part of the Soviet army had Trotsky's conceptions, without being Trotskyist. The Soviet army acted as if to say to Stalin: 'Yugoslavia may be a competitor, but it is not an enemy. It must not be hurt because it is necessary to the Soviet Workers State. Should it return to capitalism, this will go against the Soviet Workers State'. Pig-ignorant as always, the bureaucracy could not see this; but a sector of the Soviet army did, plus that part of the Communist Party that had no finger in the bureaucratic pie.

Every conclusion reached here returns to one central, categorical and undeniable fact: The Workers State engenders and creates the forces to defend itself. It does not invent those forces, or even stimulates them. It creates them. It creates the necessary defences both inside the Workers State and outside. There is nothing for it. For the development of the economy, of science and of society, the Workers State has to expand.

Looking over into the then coming war (1939) and the post-war future, Trotsky had envisaged a series of alternatives. One of his remarks reveals his train of thought. A journalist asked him: 'If revolutions break out after the war, what will happen to Stalin, Stalinism and the degeneration of the Workers State?'. Trotsky simply replied: 'In that case, the conditions that have provoked

the degeneration of the USSR will have disappeared'. He could hardly say more because he could not invent - but he opened the road upon which we are walking today. This reply was an invitation to carry on interpreting this question, and we have done it. We view this matter as closely associated with Trotsky's declaration that "within ten years, millions of revolutionaries will know how to move heaven and earth". Like him, we base our confidence on the historic role of the working class and the Soviet Workers State.

Because things have changed, it is not just a homage that we render here to Trotsky. We bring him today into the revolutionary life of our own historic process. He is there, alongside us. We feel his presence in the analyses which we make. To remember him means to give life to his thought, to make it apply, the same as he continued the living thought of Marx. This is how the living thought of these masters continues to live amongst us.

This is not fanciful you, it is real. Trotsky is here present with his thought, his confidence, his dynamism, his dedication to write and write. Through several attempts on his life, Stalin and the Soviet bureaucracy warned him to stop, but he could not stop. He knew that in persisting he was hastening his end, but he kept going: 'I need another five years to finish this work; after that, other revolutionaries will know what to do'.

Trotsky is one of the most dignified examples of the function of the revolutionary. And in the field of the revolutionary ideas, few have shown better than him the true force of ideas. No amount of mass suppression, of assassination, Hiroshima or atomic weapon, can crush the revolutionary idea, because the revolutionary idea is the consciousness of the unconscious process of history.

Trotsky embodied that consciousness although of course, the existence of the USSR lent consciousness as well to the historic process. Engels' epoch, for instance, had been that of the unconsciousness of history, but when Trotsky wrote, the Workers State was there, telling the world: 'This way!' - beacon of consciousness and guidance.

Trotsky set out to leave behind the principles to interpret and analyse history, and serve as bases in the future. You get a glimpse of this when someone asked both Lenin and Trotsky: 'Do you think that Socialism will triumph?' Both of them replied: 'Of course!' - 'Aren't you worried about where it all goes, and you making mistakes?' - Lenin answered: 'Of course. We can make mistakes, but mistakes do not scare us. We may be destroyed for wanting to help the revolution in Germany. If this happens, those who come after us will know better; they will have our experience before them, something that we don't have'. He meant the experience of the Workers State. Lenin was the genius of history. With the homogenous simplicity of Communism, he held fast to his chosen path of representative of the necessity of history. Lenin and Trotsky did not consider themselves geniuses. They never wanted to attract honour or acclaim, but to contribute to the progress of history.

Trotsky sought to leave behind a movement capable of intervening as he had done himself, a movement to work as world instrument, to centralise the capacity to think, to foresee and to plan how to intervene. He could not have known exactly what would happen, but he was certain of the revolution. He could not tell how, but he knew that 'within ten years, millions of revolutionaries will know how to move heaven and earth'. He could not say more but he knew that war leads to revolution. He had no previous historic reference against which to make comparisons. He

had to start from his knowledge that the Workers State imparts consciousness to the unconscious process of history. He did not use those words, but we make this interpretation with the principles that he gave us.

Trotsky saw in the Workers State a tool which humanity and the vanguard had acquired. He focused his concerns on what this tool was going to need in the future. The Workers State in Stalin's hands was then passing through the greatest trials of history. In 1938, the whole Bolshevik vanguard had been assassinated and the Bolshevik Party stifled. A campaign had started threatening the very existence of the communist parties.

That was when Trotsky founded the IV International, and it turned out to be an irreplaceable necessity. Trotsky did it to prepare in view of what he saw history had in store. The setting up the IV International, and with a programme in continuation of the Russian Revolution, needed a world team of leaders and revolutionaries. That team had to be utterly self-confident. It had to have no doubt about Socialism being an absolute necessity of history; an absolute necessity of history and not just a simple requirement of the working class - absolute in the sense of Socialism as a necessity for the whole of humanity.

Vietnam gives the proof today of how Socialism is indispensable to humanity. The Vietnamese bourgeoisie resisted violently at first, but even in that bourgeoisie, sectors lost the drive to return to private property. Socialism does this. Even where it has no economic bases, it has the effect of winning people. It wins people over through the social relations it inspires, the heroic conduct, the human dignity of everyone, young and old. The socialist relations dissolve the sentiments, the consciousness and the conventions of private property. We

do not say that this eliminates the capitalist class, but that in Vietnam, the Workers State decides now, and no longer the capitalist class. The Vietnamese Workers State puts up a fight against the counter-revolution of course, but on top of this, the forces of counter-revolution have lost much of their powers because Socialism disarms the old attitudes. It disarms and disorganises them, laying the bases for more elevated sentiments and consciousness that destroy private property at the roots. Vietnam shows how to have confidence in the coherence of the future of history.

Capitalism moulds the human being for a life that goes little beyond the scramble for property, money acquisition and capital accumulation. Capitalism has had centuries to build the capitalist class consciousness. See how Vietnam neutralises half of its capitalist class in only a few years! Mind that it is not strictly Vietnam that does this however. It is assisted in this by the Soviet Union having already done it with its triumph over the Nazis. And then, the mobilisations of the masses in Cambodia and Laos did this too - and those of Cuba. Vietnam implemented change, but all these others contributed to the confidence.

Trotsky could not foresee all this, but he set up the Fourth International to perpetuate the function of *International*. He had always rated the task of the Communist International well beyond numerical successes. He saw in the International the way to create conscious leaderships, transmit experiences, unite the world forces and stimulate revolutions. The International communicates confidence even to countries without revolutions. It deepens the ability, the experience and the organisation of the revolutionary movements. When he gave central stage to the Soviet Workers State, Trotsky's Fourth International allowed the Workers State to weigh in history, impelling it.

At the point when Trotsky decided to form the IV International, the Third International still existed (it was only formally dissolved by Stalin in 1943). The latter had even held a farcical Seventh World Congress in 1936. The principle of struggling for power in order to build a Workers State had not figured in there, of course. It was only relatively recently that the Soviet Workers State had been built, but the USSR had already proven its power and development. Trotsky saw that there was no one to preserve this principle apart from the IV International.

Today, the fear and reluctance of Communist parties to support the Soviet Union may be harking back to that period. In depth however, they surrender to the consciousness and sentiments of the Soviet bureaucracy. They share in the same paralysing regional and trivial interests to the point of no longer envisaging (proletarian) forms of economic or political unification across capitalist boundaries, if only for the sake of their mutual defence against the capitalist system. The Soviet Union and other Workers States do not go along with this, having other differences, but their leaderships also encourage internal regional interests which sap at the base, at the ability, at the force and at the historic experience of socialist construction.

When he founded the IV International, Trotsky took on this huge task with practically no material means. He wanted to preserve the continuity of revolutionary thought for the future. He did not expect much development for the IV International before, or during the war, but he counted on what would happen later. In 1938, his view was that 'within ten years' there would be 'millions of revolutionaries'. He did not say that millions would follow the IV International by 1948, but that millions would follow its programme.

Trotsky focused on the building the IV International by equipping it with the most indispensable of political documents. Aware of the limited time left to him, he set out to spread comprehension and confidence in the world Communist vanguard: showing how to wait, how to deal with the delays of history.

He had to build such a movement from nothing at all, without any immediate perspective of development, against a great deal of incomprehension. For wasn't the Soviet Union to be seen crushing the Bolshevik Revolution and the Bolshevik leadership? Just when world war was coming at the USSR from all sides, likely to engulf it? Trotsky had no material means, no team or hardly anyone; and he, himself, was the victim of numerous attempts on his life, the last two the worst. He put every effort into creating a team prepared to wait, based on ideas, on programme, on practical revolutionary militant life; a team able to use the delays and the rhythms of history. When and how? ... He could not say. And it is starting from nothing that he prepared this movement for the long haul!

Trotsky prepared the IV International for the day when the process of revolution would advance and develop once again. For those following him, it was going to be necessary to learn how to wait. This could only be done by building confident teams, convinced, sure of themselves on the basis of the ideas and of the essential objectives.

Trotsky does not use his texts to polemicise against Stalin. Where he refers to controversies and necessary criticisms, it is to educate the vanguard. He makes no personal polemics in the defence of his work or of his actions in history. He prepares a new vanguard in the understanding of how to continue the revolution. Each of his texts is brilliant display of historical grasp, inspired forecasts and

conscious briefings for a vanguard he knew he would never meet, all this deliberately and on purpose.

'The Revolution Betrayed' is just 40 years old this year. It is a historic monument. It is not 'a text of polemic' as left-wing pundits say glibly. It is even less a polemic with Stalin. It simply analyses how the first Workers State became limited by the failure of the world revolution to expand. How this led to an internal situation of retreat, situation which did not create a Stalin but which engendered him. We say 'engendered' because the elements for the advent of a Stalin had existed before, in wait for conditions favourable to someone like him.

Trotsky kept on briefing a new vanguard. He had the difficult task of explaining the Workers State at the level needed to inspire its unconditional defence - and he did this expertly. He never gave in to Stalin on a one hand, but on the other, he never hesitated to support the Stalinian leadership against capitalism. Trotsky was at his finest over Poland and Finland (when he supported the entry of the Soviet troops in Poland and Finland in defence of the USSR against the Nazis. Editorial note). On occasions like this, Trotsky gave practical demonstration of how to profit from historic conditions, while fully standing the ground in defence of the Workers State as historical instrument and conquest.

In *'The Revolution Betrayed'*, Trotsky expands on his previous criticisms of Stalin and the Soviet leadership. In the USSR's retreat, he said, the Russian Revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet functioning were not at fault. The only one out was Stalin, not the Workers State. Stalin's rise was not inherent to the Workers State, but circumstantial to events in the world process at the time. Stalin would have pushed history even further back

had this particular Workers State not been built on the rock-solid principles of Lenin and Trotsky, mostly Lenin's.

Trotsky saw that it was necessary to create a new vanguard capable of waiting. Now that we look back, this took twenty years. Twenty years! Such a wait demands a lot in terms of human confidence and Trotsky worked at preparing it. '*The Revolution Betrayed*' is not a dispute with the Soviet bureaucracy. For the communist vanguard, its theoretical and scientific analysis is an inspiration. It passes on knowledge, security, ability and every reason to look forward to the future of history.

'*The Revolution Betrayed*' shows in detail how the Workers State is legitimate and not its degeneration. Between its degeneration and the historic necessity of the Workers State, it is the necessity of the Workers State that wins. Stalinism was no necessity whatever - this is why it was flushed down the hole. It was a tumour on a necessary body. One had to wait for a more distant future, not with the fingers crossed but attentive to every sign of recovery. Every theoretical analysis confirmed that the advent of a Stalin had no origins in the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the Soviets or in the Workers State. Stalin had risen from the historic conditions of a given time, in specific social and world relations. One had now to organise in prevision of the return of conditions favourable to the reanimation of the Workers State.

In 1937-38 however, the prevision was that of war, the war of capitalism against the Workers State. Trotsky wrote '*The Revolution Betrayed*' (1937) in the thought that the Workers State was coming up for its historic trial, and that once the test was passed, humanity was going to surge forward with enormous confidence. Trotsky wanted to leave to the future a dependable interpretation of the

Russian Revolution. He showed and communicated the theoretical and practical capacity required to understand the Russian Revolution and the Workers State. He insisted on saying that Stalin did not stem from any perversion in the Workers State, in the dictatorship of the proletariat or in proletarian internationalism. Stalin had emerged from particular social historic conditions in the world retreat of the revolution, with the inexperience of the world proletariat and petty bourgeoisie added to it.

Ultimately, what had been a lack in the permanent instruments through which the proletariat could demonstrate its authority and lead the petty bourgeoisie. These in-depth historic revolutionary observations did not win Trotsky many accolades when he lived, and there were not that many Trotskyists either. This is why he did not use this book for large anti-Stalinist rallies. He focused instead on educating a new vanguard in the recognition of rhythms and delays and the role of historic patience. He did not write to get glory.

It was not Trotsky's aim to prove himself right and Stalin wrong. His aim was to defend the Workers State. When the time came of the Soviet Workers State's confrontation with capitalism, in 1939, Trotsky called on the world working class, the proletarian vanguard, all the progressive elements to defend the USSR. The USSR was still showing the road to progress; it was still the beacon, still capable of a positive contribution. One had to defend the communist principles in general and the Workers State in particular. This infinitely important conclusion has any number of lessons to teach about tactics.

Mind that the idea of the *defence of the Workers State* is not a creation of Trotsky. It comes from Marx who treasured every instrument useable against the capitalist

system. Indeed, any such instrument must be defended, improved and impelled. If it contains negative and bureaucratic contradictory aspects – contradictory but not antagonistic – one must count on overcoming them in the future, as part of the advance of the world relations of forces.

Trotsky defended the USSR and showed the way for those coming after him to continue doing the same, which includes ourselves. He did not publish to prove that he was right and that Stalin was a vile pervert. He wrote to show the need to defend the instrument represented by the Workers State, its leadership included, even if that leadership was Stalin. Trotsky never confused the Workers State and its Stalinist leadership, but when the capitalist system attacked the Workers State, he did not hesitate to support the Soviet Union, Stalinism and all. This is what he did on the occasion of the Soviets' invasion of Poland and Finland.

With his unconditional defence of the Soviet Workers State, he never stopped applying this essential principle, which he did as the great tactician that he was. At the time of Brest-Litovsk, the [Bolsheviks'] concessions had had a similar thrust: Give an inch and save the day. In the case of Poland and Finland, the Soviet invasion was right, even when it was Stalin doing it.

It is not really an homage that we render to Trotsky. We return to his teachings and experiences to review our own intervention, comparing, measuring, affirming. The experience that we (Posadists) have contributed to, was rejected by the members of the old Trotskyist team. That team (Pablo's) contained intellectuals, writers, old communist militants, embassy functionaries, employees of capitalism and others who became impotent, feckless,

individualistic and egoistical. None of them managed to keep confidence in the consistent application of the Marxist method. They did not believe in the inevitable regeneration of the Workers States. It is us, ourselves, who maintained unwaveringly that, since the Workers State managed to triumph (in WW2), its regeneration would come.

Again however, it was necessary to wait. All the old Trotskyist movement degenerated. It decomposed and became corrupted. Its evolution kept essentially mired in impatience, arrogance and petty bourgeois superficiality, i.e., the not knowing how to wait. As individuals, they became history illustrators, keen on public acclaim and recognition. They would not fasten themselves to the scientific method and learn how to wait. The result was that they could not keep going, and they deserted.

Today, there is the clear and obvious progress represented by more than one Workers State in the world; but this progress is only in continuation to what was already discernible in 1940. At the time of Trotsky's assassination, it was not possible to have the clarity that we can have today, when we look back upon events like 1948, 1953 or 1956⁽³⁾ for instance; yet, all the elements necessary for their interpretation were already present in 1940.

None of the old Trotskyists learnt to wait, but Trotsky's address was for those who would wait: 'Millions of revolutionaries will know how to move heaven and earth'. He did not say 'millions in the IV International' but 'millions of revolutionaries', in the Soviet Workers State therefore, and other Workers States to come. The desertion of the old Trotskyist movement may have coincided with the ebbing of a stage, but in depth, it came from seeing the continuation of the revolution in its Stalinian garb as a new form of historic perversion.

In 1946, some militants and leaders of the IV International like Germain wrote documents on '*The historic glacis*'. Germain called the East European Workers States '*The glacis*', a notion not unlike Solzhenitsyn's later. 'Glacis' meant: oppression, bureaucracy, rampant bureaucratic almightiness. Germain's analyses never asked why Workers States carried on being built. For him, they simply carried on extending the Soviet bureaucracy.

The old Trotskyists could not understand the changes in history, like the liberation of India. They did not see progress in Ceylon and even less in Latin America - reason why they degenerated. They understood neither the process of Peron in Argentina, nor that in Guatemala, Venezuela or Colombia - not even Bolivia (1952). They saw nothing happening there. In 1947, they were saying in their review 'IV International', that the nationalist movement of Villarroel in Boliva⁽⁴⁾ was an agent of Yankee imperialism!

The IV International was built by Trotsky as an instrument to understand, to analyse and to intervene in the process of history. Of course, nothing of this is set in stone. Created in 1938, the programme the IV International ⁽⁵⁾ could only give a general outline of the historic process. But that process did lead to the defeat of capitalism, source of regenerations and of new revolutions. Trotsky could not say what struggles would lead to today's process and its regeneration. He could not know how the Communist movement would get re-structured. He had no element on this. It was up to the very IV International that he created to continue, and this is what we (Posadists) have done. The IV International of Pablo and company gave many proofs of incapacity, and its people showed no understanding.

It was with great superficiality that Pablo, Mandel, Livio Maitan, Pierre Franck, treated the ideas. They never believed in any Partial Regeneration in the Workers State. In actual depth, they never accepted that Stalinism and the degeneration of the Russian Revolution originated in the world process – instead of in the Workers State, the Soviets and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

With such a loss of confidence in the Workers State, these Trotskyists did not see the Partial Regeneration when it came. Their refusal to see it confirms that it was the Workers State that they had come to suspect all along. They had come to suspect the Workers State, and Lenin therefore, Trotsky and the Soviets. Having lost the means by which to know that regeneration was inevitable, they deviated and left the road. This separated them from the course of history, and now that regeneration is very clear and obvious, none of them has wanted to change or to contribute anything to its progress.

This present text is not so much a homage to Trotsky as a tribute to his guiding ability and precision of thought. Backed by the scientific method of thought and the force of the Workers State, we follow Trotsky's orientations and keep them updated. This is what has brought all of us here. We celebrate that, on this 40th Anniversary of '*The Revolution Betrayed*' and 36th Anniversary of his assassination, Trotsky's ideas, forecasts, confidence and optimism, are all fully vindicated.

The essential principles of Trotsky are in operation in the world revolutionary movement. The Permanent Revolution is part of the Political Revolution, meaning that most backward countries leap over intermediate stages to become Workers States. The Political Revolution that would have had an inevitably violent character in the past now

takes much less violent forms. In many countries, violence is not required at all in view of the world balance of forces.

Armed with such foresight and competence, we maintain the functioning of Trotsky's IV International. Our Posadist IV International must never stop living the experiences of history because this is how it knows what is demanded by the process at every turn. This was Trotsky's method when he founded the IV International, and even before that, with the Left Opposition in 1927, or when he laid the first foundations for the IV International in 1932 and 1934.

Trotsky wanted to build in good time the tool of experience, political ability and related organisational, practical and tactical capabilities. This done, others will know how to rid power and history of every kind of usurper – a thing that will inevitably happen, never fear. Socialism is an irreversible necessity of history. When history does not find its conscious representation, it invents it. As Socialism suffers no invention, history keeps throwing out the invented leaders, bringing forward its own.

The Political Revolution need not take violent forms in all the Workers States: proof is the USSR, Yugoslavia, Cuba, Vietnam. Vietnam has undergone a complete regeneration from the military point of view. It is now reorganising its society very rapidly. In becoming a Workers State, it took a leap in the direction of complete regeneration. But this process is plagued by poverty, in a country constantly threatened by the wars of the old capitalist-imperialist system. Forced to dedicate so much of its industrial capacity to war, its economy grows only slowly.

All the theoretical, programmatic and organisational principles of Trotsky are being confirmed. But as he could not see the exact forms that the course of the process would take, his programme was only a guideline. Aspects

in his Founding Programme are still valid however: sliding scale of wages, sliding scale of working hours, statification (state ownership/planning) of 'lame duck' enterprise, workers control and a leading role for women, children and the old – principles that come up in any revolution.

Trotsky posited two brilliant concepts about Women and Youth that were not highly regarded at the time: The first is that every revolution heightens their role; the second is that revolution is the key to woman's liberation. Communists and Socialists had not a single idea about these principles when Trotsky enounced them, but they are in full force today! Trotsky laid down the principles, years and years ahead of their time. His slogans were class, historic, and revolutionary responses to the capitalist system. They included: No company to be closed, statification of any failing company under workers' control, and workers' commissions. These points of programme have never been as relevant as now.

Trotsky foresaw fascism and that it would be defeated. There was no inviolable need for fascism; it was an excrescence of humanity and it would be defeated. Fascism was the product of the defeat of the proletariat, but prospects were of more revolutions and not of defeats! It followed that fascism had no future.

Trotsky's programme amounts to a historical forecast. There is not another revolutionary writer or leader like him. About the historic period we live in today, no-one in any Communist Party or in the Soviet Union has left anything remotely comparable to his analyses and forecasts. When Trotsky was publishing his Transitional Programme, the Soviet bureaucracy was busy dissolving the Communist International ⁽⁶⁾ and "eliminating the class struggle" in the Soviet Union. The Soviet bureaucrats so

keen to withdraw "the State formula" from everything in those days, were not backward in the use of State oppression against the Soviet people. Perish the thought of them foreseeing the world course of the revolution! They did not even foresee that, under the stewardship of Stalin, they were entering an alliance with the capitalist system.

But Trotsky foresaw. With the *Foundation Programme of the IV International*, he was seeing years ahead, and in 1938 he could say: 'Within ten years, millions of revolutionaries will know how to move heaven and earth'. He saw WW2 approaching, and with it, the revolution. He knew through analysis the potential of un-organised social forces behind the 1934 magnificent general strike in France. There had been the no less magnificent general strike of 1926 in Britain, and in 1938-39 there was now the resistance of the German proletariat to Nazism. The latter showed all its insecurity by daily killings. As the German people were not intimidated, the fascists had to step up the killings. Still the German proletariat was not intimidated: It was waiting for the right moment.

Trotsky organised the IV International with the particular concern to value capacity and experience. The need would be for the IV International to learn from the revolutionary process. It would have to get ready to intervene in the conditions of after the war. Trotsky made the IV International with such purposes in mind. Aware of his programmatic limitations regarding the post-war period, he focused on the general idea: 'War will bring revolution, and the Women and the Young will play fuller parts'.

Trotsky's principles in '*The Revolution Betrayed*' were correct and still are. His historic conclusion was that the degeneration of the Workers State had not been due to the Workers State, but to the world retreat of the revolution.

This is confirmed today in the fact that the reanimation of the world revolution brings with it conditions opposed to degeneration and announce more human progress to come.

Trotsky never spoke of 'regeneration' but he signed in that direction: 'The old conditions that produced the bureaucracy no longer exist', he said. He could not say much more about it, but he sensed the future when he announced with grit: 'Within ten years, millions of revolutionaries will know how to move heaven and earth'. He was even more precise: 'Revolution is certain. The war (WW2) will end in revolution and the bases that caused bureaucratic retreat will be gone'. This was his meaning, and now, it is for us to foresee the new historic course.

Through his writings, Trotsky was organising the leaders of the future who he knew he would never meet. In the last few years of his life, he hurried to finish his texts full of theoretical ability and vigour. His texts aimed at the Communist parties and world Communist vanguard inside and outside the Workers States. They were a voice of conscious confidence based on theoretical knowledge and practical experience. Trotsky saw the process as moving inexorably towards Socialism, the latter being a historic and human necessity, even for the progress of science. This historic necessity finds a shortage of revolutionary leaderships, but these will come as part of the uninterrupted progress of the development of history.

Trotsky's every forecast reflects his confidence in the determination of the working class to bring revolutionary transformation to the process of history. Compared to the petty bourgeoisie nowadays, the working class is diminished in numbers and in direct authority; but as represented by the Workers States, the working class is the class that wins people and influences society, the petty

bourgeoisie particularly. For the working class helps the petty bourgeoisie into the realisation that capitalism does not merit the gift of its intelligence. It is the Workers States that carry the conditions for human development, and this is so in every field: intelligence, consciousness, sentiments and human relations.

Whilst the historic forces of the proletariat diminish in number, their concentrated weight increases in the capitalist countries and in the Workers States. The Workers States are the conveyors of the historic proletarian concept of disinterest in individual property. The realisation that the economy must be organised on the basis of State property rests on an essential proletarian concept, and indeed this concept originates neither from the petty bourgeoisie nor from the intellectuals.

Trotsky wanted the IV International armed with the principles it was going to need during the coming war, and the post-war. Beyond that, the International would have to learn. Trotsky focused consciously on this matter. He wrote his '*Stalin*', '*Stalin's Crimes*' and '*The III International after Lenin*' in a marathon against time. These texts insisted on the fact that the power of Stalin, even if perhaps greater than that of the capitalists, did not come from any flaw, any weakness or any error in the conception of the Socialist revolution. Stalin's power had come from socio-historical circumstances that had been incidental.

Stalin came out of fortuitous historic conditions. Trotsky wanted it never forgotten that the Stalinist excrescence inside the Workers State was not a necessity of history. Like a growth on the social body, Stalin represented neither the process of the revolution nor the need of the Workers State to expand. He was a stranger to all this. In naming Stalin 'the growth', Trotsky was identifying Stalin

as separate from the function of the Workers State.

Trotsky wanted the proletarian vanguard to be in no doubt: Stalinism was not due to the dictatorship of the proletariat or to any Soviet form of democracy. It was not due to the character of the Workers State and even less to the revolution. Neither was it due to any absence of economic or political pluralism. Stalinism had emerged from historic and transitory conditions that had lain in the changing world relations of forces between the Soviet Union and world capitalism. In the face of it, it was necessary to remain steadfast and learn how to wait until the return of the revolutionary tide. This sums up Trotsky's work.

In *'The III International after Lenin'*, Trotsky shows how Stalin's policies had nothing to do with socialist construction. Communism inspired none of the measures that Stalin took as he led the proletariat into defeats. These defeats did not come from any proletarian inadequacy in front of world capitalism. They came from the Stalin's bureaucratic apparatus bent on failing revolutions, as in Spain, in order to preserve itself as a bureaucratic apparatus. There was nothing inevitable in Stalin's policies, although ultimately, they were the consequence of a historic stage that had started in 1924, when the world relation of forces had become transitorily unfavourable to revolution.

Trotsky insisted that bureaucracy was not inherent to the Workers State. It was not inherent to the communist movement or to any communist programme or policy. It came out of historic and transient conditions. These conditions would be surpassed, bringing reanimation, and with it, new advances in the world communist movement.

Trotsky's focus was on analysing who Stalin was and why he had come about. In his close examination of the historic

causes of bureaucracy, he showed that they had roots neither in Soviet functioning nor in the Workers State. They had no origins in the planned economy, in proletarian internationalism or in the dictatorship of the proletariat! Particular conditions in the relations of world forces had weakened the dictatorship of the proletariat, and this had buttressed a bureaucratic Party apparatus.

In every revolution, although less today, you see the emergence of bureaucratic leaderships. The tendency is to profit from the revolution and appropriate its benefits. The possibilities and elements for *Thermidors* are never very far off. The conditions for this are decreasing however, and Portugal is an example ⁽⁷⁾.

Trotsky was intent on showing that the ebbing of the Russian Revolution was no indictment of revolution or its methods. You get reverses, they may last a few years, yet they are circumstantial. Stalin's crimes and policies were no emanation of Soviet power. Indeed, they came from the usurpation of Soviet power, against which Trotsky used to prescribe the remedy of Soviet democracy.

When Trotsky and Lenin applied the NEP ⁽⁸⁾, they proposed the counterweight of more dictatorship of the proletariat and more workers' control. They wanted the organisms of workers power reinforced in the factories, on housing estates, in enterprises and banks. Their intention was to stop the careerism and 'functionarism' that breed capitalist elements and the bureaucrats that pander to them.

Trotsky wrote to stop the proletarian and Communist vanguard thinking that a Stalin would always come with a Workers State, and that the First Workers State had been a failure in that way. But it was not like this. Stalin had pointed to an imbalance in the relations of history and an anomaly. Not to forget that, while there was no support for

it in the capitalist world, this first historic experience in the construction of a Workers State had no other previous Workers State to look up to. Trotsky showed that one had to learn how to wait. Wanting nothing in competition with Stalin, he stood as the organiser of the comprehension of history, of the experience of history.

Trotsky put everything he knew in his '*Stalin*'. This book is a work of genius of the most important ever written. He was Stalin's prime target. Attacked, humiliated and insulted by Stalin, Trotsky held fast to the notions of the legitimacy of the Russian Revolution and the illegitimacy of Stalin. Stalin was not the consequence of the revolution but the consequence of the retreat of the revolution. Trotsky kept on at this. He showed also that, although the ebbing forces of the Russian Revolution did not drag Stalin back into the sea, the Russian Revolution never returned to square one in spite of Stalin.

Trotsky acknowledged that Stalin had displayed qualities. He had been more than an ordinary member of the Bolshevik Party. He had held positions where important qualities had been wanted, and he had lived up to them. Stalin had had qualities before he became the bureaucrat that throttled the Russian Revolution.

Trotsky created the IV International to serve the continuation of the revolution. He relayed his historic experience through his theoretical, political and organisational form of life. The International was the means to intervene in history and learn how to wait. Such is Trotsky's most complete and important achievement.

'*The Revolution Betrayed*' (1937) was a timely book because the world communist movement had started to think the Soviet Union would not survive. In it, Trotsky reiterated the basics: the factors of defeat for the Spanish Revolution

resulted from the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy. Nothing in the class struggle or in the world was determining defeat. In Mexico at that time, Cardenas ⁽⁹⁾ was giving an enormous boost to the world Socialist revolution. Trotsky persisted in showing that the balance of world forces was not entirely on the side of capitalism. And that was the case indeed, the tide had already started to turn.

Before the Spanish Civil War, there had been a general strike in France. The Cardenas movement in Mexico had come to government in 1934, nationalising the main properties of British and Yankee imperialism, welcoming Trotsky. The world balance of forces was not entirely unfavourable to the proletariat; and a simple event, like this in Mexico, had served to encourage reanimation in the world communist movement.

Trotsky founded the IV International since there was no other instrument to elaborate thought, to organise, to live theoretically and politically and to create new cadres for the world communist movement. After the Russian Revolution, this is Trotsky's most outstanding and impressive contribution. In the degeneration of the III International, he identified the start of the rot: It had not come from the revolutionary progress of history but from a leadership alien to that progress and opposed to the advance of the world socialist revolution. Against all those who considered that the Russian Revolution had failed, Trotsky's genuine application of the method of dialectical materialism foresaw that the world revolution would recover once the [coming] war was over.

Trotsky created the IV International for that purpose. Although no more than a handful of people attended on foundation day, the adopted programmes, policies and ideas are as useful today as they were then. Some of the

principles may seem a bit dated, but they still serve today, like the very first one written at the top of the *Foundation Programme*: The crisis of humanity is a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat¹. Trotsky enounced this very true principle in 1938.

Capitalism cannot be lasting much longer now. People are increasingly aware of this. This lessens 'the crisis of humanity' but 'the crisis of leadership' is still very much with us! The Workers State proved to be infinitely superior to capitalism, so one must help it to become regenerated, ousting the bureaucracy, and favouring leaderships interested in the objective and scientific progress of the world revolution. This is the road to Socialism.

The historic stage of today is very different from that when Trotsky lived. Today, the function of the IV International is no longer what it was when people had to be reassured and given confidence in the Workers State. This confidence is now acquired. We want to become part of the new leadership of the world Communist movement. We want to become part of it and help its development.

Our confidence in the process of Partial Regeneration rests on socialism being a necessity of history. The necessity of history is driven by the economy and by science, that is to say, by human intelligence. Limitless and unceasing, the economy and science need conditions for their development. Historic objectivity is one of these conditions. In the regime of private property however, it is the private interest that commands the economy. The private interest submits everything to the empiricism of inter-capitalist competition, the market and capitalist production. It is the socialist order on the other hand that

¹ "The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterised by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat". Trotsky, first line of *The Transitional Program*.

eliminates the private interest and competition. In marshalling every force, every energy and every ability, the socialist order concentrates human intelligence. The distinctive feature of human behaviour in Socialism is humaneness. Capitalism is not humane. Neither is the bureaucracy, nor the bureaucratic party. What is required is the scientific party.

Our confidence lies in what our Marxist masters have taught us. It is not just that Socialism is better, which it is, but that Socialism is an objective necessity of history. In history, the ability to foresee processes, developments and stages is imperative. Without it, no-one can tell what is to be done at any moment. With this ability, one can foresee at every turn and plan the foresight consciously. Trotsky's genius was rooted in this logical necessity of history. A necessity that he summarised when he said that the human being that could pass from Ape to Man would surely get to Socialism! This is a scientific principle. But whilst passing from Ape to Man was a natural process, the construction of Socialism needs the social intervention of the human beings. This intervention is greatly delayed today by the lack of a prepared Party. But since it took millions of years from Ape to Man, hasn't nature been immeasurably slower than us?

The activity of the Party is irreplaceable. Its tasks do not carry themselves out! Events left to their own devices lead to bureaucracy, and bureaucracy leads to thousands of monstrosities. This gives to the historic enemy a thousand reasons to call out, delay, postpone and divert the progress of history. It also leads to more wars, destructions, killings, disasters, etc. Death is the price exacted not just by hunger, drought, flood and outright war, but by every action of private property.

On the road of ineluctable advance towards Socialism, human volition becomes a concrete instrument. You could say that, in the end, what looks like human volition is the volition of history. For the human will is but the conscious representation of the will of history. It forms part of the necessity of history. Engels says: 'In the elimination of every dictatorship there is a consciousness of freedom'. Indeed. One becomes conscious of being free when doing everything necessary to assist human progress.

The necessity of Socialism does not come from it following philosophical, mathematical or social prescriptions. Socialism is necessary in its being a requirement and an exigency. Humanity is aware that any further progress in science, the economy and human relations, demands the elimination of the present property relations. Humanity is aware also that society has developed beyond the point where capitalism, still in charge of economic development, can grant any further progress. If the proletariat is to have an existence, it must bring down capitalism. In so doing, it must create a new society without proprietors. The realisation that this is the case makes a unity between Socialism and the intellectuals. When we pose that Socialism requires Soviet democracy, it is because the proletariat exists and the scientific process demands it.

Having considered again Trotsky's works from 1905 to 1940, we reviewed the great fertility and force of his theoretical and political principles. These now sustain us in our own experience and development of our own scientific capacity. We draw our confidence from the method that Trotsky taught us. That confidence gives us the understanding that *Partial Regeneration* will lead to *Complete Regeneration*. We are a part of the world Communist movement, and we will eventually be its most important wing. Wings, tendencies, groups and

bureaucracies result from the discrepancy between the increased scope, elevation and extension of the revolution, and the persistent lack of homogenous leadership to interpret and foresee. As the process advances and becomes unified, the world working-class influences the rest of society. Human intelligence grows and insists on its right to have a say on every important question.

What humanity has acquired above all is the knowledge of what is to be done. It has learnt how to plan, how to lead. It has discovered that when the participation of the population increases, would-be bureaucracy gets cast out or avoided. This is happening in Vietnam, Mozambique, Cuba, and in the Soviet Union. It is happening in other countries too, even if more slowly. Wherever you have revolution, organs of the whole population appear, wanting participation, control and leadership. You can observe this at times on housing estates, in neighbourhoods, in factories and in offices.

There is a profusion of initiatives and interventions on the part of the peoples of the world nowadays. This holds back the formation of bureaucratic apparatuses, or it stops them from becoming stable and functional. It hinders the creation and development of those bureaucratic apparatuses whose main concern in life is to stop revolutions. As a result, the more the world revolution gains in breadth and scope, the easier it becomes to guard against bureaucratisation. Where this happens, the intelligence of everyone which develops all the more looks to have its say in the leaderships that builds Socialism.

We are part of the intelligence of humanity. We have experience in how to function and organise. We have the indispensable and irreplaceable foresight that the world Communist movement needs for the construction of

Socialism. Our confidence in the future lies in our participation and our capacity to interpret that humanity needs Socialism. Socialism cannot be built without Marxism. Marxism cannot be built without Soviet democracy, and Soviet democracy cannot operate without the integration of all the intelligence of all humanity.

We derive a great confidence from recalling Trotsky, and we feel an immense joy in recalling the greatness of his work. Trotsky's work has been validated by the process of history. It is full of the teachings that he developed, or helped to develop, which have become central to the development of ourselves as Trotskyism-Posadism today.

We look forward to when, in not so many years to come, the '*Complete Regeneration*' of the Communist movement will be talked about even more than the book "*The Revolution Betrayed*". The road that leads from now to then will be bound to make people want to discuss, assimilate and finally replace '*The Revolution Betrayed*' in its proper historic context.

Today (1976), Trotsky is being read officially in the Soviet Union. It is done discreetly because the bureaucracy is still in charge. But in most of the world communist parties, Trotsky is read as a matter of course, as a writer of the world Communist movement.

J. POSADAS, 25 August 1976

Editorial Notes :

(1) 36th Anniversary of Trotsky's assassination: On 20 August 1940, Trotsky was murdered by an envoy of Stalin in Coyoacan, his residence in Mexico.

(2) Teheran Conference: First meeting between Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill, from 2 to 7 December 1943.

Yalta (Crimea) Accords: Set up to define 'zones of influence'. Germany was divided and territories of Poland carved up. The policy of Stalin allowed the 'Allies' to impose that, in the countries freed by the Red Army, 'Popular Democracies' would be set-up where Communists and Socialists would be made to share power with former nobles.

(3) 1948 Events: Power taking by the Communist parties of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria and China.

1953 Events: Revolt of the Berlin workers against Stalin's bureaucracy.

1956 Events: The working class rose in Hungary and Poland against the bureaucracy but reactionary sectors seeking a return to capitalism became involved. This gave pretext to the Soviet bureaucracy for an armed intervention that crushed the movement.

(4) Villarreal Galberto (1908-1946): Bolivia's president 1943-48. He gave expression to nationalist tendencies that became evident later, in the revolution of 1952.

(5) Transitional Programme: Set out by Trotsky for the Foundation of the IV International in 1938 - and programme for the war.

(6) Dissolution of the Communist International (III International): In 1943, Stalin decided to dissolve the Communist International to reassure Roosevelt and Churchill that world revolution would not be encouraged, and that there would be no coordination of the Communist parties for any power-taking outside agreed 'influence zones'.

(7) Portugal: Reference to the historic experience of the 1974 'Carnations Revolution' when the fascist dictatorship of Salazar was overthrown by a revolutionary movement of the Armed Forces united to the Portuguese people.

(8) NEP (New Economic Policy): Economic concessions granted to the private sector in the USSR, particularly in the countryside, adopted in 1921 after the 'War Communism' phase. These measures were intended to be transitory.

(9) Cardenas Lazaro: President of Mexico; belonged to the nationalist movement that continued the ideas and the programme of the 1910 Mexican Revolution. In 1938, he nationalised the oil industry. In government, he granted political asylum to Trotsky.

THE HISTORIC FUNCTION OF TROTSKY'S LIFE IN MEXICO

J. POSADAS

November 1973

The years Trotsky spent in Coyoacan ⁽¹⁾ are crucially important for the present generations, for the scientists and the workers' leaders who make themselves consciously available to lead revolutionary movements or to build Communism. In Mexico, Trotsky dedicated disciplined and conscious years to his aim. Aware of the threat on his life, he strained every sinew to stay alive as long as possible. Neither neglectful of his life nor avaricious with it, he showed that this is the way to live. This is one of the most beautiful experiences and examples ever.

The house where Trotsky committed his life in this way must be made to communicate this achievement. It must not simply show that 'Trotsky studied here' and 'touched that object...', but how he organised himself consciously. This is the house where he called on all his energy and ability, and willed them to do their very best. In this time of great reverses, it was not just programme and policy that he was passing on, but the principle of confidence in the future of Socialism.

Everything Trotsky has left is enormously important for the cadres of the world Communist movement and ourselves as well. Today's Communist leaders need the food for thought that Trotsky left them. It is a fact that, at the worst possible times and when everything seemed lost to Stalin, some Communists looked up to Trotsky for his confidence and security in the future. Trotsky's life is about this, and the house in Mexico must be made to convey this.

The house must be open to the public. It must be a permanent and communicative exhibition for the public to come and see what Trotsky did, what he left. The core of what he left is ideas, writings and the method to analyse history. Trotsky represents living Marxism, as constant and significant as history itself. Because his focus was on ideas, the house cannot be like an art gallery. Trotsky is no longer with us but his ideas still tower over human thought, ordering it. We pay homage to him, as we do to the incorruptible revolutionary leaders of history like Marx, Engels, Lenin, the thousands of revolutionaries we will never know, the Bolsheviks, and all the revolutionaries of previous times.

We live in the epoch of the final settlement of accounts, the epoch of the decisive historic confrontation between capitalism and Socialism*. This reality makes it even more urgent for us to answer to Trotsky's call to get involved, follow his example. This house must not be like a forlorn statue on a pedestal. It is the site where the human being formulated the greatest ideas and thoughts since Lenin. This is the meaning of Trotsky.

The house must showcase Trotsky's life and organisation. It must trace the continuity of his historic role. He was not there to create a circle of friends but to bring more historic knowledge to human thought. When it opens to the public, the house must focus on how Trotsky ordered his life to serve his aim. He was not a political refugee sheltering at Coyoacan. As in Alma Ata and Prinkipo ⁽²⁾ before, he used the space available in Mexico to get on with the task.

This house - and it could have been any other - was not just a lodging. It was turned into a means to organise thought. Ways must be found to illustrate the living and dynamic use the house was put to, as part of the constant

storm that surrounded Trotsky. By showing how he lived, prepared and treated his living quarters, one can bring other insights into the capacity of Marxism. Apart from this, there is no particular reason to show this house.

The house must highlight the purity of Communism as expressed in Trotsky's life. Persecuted, cornered and without means, he wrote: "I need another five years to finish my work". He knew what he was asking for. He still had another five years of texts to write, central to human thought and to the method of historic interpretation.

To show the house serves no purpose in itself. One must show what Trotsky was and what he had to say to humanity. His texts tell a lot, but they cannot tell what his life was like: how he organised his existence, how he communicated, how he managed to think, how he used the house to organise, how he conveyed the ideas that grasp, analyse and interpret the process with a view to the deliberate transformation of history. Ideas that turn the human creature into the conscious being.

Trotsky had none of the mystical traits sometimes lent to the revolutionary hell-bent on transforming capitalist society in egotistical and single combat. Trotsky was neither an egotist nor a zealot against capitalism. He was the enemy of capitalism because capitalism is the tomb of humanity. He struggled for the human dignity and superiority of Communism because it responds to the necessity of history. Far from seeing Communism as an intention, he saw it as a necessity of history – a necessity that Marx had interpreted. For Marxism interprets this necessity, and identifies the forces to fulfil it: *Proletariat*, *Party* (with programme and ideas) and the *Party in power*.

Like Lenin and the Bolsheviks who fought objectively on behalf of human dignity, Trotsky handed down to humanity

a most complete form of organisation. The way he nurtured and developed this organisation did not diminish the flow of his analytical elaborations. Some of these would not be tested for a long time yet. As war loomed, the Soviet Union faced an uncertain social reality and future. Trotsky used the ability of Marxism to etch confidence and security into his work, with the foresight that the Soviet Union would pass the coming historic tests.

One cannot overestimate the role of Trotsky's confidence in the Marxist method, in the proletariat, in the Workers State. His forecasts were inseparable from the notion that the USSR would triumph. Under siege himself, he was watching the murderous hand drawing closer to him. Here he gave full proof of his steadfastness in the service of living Marxism and the Marxist method. It is not just at the level of ideas that Trotsky equals Marxism, but in the conscious preparation of himself as instrument. These are achievements, and Trotsky lives on through them. He lives also partly through the USSR because, with the other Workers States, the USSR is the material form that the development of Marxism has taken.

Trotsky worked for the public interest of history. He gave his all to build the capacity to think and reason. He wanted nothing better than to help the world organise itself and be rid of the atrocity of capitalism. Is this not indeed where the fight for the dignity of life must begin? His role and forecasts are in no way diminished by his refusal to write against his increasingly threatening murderers. Instead of that he wrote: 'Within ten years, millions of revolutionaries will know how to move heaven and earth'. He knew that through technique and science – essentially through Marxism which is the most potent instrument of science – the human being would organise existence and eradicate every form of oppression.

With political definition, it is easier to be precise with the past than the present. In our present times, it is not always easy to tell one historic stage apart from another. Take the Revolutionary State: we have identified and characterised it, but with the dynamism and lightness of touch able to cope with the many transformations and contradictions. Revolutionary States appear because the conditions exist for the Workers States to lead history while these objective conditions are frustrated by the lack of the conscious leaderships prepared to lead history.

The present stage is characterised by the weakness, decomposition and disintegration of the capitalist regime. The world revolution and the immense authority of the Workers States undermine capitalism, but the divisions in the Workers States hold back the creation of a centralised and world leadership. The masses move with an enormous revolutionary will, but the Workers States do not unite and no-one proposes Communism. This causes the rise of nationalist, Catholic or military movements not easy to define categorically in each anti-capitalist advance of the revolutionary process.

One towering advantage of the Marxist method is that it lends the ability to grasp and define a process without always being precise. It saves on being disconcerted when a political stage can only be outlined by characteristics that will be clarified only later, when intermediate other stages have passed. The ability to do this is very important. In our stage, the situation carries conditions waiting to bring in Communism, but the leadership to use these conditions is missing. Through the Workers State, all the material, technical and even *leadership* conditions exist for communist advance, but the centralisation wanted to have these operate together is missing. Centralisation is a necessity. Trotsky responded to this lack by centralising

his own will and confidence in the knowledge that Communism is right. This is how he avoided polemics, vindictiveness and personal expressions of contempt for Stalin and the other Soviet bureaucrats. This objectivity helped him to pass on to humanity the idea that the Workers State is legitimate and that Communism is both legitimate and invincible.

Trotsky's house and the way he lived have been help-mates in the elaboration of his communist sentiments. Busy as he was in building the conscious instrument of the future, they assisted him in organising his mind, his time and his activity. This is a great feat of human security in the revolutionary ability to wait for the morrow.

Trotsky must not be represented as the lone hero in the ivory tower of his convictions and persuasions. He was the forward and conscious standard-bearer of Communism. Against the many opportunities to get involved in polemics, disputes and squabbles, he responded as the organiser of human thought, secure in the knowledge that Communism would triumph because it is a necessity for humanity.

Had Trotsky not adhered so closely to the necessity of history represented by Marxism, there would be little left of him. If he lives on today, it is through his example. His foresight and ability to interpret, all apposite today, are the conscious representatives of the instrument for progress that Marxism represents. Trotsky shines through his confidence in the future, and through the way he helps us to face anything, like the atomic war. This is what the house in Mexico must convey.

If the working class can lead the struggle for Communism, it is because it wins the best of humanity over to its side. It does this by becoming the advocate not just of its own interests, but of those of all humanity. Trotsky was an

intellectual from a bourgeois family who was won to the revolution. After Lenin, he is the most accomplished revolutionary. Marx and Lenin were also from bourgeois and petty bourgeois origins. Of course, they did not defend the class interests of the bourgeoisie, but they did not just defend those of the proletariat either: They defended the role of the proletariat as instrument for the progress of history - the proletariat being this instrument, because of the structure of history and because of its own role in the economy and society. 'The proletariat will be revolutionary, or it will be nothing'(&).

Trotsky walked tall as befits a conscious representative of history. The tide of history ebbed but he, himself did not retreat. He held on to his position, unyielding to the last. He saw to his defence by maintaining the ideas and preparing others for what was to come. He did not care for polemics designed to show how right he was. To us, ourselves, he taught how to wait. He taught us how to trust in that the necessity of history, the economy, society, science and technology in their progress, plus the proletariat, would do better next time. The Workers' State was historically legitimate and it would face capitalism down. As a necessity of history, it would find the necessary conditions, the impetus, the forces. Yes, the proletariat was going to bear the brunt, but as instrument of this necessity, it would not cave in. Trotsky analysed all this, and this is what happened (in WW2). Had the proletariat been a weakling, like the bourgeoisie, the Workers State would have been wiped out.

Stalingrad is the greatest historic triumph ever. No other nation, no other historic situation come close to beating this example. It is the proletariat and the Soviet Workers State who accomplished Stalingrad. Without the Workers State, the proletariat alone could not have done it, because

it would not have known what to defend. At Stalingrad, the proletariat drew on every spare force, ability and resource because the Workers State was at stake. The proletariat felt directly answerable to the progress of history.

Trotsky foresaw this triumph when he said: 'Within ten years, millions of revolutionaries will know how to move heavens and earth'. He did not talk of the triumph of the IV International, but of 'the triumph of the programme of the IV International'. He could not tell what would happen to the organisation because it was still very weak and embryonic. But he knew that since the programme was giving a voice to a necessity whose time had come, it would eventually be confirmed.

For the sake of humanity, Trotsky made every idea and every moral fibre serve the purpose of the incorruptible fight for human dignity. Human dignity does not mean mutual civility but the elimination of war. Conflicts come from an entire epoch where the human mentality was shaped by social class. But human dignity has its roots in the historic objective of eliminating conflicts. This demands the elimination of classes because they cause all the violence, the disputes and the conflicts of humanity.

Trotsky lived to the full, and yet in a very modest and simple manner: He devoted a lifetime to intellectual work and to active and militant organisation. He never operated as if his intellect were out of step with the rest of life, or separated from it. His life was devoted to participation in the revolutionary struggle. However, he was not the one to waste his energy either. His head organised and controlled everything, and his house had to reflect this. Now, the house must communicate it to the visiting public. For instance, the objects on display must not lie passively but be presented in an evocative manner.

Trotsky worked as a public good of history and he made of the IV International a public good of history too. He did not create it as an entity for its own sake, or as a property pitted against others in polemics, arguments or disputes. The ideas of the International of Trotsky are a public resource of history, on a par with all the big ideas in human history. Those who proffer them want them retaken by the whole world, the way scientific and artistic ideas are, or should be. As these ideas do not emerge from any private fund, they are a public asset of history.

Communist society is not going to rain down from the clouds of empiricism. The reason for this is that Communism is a construction. Through the experience of his life, Trotsky worked away at being a Communist. Self-advancement or personal benefit held no attraction to him. He found contentment in his role of public good of history. He did this in writing as much as in thinking, in the scientific analysis as much as in the human relation. Communism is a construction. Trotsky's work belongs to the world Communist movement, namely the Communist parties, the Workers States and their most conscious part, the Trotskyist-Posadist movement.

Trotsky applied himself consciously to his work. There was a time when the core of his followers was hardly more than him alone. Far from letting go of his resilience, he recognised that the communist future of humanity was in want of clarification on points of thought and scientific Marxist method. The scientific Marxist instrument would have to learn to wait in an active endeavour, not a passive interlude. Staying-power was going to be needed. The active minority would have to remain alert and close to reality, feeding a process bound to eventually recover from the difficulties and the obstacles.

Trotsky focused on the construction of a world team in which he privileged most of all the qualities of confidence and security in the ideas. Revolutionary writers who also opposed Stalin in the times when Trotsky lived, tended to react in self-justification and self-defence. Far from this, Trotsky chose the path of scientific-theoretical research and combat. Through these, he prepared and helped to form the new cadres who were going to build the instrument that was the IV International.

There is no advance in history without an instrument. The instrument needed here is more than the sum total of several peoples' individual qualities. When the instrument is no longer used for objective aims, it stops being an instrument and becomes an apparatus. When the Party is an instrument, it thinks for the good of history. When it stops thinking for the sake of history, it becomes an apparatus and starts thinking for the sake of its leaders. The bureaucratic leaders of the Workers State defend their State to the extent that their own interests depend upon it. Give them half a chance, and they turn against the Workers State. Trotsky held on doggedly to the Marxist method of interpretation which gave him the strength to defend the Workers State whose leaders wanted him dead. Trotsky shines in this example of objective purity, a quality that no defender of Marxism can do without.

One must not abandon this conclusion. It is one of the highest conquests of humanity which Trotsky worked at, like Marx, in order to leave it to us. Today, our feelings and our lives are transformed by observing how this objectivity continues in the world, in Vietnam, in the Middle East, in the 80 years-old Syrian Woman in the picture, embracing a Soviet soldier. Vietnam, Stalingrad and Cuba are living tributes to the legacy of Trotsky.

Trotsky's conduct is of a piece with his stand as the conscious representative of the historic function of the proletariat. No one can fulfil such a role without Marxism. The process faced Trotsky with the responsibility to defend the good of history, and he shouldered it. The house in Mexico was therefore more than a headquarter to him. It was a completely scientific work tool in the service of his goal. This is not to say that the house was, or is the most important spot on the map, but that this was, and is where he lived out the last and most important stage of his life.

Trotsky mentioned that this period was the most important of his life. Without his role in the Russian Revolution, he could not have achieved what he did afterwards. But many are those who would have lost all confidence on seeing the Revolution retreat. In Trotsky, it strengthened his confidence, leaving him with this immense task. Without the Russian Revolution that he co-led with Lenin, there would not have been the Trotsky we know today. It is the Russian Revolution therefore that provided the backup for this actualisation of Marxism in real life.

Trotsky played an immense role in the Russian Revolution – second only to Lenin's level. Had he not been in the Russian Revolution, he would not have found the knowledge and confidence for the work he did afterwards. It is the Russian Revolution that inspired concretely the thought, the action and the experience that humanity made through Trotsky. To what might have seemed in the past only a perspective or an outlook, the Russian Revolution gave a material form. Before the revolution, Trotsky had not found the concept of *the Party* easy. The revolution opened his eyes. That he learnt from the Russian Revolution how to build the Party is one of his greatest accomplishments.

The texts by Trotsky that followed his '*History of the Russian Revolution*' are of an immense importance. Some are even intellectually superior to the *History*, but his '*History of the Russian Revolution*' is the master stroke of his life, the cradle of all his work. For the first time, a proletarian revolution explains itself to history. Along with '*The Revolution Betrayed*', it is a feat comparable to the '*Capital*' of Karl Marx.

Those texts teach how to understand and dominate what happens to the structure of history when a new regime enters it. They give confidence because they show that the disastrous consequences of Stalin came neither from the Workers State, the Bolshevik Party nor Communism. Trotsky shows that these disastrous consequences came from the same historic causes that gave rise to Stalin himself. These consequences appeared then, but they would disappear when the situation changed, which is what is happening today! Trotsky did not seek polemics, be it with Stalin or in the world Communist movement. He concentrated on building humanity's confidence in its own self. Trotsky is the champion of scientific thought applied to human progress. He is the living illustration of Lenin's pronouncement: 'Marxism is the science of all sciences'. Marxism resolves all the human problems in relation to society and all the human problems in relation to nature.

Trotsky pondered much of this in Mexico while the world revolution was in retreat and his life was in danger. But instead of looking for safety, he insisted on the right to defend the legitimacy of the function of thought in history. Knowing that he would be murdered for it, he hungered for 'another five years' to finish his work - his '*Stalin*' particularly. In this book, he demonstrates that Stalin was not a consequence of the dictatorship of the proletariat, or of the Bolshevik Party or of the Russian Revolution. Stalin

came from the discrepancy between two factors. One was Russia wracked by scarcity, lack of cadres and economic means, the other was a tremendous revolutionary impetus moved by great determination and possibilities. The revolution had to happen come what may, the hurdles left for later. One had to assume, show example. The same choice came up later when it became necessary to yield at Brest-Litovsk ⁽⁴⁾ in order to keep Petrograd ⁽³⁾.

The house where Trotsky lived in Coyoacan is an example and a living testimony of all his work. Now, no one will ever be able to wipe all this out. Every line that Trotsky has written, and every aspect of his life are here to stay. With their risings in the world, the masses give continuation to Trotsky's work. In the Workers States, the process of Partial Regeneration brings back to life Trotsky and his dignified example. Many people in the world act like Trotsky. The Bolsheviks themselves did; not all of them had the same conditions as Trotsky, but where they had the same passion, the same purity of intention and the same determination, they have the same importance as Trotsky. There is an identity between the Bolsheviks, Trotsky, ourselves, the Communist parties, the Socialists and the world revolutionary vanguard. Humankind cannot wait to finally agree with itself: as it tries, it starts living in the dignified way that serves the objective interests of human progress. This is the struggle for Communism.

The essential function of Trotsky lies in having continued Marxism through his dogged and scientific defence of the Soviet Union. The Workers State and the aspiration of humanity for Communism are legitimate. It is through them that the necessary human relations will be reached, once the egoistical, class and economic obstacles are defeated. Trotsky showed that the economic and social conditions already exist to reach this, and that Communism

simply represents the conscious link between nature, society, the economy and human thought.

Trotsky preserved this knowledge. He demonstrated the legitimacy of the Soviet Union and of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The errors that appeared, and the delays, did not come from a flaw in the historic interpretation, the Marxist method or dialectical materialism. The flaws had arisen from circumstances where humanity was learning to make of its intervention an objective factor. Transitory had been the pitfalls, not the idea. The idea goes on being the expression of the necessity to allow for the development of the economy, science, technique and human ability - to overcome the problems through the proletariat.

The world revolutionary process has proceeded along the general lines of Trotsky's interpretation. He trusted in the fact that the Soviet Workers State would pass the proofs of history, and it did. Only, the forms through which a revolutionary leadership is being organised to respond to the necessities posed by the world revolution are changed. When Trotsky lived, there was only one Workers State. Now, there are 14. Plus 17 Revolutionary States.

A return to Marxism is urgent to intervene in this process. One must know the history of the Workers States and of the Communist International to grasp the present process of *Partial Regeneration* and *Historic Re-encounter* (**). This is the task of the Trotskyist-Posadist IV International.

The house of Trotsky has been an instrument organised with the aim of securing the historic continuity of the struggle for Communism.

J. POSADAS

November 1973

Editorial notes next page.

Editorial Notes:

() Final settlement of accounts – J Posadas refers to the coming war between capitalism on a one hand, and the Workers States and humanity on the other, in which Socialism will triumph.*

*(**) Historic Re-encounter – The author refers to the return of Marxism to the world communist movement.*

(&) Marx' quote.

(1) Trotsky at Coyoacan: a district of Mexico and last residence for Trotsky after years of exile and 'Planet without Visa'. The Mexican government, headed by Lazaro Cardenas had the courage to welcome Trotsky and allow him to pursue his political activities. In 1973, the government of Echevaria entrusted to a collective the organisation of Trotsky's house in Mexico. The Trotskyist-Posadist IV International formed part of it and this why J. Posadas analyses the role of Trotsky's house in Mexico.

(2) Alma Ata and Prinkipo : Alma Ata, town in Soviet Asia where Trotsky was in internal exile before being expelled from the USSR in 1929, ending up in Prinkipo, Turkey.

(3) Petrograd: reference to the 'tooth and nail' defence of Petrograd made by the workers of the town and the Red Army under Trotsky's leadership. As a fundamental bastion of the socialist revolution, it took the brunt of the struggle against the Russian counter-revolutionaries supported by the armies of capitalist Europe.

(4) Brest-Litovsk: Where the Peace Treaty between the Soviet and the German governments was signed in 1918. The USSR had to accept the loss of some territories in exchange for peace.

TROTSKY'S BOOK 'MY LIFE' AND THE CONSCIOUS PREPARATION FOR SOCIALISM

J. POSADAS

20 December 1974

Trotsky wrote the book 'My Life' to show how much steadfastness is wanted in the life, to build the organs to destroy capitalism and create the new, Socialist society. On reading this book, one is reminded of how much a revolutionary's ability to think, reason and intervene is shaped by the process itself; and on considering this, what a formidable instrument Marxism really is.

Without Marxism, Trotsky would not have been *Trotsky*. The role he played in the historic building the new society moved him to pass on experience, coaching and scientific training to the rest of humanity. The revolutionary works in fields different from those engaged in medicine or chemistry, but they all prepare themselves scientifically. Their actions embrace and influence every aspect of life with the aim of freeing the human potential. Capitalism and private property are opposed to this, and they put themselves in the way.

Trotsky shows that revolutionary ability is something that one has to organise and develop, through discipline and constancy. He put his own life at the service of the construction of Party, programme and policy. And although he had not quite understood all this at first, he learnt it. At the centre of his life and in every fundamental aspect of his existence, he kept sharpening his scientific preparation against the scientific verification of experience.

Trotsky stands out for the way he kept improving his ability to think, intervene, make comparisons. He would always check his prognoses and appraisals against reality and scientific experience. His accomplishment in this matter is a tribute of the indisputable, indispensable and irreplaceable worth of Marxism. Every aspect in the organisation of his existence was dedicated to experiencing life and assimilating ideas. He would intervene and implement after a preparation. The confidence behind his actions was something built previously by giving himself time and options before deciding to act.

The preparation of revolutionaries like Trotsky is not very different from that of scientists or musicians. The plane is different because revolutionaries must organise the public, the masses, in the need to oppose the ruling class interests. What they think is at variance with the prevailing mores, ways of seeing and assessing. Revolutionaries work for transformation on behalf of the society of the future. And in Trotsky's epoch, there was no example of such a society.

Trotsky gives a living testimony of the personal discipline involved behind the elaboration of the necessary programs and ideas. He shows what it takes to view every event in light of the global, total and world perspective, which get itself expressed afterwards in national characteristics. He does this in *'My Life'*, and he returns to it in his later book: *'The History of the Russian Revolution'*.

Even with the Marxist instrument, a disciplined life is needed to dominate the global process. Trotsky tells how he acquired this discipline. Capitalist propaganda extols scientists, economists, philosophers and writers - generally all those in its service, consciously or unwittingly. But these people are mountains of empiricism, considering that bourgeois science is not interested in the objective needs of humanity. Because bourgeois science serves capitalist exploitation and market competition only, its

scientific conclusions are crippled, pared down and limited to where gain is to be made. If some scientists operate with more depth, more resolve and a greater capacity to generalise, it is due to the influence of the Workers States where private greed has been replaced by the public interest.

Trotsky shows in this book how the revolutionary must get ready, cultivate and apply the scientific method of organisation afforded by Marxism. For Marxism is an inexhaustible fount of foresight. Trotsky matured as part of the Bolsheviks, and he arranged his life in order to do so. Where he had not quite understood the role of the Party in the beginning, he eventually corrected himself.

It was the first time in history (1917) that a group of revolutionaries made ready for the task of building a new society. Trotsky amongst them put his life at the service of this purpose. He had not an iota of interest in private gain or private pursuits because he did not see why his intelligence should be used to compete against anybody. He wanted his life used for the development of humanity and society. This sums him up pretty much.

Trotsky never said that for mindfulness, scientific thought and foresight, it was necessary to forsake life, stop eating, sleeping or having children! All he showed is that personal preparation is needed to acquire foresight. In times previous to Marx and Engels, no one was thinking of this. The social regimes had no use for it, and the private interests were free to tailor science closely to their needs. The benefits of science accrued to people with the private property mentality derived from usufruct, exploitation and competition. It is only with the Bolsheviks and someone like Trotsky that a new sort of human action became apparent. That action was now of the conscious and deliberate kind. And it was backed up by an objective ability to foresee

the historic course and concentrate the forces that the capitalist regime had developed empirically.

Trotsky was as occupied with this as with all aspects of life – literature, art, the human being, the economy, physics, chemistry, politics, war. In short, he wanted to know where we are all going. This also sums him up! His life has the transparency of the revolutionary who not only allows Marxism to show him how to interpret and foresee the course of history, but who allows his life to be transformed by it.

In the book *'My Life'*, you see that Trotsky is not driven by any private or individual interest. In the middle of the worst polemics, he would simply say: 'Lenin is my guide'. Trotsky displays the purity of the Bolshevik who prepares for conscious action, as a conscious human being. The Bolsheviks did not seek personal gain because their interest was objective and scientific. As they were not moved by any caste, group or camarilla interest, they were free to foresee and to develop ideas. They were not weighed down by the petty bourgeois limitation of not wanting to touch history lest history should move. The petty bourgeoisie of those days was particularly undecided; it is much less so nowadays.

Many Bolsheviks came from the middle or poor petty bourgeoisie, although some came from the nobility. Quite a number were of bourgeois origins but intelligence grew within them all, and Trotsky proves it. His case is that of the revolutionary who never needs to lie because he resolves everything on the basis of scientific analysis and what history requires objectively. As he does not have an individual interest, he operates for the public good of history, the way Lenin and the Bolsheviks did. The latter never needed to lie, because their intention was objective, and they simply represented history.

In the worst conditions and whilst Stalin wanted them all dead, the Bolsheviks who had followed Trotsky passed on to the workers' vanguard Trotsky's teaching of the unconditional defence of the Soviet Workers State. They would defend the Soviet Union, and they would even defend Stalin, if necessary, without ceasing to criticise or condemn him politically. Thanks to Marxism, those who had been taught by Trotsky became in their turn the objective representatives of the public good of history. They had no problem in dealing with the most delicate problems. They could both oppose Stalin and continue to defend the Workers State unconditionally.

Trotsky and the Bolsheviks saw no contradiction in both defending the Soviet Workers State and condemning Stalin's crimes. This was both dialectical and correct since the Workers State had to be defended, and Stalin had to be condemned. When it came to having to choose between the Workers State (with Stalin) and the capitalist warmongers, it is the Workers State that they defended, and unconditionally. This is how they infused comprehension, courage and ability in a new intellectual and workers vanguard which, in its turn, felt up to continuing in this role of *public good* in history. This vanguard went on defending this instrument that the progress of history had brought about: the Workers State.

It was through his scientific preparation that Trotsky inspired those who followed him. Trotsky's preparation motivated others to become defenders of the public good of history like him. It fired his followers with an immense sense of determination. This is what happened to us Posadists, and this is what we are continuing. Once Trotsky had characterised the Workers State as an indispensable historic instrument, he felt free to analyse the bureaucracy of the Workers State and every contradiction. He drew strength from his courage and confidence as leader, but mostly from his scientific preparation. He mastered the art

of handling a contradiction by holding on doggedly to whatever element of progress it might contain; he would then steadfastly teach others this new mode of struggle which consists in defending the Workers State while condemning its leadership. This sort of thing had needed preparation.

Having started as one of the main architects of the Workers State, Trotsky became the main instigator of the struggle against its degenerating leadership. This was all new in history. He called this struggle: the *Political Revolution*. Through it, he built a world current convinced of the need to indict the bureaucracy of the Workers State whilst still defending the Workers State unconditionally as representative of historic progress and world revolution. As he called for the unconditional defence of the Workers State, success in this tactic was far from a foregone conclusion at the time. One had to guard against being waylaid or influenced by the enemy.

In '*My Life*', Trotsky documents how he trained and prepared himself. Had he descended into gross empiricism, he would have found it easier to see no difference between the Workers State and its leadership. But that was not good enough for him. The leadership of the Workers State is one thing, and the Workers State is another. The Workers' State is a true conquest and a settled structure. The regime of statified property (state-owned/planned) is a turning point in itself, a watershed.

In this book, we see how Trotsky's ability to understand relates to the way he dedicated his entire life to his aim. It is important to follow all the aspects of his life. He brought to history principles that he discovered through accumulated elaborations, but also through the open availability of himself and his life. Without his initial involvement in the revolution for example, he could not have fulfilled this role which he played in later years. He would have remained an individual revolutionary.

We wish to highlight therefore how revolutionary Trotsky prepared himself to be the public good of history, and how he felt joy in living his life for this purpose. He never wrote with the aim of complaining or recriminating against the persecutions he was constantly under. His behaviour was scientific and it remains scientific to us today. He likes to define a goal, and then work towards it. He seeks no reward other than that offered by steadfastness. This is the most beautiful thing you will find in this book.

It was a book well worth Trotsky's writing with all the references to the life-experiences that he conveys to us. He does not look for a prize or an accolade. He tells us how the Bolsheviks were consciously committed to the taking of power and the construction of the new society.

Trotsky's *My Life* gives important narratives about certain actions and struggles, as in the actual taking of power and the political discussions during the Russian Revolution, but the essence lies in all the above analyses.

J. POSADAS

20.12.1974

TROTSKYISM AND THE ONGOING WORLD PROCESS OF THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION

J POSADAS

A Public Conference, Questions and Answers
3 and 4 July 1978

Editorial notes :

J Posadas gave this Conference in Greece on the invitation of the 'Association of Jurists' and with the participation of various Communist militants and leaders.

Ben Khedda, Ferrat Abas and Ben Bella: leaders of the NLF (National Liberation Front) of Algeria. More by J Posadas about this in: 'Algeria, Revolutionary Progress and the Construction of Socialism'.

Tchiang Kai Chek: Followed Sun Yat Sen in the leadership of the Kuo Ming Tang, a bourgeois nationalist movement in China at the time. In 1945, Stalin tried to force the Chinese Communist Party into a second alliance with Tchiang who had already murdered tens of thousands of Communists in 1927-29. The Mao's leadership refused, and in 1949, it took power and created the Popular Republic of China.

Eurocommunism: this concept appeared in the 70's and 80's in many European Communist parties. It represented the abandonment of Leninism and Bolshevism. It expressed the growing abandonment, on the part of those Communists, of the unconditional defence of the Soviet Union in particular, and of the Workers State in general. Eurocommunism encouraged a social-democratic belief in the possibility of a 'third road' between capitalism and communism, which amounts in the end to a new accommodation with capitalism. More by J Posadas in: 'The crisis of capitalism, Eurocommunism and the need for a Socialist Society'

Editorial, 19.10.1977.

**TROTSKYISM AND THE ONGOING WORLD PROCESS OF THE PERMANENT
REVOLUTION, J. POSADAS:**

Dear comrades,

I greet you with communist affection and fraternity. It is a true joy to meet comrades with the same preoccupation as our own movement. The general objective of the Posadist IV International is to impel, in the world's Communist parties and the Workers States, the development of a current ready for their return to the Marxist programme.

This question is no longer posed as in 1940. This aim remains necessary, but the objective conditions have changed. These have become generally more favourable, but there is a question mark over timing inasmuch as we have not the force to fulfil this task in the required time span. We influence all we can for a return to the Marxist method, but this return has now become inseparable from the sharp and continuing world confrontation system against system. Now, what is wanted transcends this or that Communist Party, even power itself. Power continues to matter of course; in some countries, the Communists could even take power electorally. What has changed is that no single task today can stand separate from the system against system confrontation.

The capitalist regime prepares for war as a regime, and it does this with every means at its disposal. Its massacres in South Africa and Zaire (Congo) are one aspect; its actual use of the nuclear weapon and downright atomic war is another. Observe how it hurtles from one war to the other to keep its power. The problems now facing the Workers States and the Communist parties are no longer posed as in Stalin's epoch, or just after. Now, the confrontation *system against system* is daily more evident, recurrent, decisive. The capitalist system fears the

progress of the socialist revolution in its bones. It notes that the masses continue to progress despite bureaucratic and empirical leaderships, some even anti-Soviet, like the Chinese. Progress marches on in humanity and in history, raising its head everywhere in the economy, in science, in aspects of culture and in technology. Progress pushes back against the capitalist regime, needing it gone. Social transformations follow each other in a constant world chain of Permanent Revolution, raising constantly the level of the most backward to that of the most advanced.

There is Permanent Revolution in the revolutionary process of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and in the progress of the Workers States. This is incomplete because it follows no programme or norm, but the constantly growing confrontation between the capitalist regime and indomitable humanity drives the progress of humanity into the arms of the Workers States.

The Workers States find allies in the progressive movements of the world like Angola, Mozambique, Cuba. Back in turn, the progressive movements find an objective ally in the Workers States, even when these do not help sufficiently. The Workers States and the world progressive movements form a United Front against capitalism. This Front is not led by an anti-capitalist programme or project, but its existence is assured by the rising confrontations against the capitalist system.

Since 1948, the growth of Workers States and of Revolutionary States has illustrated this rising confrontation. Scores of countries have gone from opposing capitalism to breaking its spine. They do not always manage to overthrow or eliminate capitalism, but in having to survive, they take roads that push capitalism back. We have defined Algeria and Guinea Bissau as

Revolutionary States. We do not call this a new historic stage, but a new condition. Simple observation shows that many countries oust key aspects of capitalist power without making Workers States. Because they keep internal power-forms still accessible to the capitalist economy, or to sectors linked to the capitalist economy, we call them 'Revolutionary States'. Algeria is one.

The Revolutionary State presents aspects that did not exist in the epoch of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. The latter could not have made this characterisation because these changes are recent. Consider French imperialism which used to dominate Algeria: Left to itself, French imperialism would still be there, corrupting the local bourgeoisie as in the last 20 years. If French imperialism quit Algeria, it is because the Algerian revolutionary movement threw it out. As the latter could not install the new bourgeois order envisaged by Ben Khedda, Ferrat Abas and Ben Bella, the Boumedienne movement came up, more directly in tune with the thinking of the masses, more responsive to their thirst for progress.

When Algeria threw French imperialism out, it still had its economy to develop. The conditions for a Workers State lacked due to a shortage in political leadership, but there was no shortage in the determination of the masses. The revolution had broken the back of French imperialism, but not that of the capitalist system. In the countryside, production remained in private hands, still does today. This lends a hand to capitalism, and presses against the need for a Workers State: Algeria is a Revolutionary State.

To continue progressing and develop its economy, Algeria must eliminate the capitalist forms of production. Constantly under the threat of aggressive capitalist interests and their pressure, this Revolutionary State is

forced to fight for more than the anti-capitalist gains already won. It needs to flush the capitalist system out of the economic and social spheres. This happens in Algeria as it did in Angola, Mozambique and Vietnam in their first stages. The latter are now Workers States.

New problems have arisen today, but in depth, they are no different from those analysed by Marx and dealt with by Lenin and Trotsky. Under the overarching permanent process of revolution, specific conditions and influences create particular phases, but from top to bottom, this needs leadership. The historic flux is too powerful to be stopped, but the lack of a conscious leadership creates counterflows. This is how our contemporary revolutionary processes go today. Our concept of the '*Revolutionary State*' does not point to a new historic stage in want of qualification; it simply describes the way our historic epoch lifts itself in the direction of proletarian revolution and Workers State in an arc of Permanent Revolution.

There is another aspect to the Permanent Revolution: its outbursts in stages and evolutions work like engines on the Workers States, driving them closer to more elevated aims. There is never any mention of this in the Communist parties, the Socialist parties or the old Trotskyists. Old Trotskyism may fairly adhere to some conceptions of principle, but it does not apply them programmatically in the concrete process. This is why it still does not understand the process unfolding in the world, or that in the Workers States.

We call ourselves Trotskyist-Posadists to clarify this. Those who say they are Trotskyists should explain what they think the role of Trotskyism is today. We wish to understand their movements and help them to progress, but in our opinion, there is now no historic time in the

world, or in parts of the world, to start building a new Party or a new revolutionary movement. It is true that in countries of Latin America for instance, one can still build new movements with a certain mass base, but in Europe, entrenched historic conditions make this difficult. One must elaborate on the role of Trotskyism today therefore, given that the Communist parties are still unprepared for the historic need to bring down the capitalist system.

We call ourselves Trotskyist-Posadists to make a separation between ourselves and the old Trotskyist movement. I am, myself, the only one left of that old movement because all the other old Trotskyists left, they went.

Our name indicates how we view our Trotskyist role and the Permanent Revolution today. Look at Algeria, Angola or Vietnam, and you see varying levels of Permanent Revolution. The leadership in Vietnam has a programme of socialist transformation. It takes very big steps towards it, while this is not so much so in Algeria, Mozambique or Angola. But in the latter three countries, the revolutionary programme unfolds in a permanent process of continuous and uninterrupted transformations, with the intervention of the population, with a real desire to distribute the wealth.

In Vietnam, private property is almost liquidated, large or small. Control and leadership of the economy and society have concentrated in the hands of the State, and the State in the hands of popular committees. There are still bureaucratic conceptions and huge economic shortages. But instead of prioritising individual advancement, property acquisition and large salaries, the leaders have brought in State control and planning. The 400,000 Chinese bourgeois who had been lurking behind the old and clingy Vietnamese movement have been expropriated.

Vietnam has no economic means. Soviet aid is important, but limited and mostly military. Still, the Vietnamese insist on the State ownership and planned production of a 'Socialist country'. In the economy and society, the choices that are made integrate the population in the leadership. This is still bureaucratic and incomplete, but the leading idea is that the economy must serve social, scientific and political improvement for everyone. For a more consistent and harmonious development, more planning will be required. The force of necessity teaches the Vietnamese revolution to rely less on following other Workers States and more on the intervention, ability and determination of the Vietnamese masses under the guidance and the experience of their chosen leaders.

Mozambique has no economic means. Before it left, Portuguese imperialism razed everything to the ground. It smashed the houses, the vehicles, the infrastructures, water, electricity. The people of Angola and Mozambique were left with nought. Yankee and German imperialism came up with offers, but it was turned down. The socialist road was chosen instead, with social measures to confirm the position of the population at the helm. In these two countries, the population intervenes more than in any other.

The people of Mozambique champion the role of Woman and of the Young. The latter intervene as leaders in the construction of the country: Ten-year-old children sit through political discussions where they express their thoughts and face the problems like the builders of the Workers State which they are. The same happens in Vietnam and Angola. This wants for bases in the objective experiences, the debates, the programmes and the sort of internal life that leads to Marxist comprehension. As long as this lasts, there will be bureaucratic leaderships; and

there is always the tendency to want to emulate the experiences already made in other Workers States.

Relentless necessity gives this no respite. The revolutionary fermentation stops the leaders from seeking truces with capitalism or accommodations with it. The will and understanding of the masses stimulate the adoption of 'statification' measures (state ownership and planning for need). Although this is hampered by limitations and bureaucracy, the comprehension of people is already at high mark. This is not a strictly Angolan or Mozambican feature because much of the world balance of forces weighs on the side of anti-capitalist struggle. See how undeterred people are by the atomic war that capitalism is preparing.

In the Workers States, there is constant scientific, economic and social progress too, even if it is still limited on the political plane. The proletariat of the German Workers State (GDR) and that in the Soviet Union dedicates a part of its earnings to support the revolutionary processes in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It is not a poultry amount, but a whole chunk of salary. Many Trade Unions act in this way, more or less, but it is the German and Soviet workers who contribute the lion share. This is in line with the constant elevation in the relations between the Workers States and the world process of the revolution.

What has developed to a very high level is the economy of the Workers States. In five years, there will be one room per inhabitant in the USSR. Rents are 3% of wages, whilst in the capitalist regime it can take 50% or 70% of someone's income. What people spend on transport in the Workers States is 0.001% of their wage. Conditions to get food and clothes are not so good, but when you consider

the human relations and the quality of the contact between people, the superiority is infinite. There is a constant expansion of the Workers State to impel the progress of the world.

This does not mean that the bureaucracy has acquired any comprehension about what the socialist revolution needs, or about the development of the world Socialism. But inexorably, the economic and social development of the Workers States brings them into collision with the capitalist system. This is the opposite of what Stalin did, in his epoch, when he conciliated with the capitalist regime to the point of giving Spain away.

The Soviet Union must defend Vietnam today, although it would be easier for it to let Vietnam down now, than it was to betray Spain. The Soviet Union had to defend Korea, Cuba and China in the teeth of a Stalin who wanted to impose on Mao Tse Tung an alliance with Chang Kai Chek. But Mao sent him to hell, and rightly so - like Tito who refused to be pushed by Stalin into an agreement with the king Michael of Yugoslavia. Today, the economic and social development of the Workers States is worldwide. This energises the world masses, with the result that the Workers States are stimulated back into taking a better stand against the capitalist system.

Capitalism is aware that each day and each week passing brings about a new anti-capitalist movement or other. The Workers States and the Soviet Union in particular, feel that they can no longer develop their economy and keep agreeing with the capitalist system. In any Workers State, every act of compliance with capitalism is an increasing blow to its interests and objective needs. Each Workers State has need to spread its own forms of property and of production to the other countries of the world.

As far as the revolution is concerned, conciliation with capitalism is a cul-de-sac. You can have conciliation in the United Nations or in temporary agreements, but it cannot be done historically. What decides nowadays is the arc of history, that is to say, capitalist regime vs Workers State. This confrontation is in front of everyone's eyes, ever more clearly to be seen. On the occasion of the confrontation over Korea (1950), what crushed Yankee imperialism was the united front of the Workers States, China included.

The Workers States form a united front, and it is constantly enlarging. That same united front defeated imperialism in Cuba; the same applies to Angola, Mozambique and Madagascar. The Workers States form a united front in spite of the political and bureaucratic limitations of their leaderships. No Workers State, from China to the Soviet Union, can advance and develop without having to force back the capitalist system. The result is that, of necessity, the Workers State must support the anti-capitalist liberation movements even when this support is full of political and military limitations. This situation is the reverse to that under Stalin. The Workers States must support the liberation movements because their own existence depends upon it. Here you have the present world relations of forces in a nutshell: Workers States versus capitalist system.

The Workers States need to extend and spread their planning to the world, if only to maintain themselves. The Workers State cannot develop in any other way. The political leadership of the Workers States today is not the same as when Stalin. It carries on with the bureaucratic notions it had under Stalin, but objectively, it is no longer the same political and historic leadership. Now, it cannot but oppose the capitalist system. The Workers States' leaderships do not acknowledge this, but they move

accordingly, supporting the liberation movements of Madagascar, Mozambique, Angola, Guinea Bissau, Laos, Cambodia, Algeria, Libya. They go on defending bureaucratic interests, but they have to support these movements too. The world balance of forces runs counter to their sustained conciliation with capitalism. They seek 'coexistence', but it is not the same as conciliation. Coexistence is a transitory affair, and in constant flux, as shown by the support that the Workers States now give to Mozambique and Madagascar in the middle of it.

Madagascar was originally a very backward country, but now it is very advanced. It has strictly no economy but this does not stop it laying down the bases for a Workers State. Its leadership prefers to call itself 'a Revolutionary State', something we have contributed to: In its Constitution, Madagascar declares: "We are a Revolutionary State on the road to Socialism". The social organisms that have appeared (Fokonolonas) are insufficient because they are still linked to the bourgeois order. We have explained that they are not serviceable for the purpose of economic and social change; and that revolutionary cells should take the lead instead, without suppressing the Fokonolonas. And now, they have started building such cells; they discuss the economy and even intervene in the Fokonolonas.

The same goes for Mozambique, Libya, Angola. The Libyan military movement has turned itself into a growing force favourable to social transformation. Libya does not have much agriculture or industry, but it is rich in oil. The Libyan leadership uses the income from it to develop the country. It does not do this entirely correctly, but the intention is there. Observe how Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, lavishes its oil revenue on an oligarchy allied to imperialism, enabling the latter to keep its bases throughout the Middle East. Libya favours the idea of

associating with Workers States and liberation movements. The Libyan leaders retain an Islamic mystical conception, but they reckon that Mahomet must have spoken of Socialism in his days. The Muslim religion does not pronounce in favour of any socialist plan, but it can make Mahomet participate in Socialist construction and coincide with Socialism. The Libyan leaders have turned into a socialist road that does not figure in the precepts or in the codes of Islam.

The Workers States defend Cuba in spite of the continued presence of the US imperialists and their atomic base there in Guantanamo. This support allows Cuba to export soldiers, weapons, ideas, programmes and policies. The Cubans used to say that "the revolution cannot be exported" - to which we used to answer that "Oh yes, it can!". We used to expand on this particular theme, to show that the revolution is not a military measure. The revolution is a principle whose military aspect is but the material means to give effectiveness to the revolutionary principle. The pure military means is only decisive when it is programmatically backed. When the Cubans used to insist on the revolution not suffering exportation, we never stopped insisting that, to the opposite, it should be exported. See how Cuba now goes to Angola, Mozambique, Vietnam and Ethiopia, exporting the revolution. This may not trigger revolutionary movements, but it impels anti-capitalist ones.

With the steady advance of the process, the Workers States increase in strength. What does not rise inside them in an equal measure is their theoretical, political and programmatic ability. They improve in objective military and economic power, but their political, historic and theoretical comprehension lags very much behind.

In spite of this however, a lot of progress is observable in the Workers States. It takes various forms, impelled by the guiding evidence that there is no advance to be had in the world, from one end to the other, without the struggle against the capitalist system. The only way to make human progress is to advance in the suppression of capitalism. There is a comprehension of this in the Workers States.

The new Soviet Constitution in the USSR (1977) contains norms that are universal and will prevail in the end. For instance: 'It is up to the Party and not the government, to initiate the plans and directives in matters of policy, society and the economy'. This is a Marxist principle! It surfaces now because there is an immense inter-bureaucratic struggle. This confronts the bureaucratic sectors who use the State apparatus to routinely browbeat the Party, and the country, with their bureaucratic policy of conciliation with capitalism. The predominant and leading role of the Party gives a greater say to the Trade Unions, the workers and the population. The fact this is being posed shows the possibilities. Lenin and Trotsky had put these principles into two nutshells: 'Independence of the Party from the State', and 'The Party to have the leading role'. In the USSR today, the Party is not independent from the State but it is still in the leadership.

Another clause in the new Soviet Constitution makes a characterisation of the present USSR: 'The historic role of the USSR is to intervene in the world and support the movements of national and social liberation'. We note that it does not refer to the 'anti-imperialist' or 'anti-capitalist struggle' but to the 'national and social liberation'. However, these are two defining and demarcating principles that underscore the course actually being followed by the Soviet Union – a sheer anti-Stalinist one!

These new Constitution's principles are not backed by the necessary constancy and dependability. The political leadership to guarantee them is missing, but the principles have been couched on paper. Independently of whether all the leaders have agreed, they have all looked in these principles for a protection against imperialist attack.

During the lives of Lenin and Trotsky, the Soviet Union was the only Workers State. The Communist parties (CPs) that became formed were minute. The French CP became the only large one, but it suffered a retreat after the unfortunate experience of the Popular Front. The Italian CP was small and then fascism came. The German CP was razed to the ground after its monstrous error of a policy against the Socialists that gave Hitler passage. There were few Communist parties then, and no present-day Communist Party draws the necessary conclusions.

In spite of the shortcomings however, new Workers States came to life. They came out of the war, out of the single-mindedness of the European and world masses who imposed social transformations. The new Workers States owed their lives to the Soviet army, because the latter prevented Stalin from repeating what he had done to fail Spain. It is the Soviet army that stopped Stalin doing this. The Soviet masses knew that Hitler would triumph if they rose against Stalin, so they chose to crush Hitler first and dislodge Stalin afterwards. Is there a more complete proof of superior behaviour and comprehension anywhere?

Imperialism seeks to gain historic time because it does not have the strength to decide the course of history. It has very powerful atomic weapons, but the Workers State of the Soviet Union, and others, have some too. They have weapons at least as powerful as the Yankees', if not more. Had US imperialism enjoyed military and social supremacy

all along, it would have launched the nuclear war already. It has not yet launched that war because it is not certain of outcome. Yankee imperialism is boss of world capitalism, but its superiority over the USSR is only partial. On the whole, it is inferior to the USSR because a pure military comparison is important, but not sufficient. Given that every inch of human progress entails a capitalist retreat, Yankee imperialism cannot ignore the social assessment. Progressive movements keep coming and capitalism never recovers everything it concedes. The constant tide of social change proves to capitalism its loss of supremacy. Without this, it would have already made the war.

The uprising in Mozambique marches boldly towards the transformation of society and the elimination of private property. Mozambique throws out Portuguese imperialism and suppresses capitalism. Without waiting for more economic means, it proclaims the 'Socialist State'. Whilst capitalism never recovers the countries that escape its control, the Workers States go on influencing in the world. It is inexorably that the social movements of every sort seek their fulfilment in social transformations.

The advance of the world revolution has not yet found an equivalence in the Communist parties where its effects fall far short of the mark. These parties see a competitor in the anti-capitalist and revolutionary struggle of Angola and Mozambique. In the old Workers States' and communist apparatuses, the progress of the world brings out a sense of rivalry and conflict, although not of antagonism, mind. These old apparatuses resent the revolutions of Vietnam, Laos, Cuba, Korea, Mozambique, Libya, Algeria, Angola, Madagascar, Yemen, but without the antagonism that moved Stalin against the Spanish revolution. They feel jostled, but they can no longer wish the revolutions dead and gone because they, too, need to suppress capitalism in

order to breathe. It is paramount to appraise this aspect in today's world balance of forces.

The other aspect to appraise is the spreading, expanding and bulging crisis of capitalism. Ultimately, it is the world development of the revolution that is at the bottom of it. There is also, of course, the run-of-the-mill but extremely important economic crisis of capitalism, which is not just in one country or the other, but all over the capitalist world.

Any country seeking to advance in Africa, Asia or Latin America - with Europe at least partially included - must emulate the Workers State. Capitalism's capacity to export its crises diminishes because it is surrounded by the Soviet Union, China, Vietnam and many Revolutionary States. There is also the struggle of the world masses who want rid of the oppression of private property. Capitalism must also face its own and never-ending crisis, compete with the Workers States and face all its internal problems in the economy, in production, exchange, etc.

There has not been any decline in the level of competition between Yankee imperialism and capitalist Germany, Britain, Japan, France. They keep making agreements but they only manage to attenuate it. You had the 'Nine', the 'Eleven' and then the 'Common Market Commission'. These are deals to continue subsidising agriculture. They hold back production to keep the prices high. When they talk of overproduction in butter, tomatoes, fruit and vegetables, sugar and meat, they actually pay to get these destroyed.

Argentina and Uruguay offer meat at half the price on the markets of Europe, but the Common Market will not hear of buying it because it competes with the big producers of France and Britain. The latter intend to keep their enormous margins and will not hear of lowering their prices. But there are Workers States that can export meat

at even more competitive prices, compared with the capitalist system.

Meantime, the capitalist system must get rid of the workers. A company with 10,000 workers sacks 5,000 because production increases with automation. It is to compete with the other capitalists, and with the Workers States, that the enterprises instal more machines and get rid of labour. They use the savings to compete and finance their war preparations, but this is also a constant source of crisis for the capitalist system.

Capitalism does not regain ground in spite of the Workers States' bureaucracy and the erroneous policies of the Communist parties. If capitalism goes on living, it is because the Workers States do not implement all the measures at their disposal to end the capitalist regime. But the relations of world forces continue to run counter to the capitalist system.

In such conditions, what is the role of the Communist parties, and what is our own Posadist role? The balance of forces is globally favourable to social transformation and to the progress of the Workers States. The capitalist system has no social force. You measure this when you observe the balance of world forces and the objective economic, social and political development of the Workers States. Add to this the constant struggle of the world masses and you conclude that the world process moves in a way that keeps weakening capitalism.

With their policies, neither the Communist parties nor the Workers States rise up to this conclusion. They cannot be said to be fully supporting capitalism either, because they do confront capitalism and seek its suppression. But they organise nothing for actual and effective progress, and they propose no action for capitalist overthrow.

What is the most pressing thing for us to do in this situation? Struggle against the bureaucracy, or struggle for the elimination of capitalism? The answer is the struggle against the capitalist system! We must uphold the criticism of bureaucracy of course, but do this while helping the Communist and Socialist parties to incline leftwards, towards the anti-capitalist programme. We must help them also to develop their own experiences, increase their comprehension, analyse the process themselves. There is no need to keep attacking others. Finished is the old Party-against-Party struggle. One must handle the orientation of our criticisms with care. Finished the time of Party contests to see who outshines the other. Humanity wants guidance towards the elimination of the capitalist system. The conditions, objective and global, exist now for Socialism. They are no longer the preserve of Communists, Socialists or Trotskyists. They have become the goal of history.

Socialism is not a choice of Karl Marx or of Lenin: It is a necessity of history. Passed a certain point, capitalist production stops advancing and stagnates. This is when the system of production must be transformed, and when its transforming needs more production planning. This leads to further changes in property relations, changes in the social regime. Socialism is a necessity of history. It is not an aspiration of Marx, Lenin, of the Bolsheviks or of Trotsky. Marx, Lenin, the Bolshevik, Trotsky and the proletariat only represent this historic necessity.

What is the essential task then? Must we keep going the old barrage of criticisms against Stalinism? But Stalinism no longer exists! True, the bureaucracy carries on in the way of an apparatus, but Stalinism was a way of conceiving power. The progress of humanity has already eliminated Stalin and Stalinism. Bureaucracy continues, but with diminished powers and a greater involvement in

the objective process of Socialist advance. The task must be to help the Communist and Socialist movements to understand and analyse - the thing they do not do.

The Trotskyist-Posadists have given to this process the name of '*Partial Regeneration*'. We apply the qualification of '*Revolutionary State*' to a number of countries, as Algeria and Libya for instance, taking on board the particular structure and evolution of each. We also said that Revolutionary States might occur in developed capitalist countries, those with big Communist and Socialist parties, with all their lack of the leadership wanted by social transformation. These parties sometimes propose transformative measures that stop short of capitalist overthrow. We think that in being so ripe for social transformation, these countries may create a Revolutionary State process. 'Ripe' means that the masses want change and the immense majority of the petty bourgeoisie too.

In France, the Party of the President of the Republic has won the elections. Some say that the Popular Union has been routed, but no such thing! The Popular Union has failed to win, but the winner, the government, is still confounded by its age-long problems. Had it resolved something or other, it might have been said to have grown in authority. Instead of this, it is now casting about for points of support in the Left, trying to divide the left, to prop itself up. It curries favour with the Socialists to give itself an air of authority in the petty bourgeoisie.

But behind the Socialists, you have the old Trotskyists - some young - saying erroneously that the proletariat has lost social forces, that it is losing numerically and that the weight of the petty bourgeoisie increases. But this is not correct. It is true that the proletariat is fewer in numbers due to automation in production. This reduces its numerical

weight and it increases the role of the petty bourgeoisie in the posts of economic command.

Whilst this is going on however, the Workers States multiply and increase their world authority. They show that economic performance is not the only thing that decides in history. Even though there are fewer workers, they still attract the petty bourgeoisie. They exert on the petty bourgeoisie their historic influence through the development of Workers States and Revolutionary States.

Another factor is that the petty bourgeoisie is no longer rated as highly as before. It is fast becoming itself the proletariat of the automated and electronic world. Its increasingly ordinary roles do not compare in status with the professional or intellectual petty bourgeoisie. The mass of the petty bourgeoisie passes increasingly under the influence of the Workers States.

The proletariat sees its numerical weight decline, but not its social weight. This is so because the Workers States and the advance of the revolution in Africa, Asia and Latin America attract the world petty bourgeoisie, give it a general means of orientation. The petty bourgeois are being taught the deeper meaning of 'the role of the proletariat' in the sense that it is more than what the proletariat contributes to any country's economy. The role of the proletariat is mostly represented by the programme of the proletariat - and what is that programme? It is the programme of the Workers State!

In these conditions, the logical role of the Posadist IV International is to feed this process. The vital centre of the struggle is not anti-bureaucratic but mainly anti-capitalist. It lies in the anti-capitalist struggle accompanied by the anti-bureaucratic one. It is the anti-capitalist struggle that determines the course, because the greater the advance of

the Workers States, the more reduced capitalism becomes. As the world structure of the Workers States spreads, the historic power of bureaucracy diminishes.

In the same way as the advance of the revolution liquidated Stalin, in the same way the advance of the Workers States is going to liquidate the bureaucracy. In the Workers States, the pressure is going to increase to respond more objectively to the necessity of the masses. The need will grow to re-educate layers of leaders inside and outside the Workers States. This will increase the comprehension of the need to elevate the programme, to take more part in the struggle, and in the organisation of the intervention of the masses. The objective requirements of the economy and of science will find better conditions to impose themselves upon the leaders.

Our struggle consists in contributing our persuasive criticisms along with our analyses and experiences. The world elevation of the leaderships of the revolutionary movements is a positive help. We intervene to show how to trust in the Marxist method and its continuity. Our aim is to help with the creation of new leaderships where the world revolution elevates, as well as in the economic and social advances of the Workers States.

Not many movements share in the task that we have taken on, making it that our own growth is mostly in political authority. We intervene to raise the level of comprehension in others, in the leaderships of the Workers States and the Communist parties. When we analyse therefore, we select the scientific arguments most likely to serve the rectification of their previous policies. And all the while, we show the need to prepare for the historic confrontation *capitalist system* versus *the Workers States*. This is the sense of what we do.

We aim at impelling the Communist and Socialist parties of the world. We act in this way also towards the revolutionary nationalist movements. As these tend to have a better understanding of the process and be more in need of the revolutionary programme, we help them acquire the experience and the conviction that progress can only be anti-capitalist; and that the Permanent Revolution does not proceed along local lines, but on a world scale.

The Permanent Revolution can no longer be seen from one country only. It interprets how the bourgeois democratic tasks become completed by the socialist measures - but today, and on top of the local struggles in different countries, the Permanent Revolution includes everything to do with the confrontation between the capitalist system and the Workers States.

We intervene to feed the movements with ideas, and some of the principles we raise are retaken in the Communist and Socialist movements. We contribute to the world progress of the Socialist revolution by raising the level of experience in these leaderships. We bring to them a theoretical and political comprehension, aware that the anti-bureaucratic and the anti-capitalist struggles are combined. Here our comprehension includes one (additional) essential factor: the two struggles are combined, but the one that decides is the anti-capitalist struggle, because the deeper it goes, the more of bureaucracy is swept away.

You can prove that Stalin was defeated by the necessary advance of history. Every bureaucratic motive and policy of Stalin, every one of his grand plans, used to run counter to historic necessity. But the need to progress causes the masses to oppose the capitalist system, making them

intelligent. When Stalinism tried to stand in the way of this necessity, it ended up trampled and squashed.

Stalinism achieved some importance only as long as it could use the lone Soviet Union as refuge. The Soviet Union was the only Socialist revolution in the world at the time, and the world masses had no other experience to compare it with. But the masses of today are world-wise. They lack in leadership, policy and programme. We have made it our task to help in providing these.

No Socialist Party – be it in Greece, Japan, France or Italy – has ever replaced any Communist Party. No Socialist Party can do this because the masses need programme, policy and objectives for development. The masses assess the quality of their Party in relation to the role that they, masses, play in social transformation. They aspire to capitalist overthrow and ways to make Workers States. You will never find a Socialist Party on that ground. Only the Communists have the programme for that, when they are worth their salt. Some Socialist parties, as in Greece, pretend to be able to compete with the Communist parties. They offer much in the way of electoral rivalries, but no programmatic discussions. They discuss no experience or programme, historic or trivial. But never in a million years will the capitalist system arrange for the progress of Greece. Of Greece, or any other country.

The Posadist IV International intervenes in the world process to encourage the Workers States to collaborate between themselves. It explains to them the process of Partial Regeneration. It reminds the Communist parties of the need to take power. It helps the Socialists consider that progress demands more than changes in capitalist administrations, and that the capitalist system itself needs eliminating: communist or socialist administrations that

simply run capitalism perpetuate the same ills as the bourgeois administrations.

This is the task that the Trotskyist-Posadist Fourth International has taken on. We do it by raising the questions most likely to assist the leaderships in the Socialist and Communist movement, the Left-wing groups, the Trade Unions. Our aim is that they elevate their knowledge of this process.

Take the Workers States' dissidents, for instance: You will find it hard to name one Socialist Party that does not support them. Worse, many Communist parties support them too, and practically all the Left-wing groups. All these organisations have stood up to defend the dissidents, citing 'the lack of democracy in the Workers States'.

But this has been the wrong debate. The USSR entered Czechoslovakia, threw Dubcek out and put someone else instead - and what happened after that? After that, there came new advances for the country - economic, technical and scientific. The Czech people are one thousand times better off now than under Dubcek. Why is there all this hoo-ha over the dissidents? What is important about a country: the opposition to be found in it, or the improvements it has made? We support the Soviet Union's occupation of Czechoslovakia and insist on the Soviet Union defending that country. This occupation took place with a view to defending Czechoslovakia against a bourgeois leadership harking back to Stalin's epoch. Ota Sik, a minister under Dubcek, wrote a book worthy of any enemy of Socialism. His protest was a call for a direct alliance between capitalism and the Czech bureaucracy. This was only bested by dissident Solzhenitsyn who defended the capitalist system directly, and berated the US for not having crushed the Soviet Union! Fine fellows these

dissidents! Of course, none of them could care a farthing worth for the support the USSR gives to Vietnam, Angola, Cuba, Mozambique – these monuments to historic progress. But where is, exactly, the Soviet anti-proletarian dictatorship?

We criticise the Soviet bureaucracy, but we support it in everything it does against the capitalist system. We teach people how to discuss and appraise this process. Imagine that the Soviet Union had not intervened in Czechoslovakia: conditions would have then been laid for a swift retreat. Proof is that every leader that was flushed out of Czechoslovakia is now a crony of the capitalist system. But after the Soviet invasion, Czechoslovakia did not go back to capitalism or to Stalin! It developed further instead, and in all fields: scientific, economic and social.

In 1939/40, the USSR invaded Poland and Finland. All the Trotskyists of the world, although they were not yet 'old', started pressing Trotsky for a condemnation. But Trotsky would have none of this. He saw the USSR's invasion as part of the world balance of forces. World capitalism wanted the Soviet Union dead. Acting in its name, German capitalism started encircling the USSR. Half of Poland was already occupied and imperialism's military strategy was to draw ever closer to the Soviets' borders. Trotsky fully endorsed Poland's invasion by the USSR, albeit led by Stalin, because this kept German imperialism away from the frontiers. In those days, Poland was not of sufficient weight to decide in history. The countries with the decisive weight were Germany on a one hand, and the USSR on the other. This is the right way to handle the debate. How comes this is never debated?

We are fully indignant at all the crimes perpetrated by the Soviet bureaucracy. But our policy is not led by

indignation. It is determined by our historic consciousness of the significance of the Soviet Union in terms of historic programme and function. We want everyone to know how to distinguish between an invasion to plunder a country, and a military intervention to ward off capitalist restoration, as was the case in Czechoslovakia.

We have written much on these questions to help the communist and socialist movement defend the Soviet Union. Criticism of bureaucracy and of bureaucratic leadership is no reason to disavow the Workers States and the anti-capitalist struggle. Indeed, the greater the progress of the struggle to eliminate capitalism, the weaker the bureaucracy becomes. You can prove that the rise of revolutions puts the USSR's bureaucracy on the backfoot, and that in spite of this, the USSR must continue to impel them to save itself from perishing!

Our role is objective because our intervention is an aid to general understanding. In Italy, the Communist Party paper '*Unita*' published letters written by Communist leaders who posed Trotsky's rehabilitation. The Young Communists' review, '*La Citta Futura*' is also agreed with Trotsky's rehabilitation. It is not that they have all become Trotskyists, but that they have received our direct influence. We help the Communist and Socialist movement to elevate its trust in the programme of social transformation, in the socialist-communist United Front. The idea of Trotsky's rehabilitation does not mean the return of the Trotsky of 1917; it means the application of the policies of Trotsky today.

The greater our strength, the better this job gets done. The more material means we have, the easier it is for our influence to spread. We could have developed a movement 'for us' by playing the cards of criticisms and alliances. We

chose not to do this. Our criticisms are persuasive without evading anything. This is why each of our actions has a great effect. We mean to grow as much as possible, but only on the basis that we have just explained.

PARTICIPANTS' QUESTIONS, AND REPLIES BY J. POSADAS

Q: About the defeat of imperialism in Vietnam or in Algeria, was it a military defeat, or did it result from the world balance of forces?

In Vietnam, imperialism suffered a social defeat because it did not find the social support it needed to do its worst. The same goes for Angola, Mozambique, Madagascar, Algeria and Cuba. Militarily speaking, imperialism can swallow Cuba in one bite. Well, why doesn't it? It does not because the world balance of forces prevents the Workers States from letting Cuba or Vietnam be wiped out. The social, economic or military force of these small countries is not their own. It comes from a world balance of forces at the centre of which the Workers States find themselves, and which stays the hand of imperialist intervention.

Post 1945, the world balance of forces was entirely changed. The war ended with German and Italian imperialisms crushed, capitalism defeated in 8 European countries. No sooner the Yankees had set foot in North Korea than the Workers States had them thrown out, imperialism having been thrown out of China just before. This is all included in our phrase '*the world relations of forces*'. This is not just about a military relation. It includes the military relation because the military arsenal of capitalism is so huge, but it is not the military relation that decides. Social force is what decides. Social force is what wins people and moves them to build social structures. In the end, social force always prevails over military force.

With German and Italian fascism flattened after the war, the world balance of forces wrought major change in Europe. And what is fascism really, but the advanced guard of world capitalism to stop the spread of revolution? Ten European countries had become Workers States, capitalism had been beaten in ten countries and all this had revolutionised Europe.

Military force is important at given times in the world relations of military and economic forces. Historically speaking however, military force is held together by social forces. In the Workers States, their military inferiority is offset by their social superiority. Their power of influence on the armies of their enemies strikes at the power of these enemies to combine between themselves worldwide. Take Cuba, this very small island-country facing the big United States with its enormous military. Why doesn't the US invade Cuba? The world balance of forces stops the US doing it, and the key factor in this world balance of forces is the Workers States!

The North American masses too have great importance. Their anti-war pressure played a very large part in the US' defeat in Vietnam. Their pressure was very important, but it was not the reason. What defeated the US in Vietnam was that capitalism could not win there without launching the war. Thinking twice about it, and aware that it could be engulfed too, the US found itself without the force to launch the war.

At the time of the Korean war (1953), Yankee imperialism had an impressive military power of destruction. But this war was an adventure in the sense that was provoking the USSR and China while still being beaten soundly on the ground. Imperialism was superior militarily. Its problem was that it was not superior socially.

These conclusions must never fail to inform our interventions. Military might can decide at one time or the other but it is not military might that decides. In the historic process, it is social necessity that makes the ultimate difference. Social necessity eventually gets hold of the military means with which to turn itself into a reality.

Q: When revolutions triumphs in countries like the US, Germany or Japan, will there still be frontiers between the Workers States as there are today?

Anything like you say happening in the US, Germany or Japan means the collapse of the whole capitalist system. The US and Germany are its bedrock. In such a situation and very soon, frontiers would disappear even if they kept going for a while.

Q: Can we have a Socialist Republic in the US and still a bureaucracy in the Workers States? Can the two conditions carry on co-existing?

We cannot give dates; The more the revolution advances, the weaker becomes the power of the bureaucracy.

Q: Capitalism defends itself via inflation. Through price rises it robs the masses and the proletariat of the capitalist countries. Is that right?

Capitalism robs the masses through price inflation as well as by other means like the adulteration of foodstuffs or the poisoning of the air. These have the same effect as price rises. It is all part of the trickery that benefits the capitalist system.

In these other ways of robbing people, capitalism hopes to hide better its manipulations and absence of perspective. If capitalism felt it had big prospects, it would invest in the colonies, in Africa, Asia and Latin America. But it does not. It is perspective-less, because its possibilities for expansion have gone. Now it falls back on tampering with food, disintegrating life and even self-destructing: This is the constant agony of capitalism.

One must criticise the Communist parties for having allowed capitalism to continue that long. Had the Workers States and the USSR organised the struggle in the world, there would be no capitalism today. When we address this criticism to the comrades of the Communist Party, we take care to do it persuasively.

Inflation is not only expressed in price rises. It is important to note that inflation does not come from deliberate decisions or particular capitalist bad intentions. Inflation is inscribed in the capitalist structure itself. Every capitalist country experiences inflation, hugely sometimes, but there are worse things still. There is unemployment, the foods that make people ill, the increasing costs of war taken from the national purse. These things point to a crisis that is not ordinary, a state of disintegration, a total crisis. The essential cause for it comes from the gains being made in the Workers States, in the revolutionary struggles, in social transformations in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Inflation and unemployment are linked. Unemployment used to come with deflation, now it comes with enormous levels of inflation. This is due to certain policies imposed by the total crisis of the system, like the cost of its counter-revolutionary wars, in Korea, Vietnam, etc.

The capitalist system has lost its post-war solidity. The progress of the economy and of life makes it feel cornered. It feels overtaken by the authority of the Workers States, by the struggles in the world, by its own masses. In the US - where there are many more demonstrations than those reported - people take to the streets to demand the return of the US troops from the countries where they make war.

This crisis of the capitalist system is economic and social. It is a crisis of structure and of regime, a crisis of disintegration. This is because the economy of the Workers

States advances, and so does the struggle for social transformations in Africa, Asia and Latin America. You get an idea of this disintegration in the junta of assassins in Chile, that in Bolivia before that, in the repressive government of Brazil and the dictatorship of Argentina. There is no economic progress in any of those countries.

The capitalist system is no longer the only decider in the world's economic affairs. The Workers States have joined the fray. Together with the continuing struggles of the world masses, this interferes with the capitalist economy. It cuts across its plans. Every dictatorship has failed, each good at assassination and at nothing else, because the masses did not lie down. It is the dictatorships and their Yankee backers that decompose. To make up for their loss, the latter flail about to keep some social support, to justify their role of world gendarme of the capitalist system. The system goes on disintegrating however. It preserves its economic and military power, but no social power.

When assessing Yankee imperialism, one must do it against the world process of the struggle against the capitalist system, a process in which the Workers States make a very big contribution.

Capitalism started preparing the Second World War as early as 1929. It took it ten years to finalise it. Mussolini got himself ready well before that, and like Hitler, he used the 1929 crisis to prop himself up. In that crisis, millions became unemployed in Germany, Italy, France and the United States. Capitalism got away with it at the time, but things have changed. Capitalism has never needed war so much as it does today. Note that the level of unemployed people in the world today, at 18 million, is double that of 1929! Looking as it does to a third world war today, capitalism has a new problem. It cannot do it just when it

likes. It cannot do it just as it likes, and it cannot do it just where it likes. Gone are the days when it used to set one country against the other. This time, its war is against the Workers States.

Led by Yankee imperialism, world capitalism is well aware that in any war today, the countries struggling for progress and development will line up behind the Workers States. It knows that the world masses are going to intervene in any capitalist war to crush capitalism. Scared of this, capitalism keeps postponing its launching of the war. Today's situation is no longer that of 1929 when it could still make war pretty much as it liked. Now, the reverse is true. Capitalism goes from one retreat to the other. Its previous crises used to explode via confrontations inside the capitalist system. All in competition against each other, Nazi Germany and fascist Italy became pitted against Britain, the US and France. Now they all draw together against the Workers States because for them, the greatest danger comes from the Workers States. The result is that they have not the force they need to decide about this war.

Q: Do you think revolution will come to the colonial and semi-colonial countries before developed capitalist states, like the US in particular?

This is not the way to look at this. The leaderships of the Communist parties and of the Workers States have no clear project. There is no doubt about the crisis of the capitalist system being total, and that capitalism is in decomposition. Its decomposing elements may become detached from each other, and crash into the maelstrom of the crisis of capitalism. Capitalism reacts to this as a system and it prepares for war. It is not going to let itself be overthrown without first making war: it has the means to do it, and it prepares for it. That capitalism gets ready for war doesn't necessarily mean it will succeed. If it had a strong chance of winning, you would already see, here and

there, movements in support of its war. But what you see is the opposite, on top of the constant growth of internal capitalist contradictions. Add to this that they all compete, Germany vs the US, the US vs Europe, France vs Germany, etc. They are all opposed to the Workers States, but they all compete against each other.

The disappearance of the United States can only happen with the total wiping out of capitalism. They get ready for the war to stop this, but it is no longer in their power to decide when or how to launch that war. They admit to be spending 18% of BNP (Basic National Product) on war expenditure, but it is more like 40%. US capitalism has no prospect of survival whatsoever.

Q: Which of the two is the most decisive: the proletariat in the developed capitalist countries, or that in the more peripheral capitalist countries?

They are both important. Take the proletariat of the United States: it is less advanced than that of Bolivia for instance. It does not have a class Party and the majority of the Trade Unions are led by gangsters. This proletariat is given no social weight and it intervenes in the social struggles only remotely, at one removed. The big strikes in the US are only every ten years or so, mostly from the miners. They carry a certain political weight because they underline a state of mind and the will of the masses to struggle, but the social or economic effects are contained. There are steel and car workers' strikes too, but they tend to be very circumscribed or limited to salary demands. There are few demonstrations evidencing political struggle.

Take Italy on the other hand. The proletariat there fights for economic demands too, but also for important social conquests. The factory and neighbourhood committees which they make are the organs of control that appear at the start of very advanced dualities of powers. In the US

on the other hand, the strikes are essentially about salary increases. This is important of course, but it shows a political detainment. The proletariat is not at fault, but the Communist parties are, and Stalin mostly.

So, one cannot tell which proletariat comes first or last. We know that the North American proletariat wants to share with the workers of the world but that it cannot say so due to a lack Party. The North American proletariat cannot account for itself in any depth because it has no political life. Its concern for the rest of the world shows through its opposition to Yankee imperialism in Vietnam and through the incapacity of imperialism to whip up the smallest little strike in support of its war on Vietnam. The US masses are clearly opposed to that war, but they cannot show this in political terms. The time will come when the struggles in the rest of the world will be so compelling that the US masses will leap directly from the Trade Union level, over to the struggle for power. The conditions for this are not yet present, but the time will come when they will be. We have no hesitation in saying that the North American proletariat condemns the war in Vietnam as much as the US youth and students. What they lack is the organised movements to give political expression to this situation.

Q: Can one say that capitalism is definitely condemned?

The phrase *definitely condemned* does not mean that capitalism will collapse tomorrow, but that it has no perspective.

Q: Can one be certain that, in these very mature conditions for Socialism, the Communist and Socialist parties will play a revolutionary role?

Yes, but there will be changes, some of them having arrived already. There is the development of the economy of the Workers States on a one hand, and the increasing level of confidence inside the Workers States on the other.

These have two effects: they erode the bureaucratic roles and they raise the level of scientific understanding. This process is not automatic. Rectifications may not happen at once. Our task is to persist with positions, persuasive criticisms and writings to show the better ways. Few are the Communist parties nowadays where even the bureaucracy is not forced to oppose capitalism. There is no way of conciliating with capitalism any more.

Q: Does this mean that the Political Revolution is no longer necessary?

It is still necessary, and a Political Revolution is taking place right now. It is not posed as in Trotsky's epoch when there was only one Workers State and no prospect of another revolution soon. The Political Revolution in those days included everything, insurrection inside the USSR included. The Political Revolution is still necessary today, but it is already in train! It is in train and without need of insurrection. Take China with the assassination of Lin Biao or the liquidation of the 'Gang of Four'. These were acts of counter-revolution, but they also mean that Lin Biao, even if not completely, was part of a Political Revolution.

Take Stalin's liquidation, or the publication of the New Soviet Constitution (1977). Take the support which the USSR gives to Vietnam, Angola, Mozambique: all such aspects form part of a Political Revolution because they tend towards the elimination of bureaucratic power. They do not eliminate bureaucratic power, not yet, but they weaken it. This contributes to the return of some confidence in the communist method. The Political Revolution is happening in this manner. This does not entirely exclude any future need for the use of force; but the more the process advances and the more the Political Revolution takes this form. This leaning towards the elimination of bureaucratic power can only be helpful to the development of revolutionary political power.

Q: Can the basic role of the Posadist Fourth International be defined as a Left Opposition in the communist parties?

No. Our role consists in preparing for the final confrontation, the final settlement of accounts with the capitalist system. We do this by accompanying the Workers States and the communist and socialist parties in this struggle. We mean to intervene in a way that gives them political orientation. We do it through persuasive criticisms and the analysis of new processes like Eritrea today, or Vietnam, Madagascar, Mozambique. We bring to the comrades the political understanding that they will need for internal political changes. This too is part of the Political Revolution! It is also about bringing to them an understanding of the world process that they do not have. This is our contribution to the world process of the elimination of bureaucratic political power.

Q: What is your position on entryism?

The problem of entryism has changed. We can make entryism; but since our aim is to form a world current to fight bureaucratic power, entryism no longer presents like before. Entryism can be used to advance the struggle for power, but you have to live the life of the Party 'entered' nowadays, otherwise there is no entryism.

Entryism failed when it developed the aim of replacing the Communist and Socialist parties. It failed because Communist parties came to power in twelve countries. The French and Italian Communist parties became major parties because the situation could no longer remain at the level of the reformist policy of alliance with capitalism. These parties do not have a consistent policy of anti-capitalist struggle, but neither do they adapt to capitalism. They are instruments that the masses support.

The entryism of today must not try to get hold of a Party's leadership in order to change it. Instead of doing this, it must help that Party to take power. The revolution continues to advance in the world, and in the Workers States particularly. In the Communist and Socialist parties, this raises the level of opposition and struggle against the capitalist system. This is how the advance of the world revolution influences the Communist parties.

It is therefore necessary - and this is as important as entryism itself - to rely on an independent movement that addresses and encourages those Communist and Socialist parties. Since the bureaucratic apparatuses do not let people speak and write, we find that we can influence better from the outside than from the inside. From within the Communist parties for instance, we would not be free to play our role, or to write towards those parties. And so, this is what we do to avoid the prohibitions of their managements, and we do it very well.

Q: Is there a historical space to build new communist parties?

There is no time for this in countries like France, Italy, Spain or Portugal; but there is still time to form revolutionary currents within the Communist parties to influence them. But on the other hand, there is still time to build new communist parties in countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Thanks to the Workers States. countries like Mozambique, Vietnam, Angola, Laos, are freeing themselves of capitalism. See how the masses of the world lean on the Workers States to win victories against the capitalist system. Proof that it is the Workers States that make capitalism retreat. The proletariat of Germany, France, England, Italy, the United States and Japan has an important weight in the political struggle against world capitalism. But it does not decide in the countries that free themselves of capitalism and imperialism. In those countries, the force that decides is the Workers States of the world, or rather, the

proletariat of the Workers States of the world: the proletariat of the Soviet Union in particular, but also that of China in spite of its present leadership. As for Cuba, and partly due to the stand-off entailed with the US, it is restricted in what it can do in Latin America; but it supports Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia and Madagascar. In those countries, it is not the proletariat of North America or of Europe that supported the revolutions, but the proletariat of the Workers States, that of Cuba included. And where Cuba has managed to intervene, it is thanks to the support of the Soviet Union. Of itself, Cuba could not have done this sort of thing alone.

The struggle of the English, French and German proletariat is important, but in this case, it works like an accompaniment to the struggle of the Workers States against capitalism. The Workers States must confront the capitalist system if only to avoid being smashed by it. This is how, even with their bureaucracies, the Workers States of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the USSR give motive and impetus to the world's anti-capitalist struggle. The proletariat of the Workers States represents a good half of the world's proletariat. The proletariat of the Workers states is the real force behind the world's liberation movements. The proletariat of the capitalist countries is not in a position to do this, but it plays its part by encouraging the conduct of the proletariat of the Workers States. All this weakens the capitalist system.

The great struggles of the Italian and French proletariat, and to a lesser extent that of the English and German one, weaken capitalism and prevent it from advancing as it wishes against the development of the Workers States. There is an unprogrammed coordination through which the world proletariat intervenes from within and from without the Workers States.

The fact that it weighs as a country gives to the USSR a bigger programmatic ability to contain imperialism. Vietnam would have lost, for example, without the USSR - no doubt about it. Without the USSR no Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Madagascar today, or even Libya. It is the Soviet Union – the Soviet proletariat – that holds imperialism down. The masses of the world see this, although they see also the Soviet proletariat not allowed to address directly the proletariat of the world and not allowed to intervene in the USSR directly.

We propose that the soviet trade unions, the factories, the Communist parties of the Workers States, send open addresses to the masses of the world, and to the North American masses in particular. Let all the communist and soviet bodies appeal to masses of the world, addressing them directly. Let the whole world witness public assemblies being held in the Soviet Union! Let the problems of the world be discussed at that level! Let there be appeals made from the USSR to the masses of the world, and the public discussion generated to continue in the USSR through soviet democracy. Such things will have a shattering effect in the United States, Germany and England. In Italy and France too, even if not so much.

It is good to compare the relative weight of the proletariat in the capitalist countries and in the Workers States. But how to get the proletariat to intervene? We have not the force to decide this. It is the partis already established that decide and there is no time now to form new movements. It is therefore necessary to influence those that exist.

We exert our influence in the knowledge that, at every turn, the process invites the Workers States, their trade unions and their partis, to the more open levels of anti-capitalist struggle and soviet internal development without which capitalism could very well have them crushed.

The bureaucracy of the Workers States operates like a bridge, like a transmission belt in the relations with world capitalism. This is in the nature of bureaucracy. But the fact remains, however, that for the Workers State to make any progress, it must face the capitalist system down. If this worked differently in Stalin's time, it is because antagonistic contradictions are surfacing today that didn't exist before.

In the Soviet Union, 5,000 workers' leaders have just been sacked in one go. They were expelled. In Yugoslavia, 500,000 members were suspended from the Communist Party, and 400,000 in the Soviet Union. This does not mean that the bureaucracy is liquidated. It means that the bureaucracy must get rid of the obstacle represented by the sectors tied to capitalism. It must do this and advance, because if it does not, it is it (bureaucracy) that falls.

We put no trust in the thought that the bureaucracy will regenerate. We say that the Workers State, through its very functioning, will end up expelling the bureaucracy; and it is in this sense that the struggle of the world proletariat influences the Soviet Union. Its struggle in France, Germany and Italy in particular, has much influence in the Soviet Union, and in the United States too. The proletariat of the capitalist countries is not ultimately decisive, but it has a very great impact, in combination with that of the Workers States.

The Workers' State has built the force and security that it communicates to the world. It is the USSR that defeated Nazism and dislodged Stalin. It crushed the Nazis and Stalin, developed itself and spread in the world. It represents the progress of history. It derives much confidence from this.

Regardless of possible new events, the Workers State fulfils a function that amply justifies its existence in history. About the economic and social roots of bureaucracy, the more completely the Workers State expands its power in the world, the weaker become the historic causes for their existence.

Capitalism as a class disposed of 400 years to take the leadership of society. French capitalism did not wait for the French Revolution to take power. It was already exercising a transitory, though limited role 300 years before it. In the Middle Ages, the medieval communes were organs of power through which the bourgeoisie was already organising. When the bourgeois class took over from feudalism, it was on the basis of an identical property regime: private property. There was continuity between the two social regimes therefore. The production system changed from feudal to capitalist, but the regime of property stayed the same. The way to conceive, the way to lead and the cultural instruments in the economic field are the same. The capitalist class is a class that became prepared in the regime that existed before.

But for the proletariat, in its case, it is a new class in history. It is led to build the leadership of society not for its own sake, but to eliminate every form of power. It must build itself in the very exercise of power.

Before the taking of power, the proletariat could not have had a great preparation. It had to devote all its time to the struggle for transitional, trade union and electoral demands - and to take power. It is only when it takes power that the proletariat finds itself in condition to exercise its first historic experience as the leading class; and that, differently from all the other classes in history, must [also] eliminate itself.

This is why the proletariat cannot be held as responsible for the

errors as the bureaucracy. The latter is an excrescence of history. It does not represent a necessity. It disappears when the conditions that generated it, no longer exist. All the time that the proletariat learns to lead society, the conditions improve constantly in its favour. The more the revolution develops on a world scale, the stronger it becomes in confidence, resolve and experience. The same happens in the communist and socialist leaders, in the leftist groups even. They learn to lead. The development of the economy repels bureaucracy, demanding harmonious coordination instead.

The power of the bureaucracy took off at a time when a separation appeared between the triumph of the Russian Revolution and the lack of world revolutionary expansion. It was then that the absence of previous experience in the working class as a leading class in history applied its full weight. This experience is still going today however, even if it is not as complete as it should be. The bureaucracy of the Workers States is forced to coordinate, centralise, plan and harmonise the development of the economy of the Workers States. Without doing this, it cannot compete with the capitalist system, or justify its own existence.

Meanwhile, the working class of the world today goes on elevating its role and function. In the Workers States, some sectors of the population correspond to what, in capitalism, would be a petit bourgeoisie. In their cases however, these functionaries, technicians and employees are all the allies of the proletariat. Together with the working class, they feel no need for a power other than the one that already organises planning.

To a certain extent, Stalin could justify his power by pointing to the capitalist danger. Now, this justification would hold no water whatsoever. Today, the revolution must be spread in the world, otherwise the economy dies.

All considered, the weight of the proletariat has increased in history. There are fewer workers but there are more Workers States. The authority of the proletariat expresses itself in the fact that the Workers States influence all the countries of the world by showing them the road to progress. The numerical weight of the proletariat does not increase, but its historic authority does. Even in the Workers States, the number of workers increases, alongside those who would be petit bourgeois in the capitalist regime and who - in the Workers States - join the Communist Party and influence the world. There is not the necessary leadership to muster all these forces. The bureaucracy does not incorporate them sufficiently, but it does not entirely reject them either.

This said, the problem of China is of fundamental importance.² It does not put in doubt the development of the world socialist revolution, but it questions how in China, which went so far itself in the socialist revolution, there could appear and form such a counter-revolutionary leadership. And this, in the full swing of the world socialist revolution that sweep countries as economically backward as Angola, Mozambique and Madagascar. The Deng leadership is not an agent or representative of capitalism. It is in its interests to preserve the Chinese Workers State, but it is uncertain. It comes from the periphery of the Workers State. It is indicative of the type of bureaucracy that develops in this stage of history. It wants an alliance with capitalism in order to oppose the Soviet Union, seeing the danger posed to its bureaucratic self by the development of the USSR. With the view that capitalism will be crushed, this Chinese leadership does not see capitalism as an immediate danger. It has an interest indeed in capitalism being

² The author refers to Deng Xiaoping. After Mao died in September 1976, there was a power struggle in China. Deng Xiaoping displaced Hua Guofeng, the chosen successor, and became de-facto leader in December 1978. One of his first measures was to reintroduce the entrance exam to university which had been abolished in the Cultural Revolution, and had remained inessential for ten years.

crushed, but in the immediate, its concern is to contain the Soviet Union.

This could not have been foreseen by Marx or by Trotsky. This situation is of now. We are the only ones to have taken on board the responsibility of tackling those problems. No-one else has done it, neither the Soviets nor the Chinese, and neither has any Workers-State or other political organisation. Everyone has stayed silent in front of the Chinese problem. But this problem had to be characterized, if only to stop it being presented as a monstrosity resulting from the revolution. But this monstrosity did not come from the Revolution! It came from the backwardness of the political leadership. This Chinese leadership is immensely backward. The perspectives however do not favour this backwardness. They favour the elevation of the world revolution.

(The Conference continues. Conclusion of the Conference next page)

Intervention of J Posadas concluding the Conference

ABOUT THE FUNCTION OF TROTSKYISM

The current process of the *Permanent Revolution* is not the one that Trotsky defined. Trotsky defined it for the Russia of his epoch. It would fall to the Marxists coming after him to pronounce on the posterior stages. No Communist Party or even our own old movement³ concerned itself with defining our present stage as distinct from that of Trotsky. This is one of the reasons why they dissolved. A lack of interest in essential problems indicates debility, theoretical and political fragility.

Valiant courage, revolutionary intrepidity and political determination do not equate to programmatic capacity. One can have a great determination and resolve, but it the programme that must guide the determination to struggle. If not, one falls in a vacuum. Enough to read the newspapers to realise the immense quantity of revolutionary movements that confront the problems of today. Among these movements, you find Mozambique and Angola. These countries have nothing, but they have an immense will to make cultural, political and scientific progress. Mozambique is the expression of this process of history.

Countries otherwise most backward qualify to the most advanced grades in historic progress. They do this by making their social conquests coincide with what is necessary for the progress of history. Take Ethiopia for instance, which has materially nothing. Before the revolution (1974), the Negus would feed special foods imported from Australia to his dogs

³ See the brief biography of J Posadas on page 154.

and lions, while the people did not know about meat. Lining up the earth's shape on his way of thinking, donkey Haile Selassie had the university teaching that the earth is square. With these examples, you guess at the prevailing state of tribalism and enormous backwardness. Hardly two years in the revolution however, Ethiopia's workers militias were teaching how to read and write. Today, supplies get to people without their need to fight. Contrary to what capitalism and the Soviet bureaucracy imagined, the peasants do not bay: 'give me my land, I want my land!'. Witness here the progress of history and the measures it requires! Of themselves, these measures have not the economic, military and social force to determine the progress of history, but they show how to go about it. Without the Soviet Union, none of this would have existed.

Capitalism based itself on the interests of private property to contain the advance of the socialist revolution. There had been a time when private property seemed able of resolving the problems of hunger, society, the family and life. Now the peasants of Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Vietnam, decide to overcome their own backwardness themselves. They pull themselves up culturally and scientifically without dispute, and from this elevation, they proceed to developing the economy. Such are the problems of history today. The balance of forces is such that the immense majority of humanity, together with the Workers States, actually drives the progress of history while capitalism drives history towards death.

It is not weapons that decide in history. What decides is ideas, programme and policy - military ones included. In themselves, the military means are not the condition for progress. The people of Angola have no weapons or army, or shoes, but they have an enormous determination to develop society. In China, Angola, Laos, Cuba, Mozambique, Libya, Algeria, there are no disputes for the land. Of their own initiative, the peasants

decide to organize cooperatives and collective works. The peasantry no longer has the stupid mentality it had in the epoch of Marx. The intelligence it has acquired comes from the confidence the Workers States radiate. The peasants may not have risen so much on the cultural plane but they are doing so on the social plane. They do this through the influence of the Workers States and their opening up to progress, transforming into a cultural elevation on their part.

Such is the course of history today. The Workers States have no choice but to accompany it and take initiatives to help it develop. All this is very different from the epoch of Trotsky. There is still bureaucracy today, but not Stalinism. Stalinism was a social orientation, a policy, a counter-revolutionary alliance with capitalism against the revolution. Bureaucracy is bureaucratic power, but Stalinism was something that could not change. It had to be crushed and the revolution did it. It matters little whether Stalin died of a bullet, a poison or of natural causes. He died of being unnecessary in history. What is the difference between assassination or suicide when it corresponds to a necessity in history? History simply registers that Stalin is no longer. He disappeared for not being necessary. The bureaucracy that came after Stalin had to suppress Stalinism. That Stalin's statues were demolished in all the Workers States became indicative of the masses' volition and intelligence. When the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union, the masses did not welcome them to get rid of Stalin. They routed the Nazis, and then they liquidated Stalin. See here proof of the immense intelligence of the masses.

In their attitude towards the land today, the peasants show their inclination towards collective production. With the Nazi invasion, it was with intelligence that the Soviet masses measured the historic duty that was facing them. They saw this invasion poised to crush the USSR, this instrument of historic

progress in spite of a counter-revolutionary and reactionary leadership. They resolved to crush Nazism, develop new Workers States and other revolutions, and then to crush Stalin. In so doing, they expressed one of the most intelligent attitudes in history. Only a Workers State can produce this level of intelligence because only a Workers State can guide human thought in this way. It takes the social relations of a Workers State to bring about such ideas and such conduct.

The bureaucracy that followed Stalin had a new process to deal with: The economic expansion of the USSR demonstrated the power of the Workers State and its superiority over capitalism. A developing economy demanded more coordination and harmony in planning. Harmony in planning demanded economic initiatives and policies to serve the economic plan. And the economic plan demanded the extension of the Soviet Union.

If it is to live on, the USSR has to spread in the world. It must harmonise with the rest of the world because if not, economic stagnation sets in. In the USSR, development is not only economic, but social, leaving it with no choice but to promote and impel revolution. Brezhnev goes along with the USSR's bureaucratic leadership, but he must support revolution in the world, not the counter-revolution. He must support Vietnam, Angola and Cuba even when he does it in the name of 'peace and détente'. And without this support, the peasants of those countries would be crushed by imperialism.

It was not like this in the epoch of Stalin. From then to today, the USSR has changed. The direction it takes is to the reverse of that when Stalin. Its need to extend and expand determines the political conduct of the Workers State.

The communist parties have no historic experience, i.e., they got no preparation under Stalin. It was all about adapting to

capitalism then, making alliances with it, Marxism absent, rationality absent, dialectics not-known.

It is only now that some Communist parties wake up to these problems. If their bureaucratic and conciliatory leaderships do not have the same historical flaws as Stalin, it is because their bases in the proletariat and the balance of world forces press them in favour of revolution. It is most evident that humanity requires social transformations in order to progress.

Old Trotskyism should have faced up to these problems, but it did not prepare for it. It trusted in policies, programmes and objectives that proved unrealizable - like "entryism" for instance. No one speaks of entryism today. It is a policy without perspective, or even necessity. The world balance of forces is clear and decisive: it is either capitalism or the Workers State. It is confrontation system against system.

Ethiopia is not important economically speaking. It produces coffee, a few minerals and some agriculture. But Ethiopia is a centre for the influence of the revolution. It is an example for Africa. It is not just a strategic centre. It is false to refer to the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa as 'Strategic Zones'. The sea is not Red as they say on the map; it is only red because it is used as transit for the socialist revolution.

This zone has some strategic importance, but this is no what decides. This is no longer the time of the crusades. Naval strategy is no longer set out at sea, but above and below the sea. Missile-laden nuclear submarines can strike blows at Carter's backside on the simple pressing of a button. The Soviets themselves say that strategy no longer rests on naval units, but on capability in the use of atomic weapons. The sea is still important, but it has lost its fundamental strategic role. One atomic weapon is enough to destroy a whole squadron.

The Red Sea is not so essential to military strategy, but it is still essential to revolutionary strategy however. Imperialism conceals the true role of Ethiopia when it calls it 'a strategic military location'. No. It is a revolutionary strategic location, and one that influences the whole of Africa. It has stopped being the most backward country of the continent. It is no longer the country where people were taught that the earth is square. Imagine the level of culture that was!

Trotskyism has other tasks today. The revolution progresses. The support the Workers States give to Ethiopia, Angola and Vietnam is support for the revolution; it is an anti-capitalist support, even if it is granted bureaucratically. The Communists who can make alliances practically with anybody, do not consider important the alliance of the USSR with Ethiopia, Madagascar, Angola, or Vietnam. But if something proves that the Workers State can no longer be in alliance with capitalism, here you have it! It is precisely the fact that it can no longer make alliances with capitalism that defines the Soviet Union today.

Trotskyism has now another task to carry out. We are in other phase of the Permanent Revolution and of the Political Revolution. One cannot conflate Stalin who used to send tanks against the revolution and Brezhnev who sends tanks to support the revolution. Our task is to mount the tank that impels the revolution, discuss with those on board, show them the better way. The counter-revolutionary tanks must be blown up.

The task of Trotskyism is different today. This is why we call ourselves Posadists. The Political Revolution no longer constitutes the aim. The aim is to finish with the capitalist system. The motive of Trotsky was never to take revenge on Stalin, but to remove the Stalin obstacle in order to advance

the revolution. But this is the progress happening right now in the Workers States! If our function is necessary, it is because the Communist parties and the Workers States have no consistent policy or programme. Their bureaucratic conceptions and their internal struggles stop them conducting this task without interruption. This lets capitalism survive, wreak havoc in history and retard its progress. The old Trotskyists do not understand this different task.

North America gives an illustration of the retardation in the historic process. There is no workers' party in that country. The trade unions are led by a murderous mafia. Because the proletariat has no political instrument, it cannot express itself and this slows down the process even more.

In France, the proletariat expresses itself through a brave Communist Party and partly a Socialist Party, but their programme, aims, concerns and political life remain very limited. They must learn how the world process of the revolution pans out, how the struggle to achieve actual progress. Instead of this, most of the European Communist parties have decided to come with "Eurocommunism". To do this as the struggles grow in the world, and the progress of history advances. Absurd! Nothing points to any 'Eurocommunism'. It is as if Archimedes were shouting 'Eureka!' on coming out of a leaking bathtub. Had he done this, he should have exclaimed for nothing. These Communists exclaim, but for nothing. Their cries fall in the vacuum.

The progress that we witness coming along today in the historic process is not expressed in Eurocommunism. It is expressed in centralisation instead. It is expressed in correction of bureaucracy. How compare Brezhnev to Stalin or Krushchev? One must not forget that in the new Soviet Constitution, there are three revolutionary points not be ignored. According to the

first point, established by Lenin and suppressed by Stalin, the historic function of the Soviet Union is to spread socialism in the world. The second point commits the Soviet Union to supporting every movement for national and social liberation. The third says that it is the Party, and not the government, that should decide the policy of the USSR. The whole drift of this goes against bureaucracy. Is Brezhnev really the same as Stalin or Krushchev? How ignore all this? The above three points in the Constitution are limited because nothing is said about the function of Soviet trade unions for instance. But the three points outweigh all the limitations.

Another fundamental aspect is that, during the elaboration of the New Soviet Constitution, the principle "*to each according to their needs*" was discussed. In the middle of the debate, Brezhnev found the need to say that 'the time has not yet arrived' for the adoption of this principle. Since Brezhnev was opposed, he did not have to say anything about this. The fact he had to say that 'now is not the time', means that a sufficiently important sector of leadership has been talking about it. This could only have happened because there had been some previous debate on the question.

How can old Trotskyism remain unmoved by all this? It must take note! It must feel that there is some progress happening here, a progress that where it is one's duty to go and help in the acquisition of programmatic forms. This is the role we play. It does not consist in a dedicated combat against the Soviet bureaucracy but against capitalism. The aim is to facilitate the necessary advances, to bring about more change and progress in the Soviet Union, and in all the other Workers States.

Old Trotskyism does not discuss these problems. It discusses the particular concerns of one group or another. This is the political level of their organisations and a commentary on the

backwardness of their concerns. "Rouge" in France arranged a meeting with all the Workers States' dissidents that they could find, all bandits. The dissidents are not mistaken. They are anti-Soviet and anti-communist. These individuals represent only themselves. They measure 'democracy' in relation to what they can or cannot say personally, and not in relation to the progress of the Workers State.

The Soviet Union gives arms to Indochina and Mozambique, and it confronts the North American imperialists. It does not grant free speech to East German Rudolf Bahro; but idiot Bahro and company have not one good word to say about the USSR and the GDR, two countries that support the struggle against Yankee imperialism. The complaint of these people is that they, themselves, are not allowed to speak. To which the German masses say: "So much the better for our ears..."

Old Trotskyism has abandoned its function in history. We are not any 'new' Trotskyism' at all, nothing to do. We are the conscious representation for today of the instrument that Trotsky built when he was alive. It is necessary to ponder the function of Trotskyism today in the same way as one ponders the function of Leninism.

It is not true that Leninism is outdated or that it no longer serves. It is still completely valid. Program and tactics change, but the conception of Lenin stays intact. Right now, those who speak of change do not try to change the tactic and the programme - they want to change Lenin himself. But Lenin means the Party that took power. Lenin means the elimination of every bourgeois power and the construction of the leading Party organs with the masses. The Communists for 'change' propose pluralism instead of Lenin. This amounts to an alliance between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and it is completely unrealisable.

History cannot progress by combining socialism and capitalism. These two are antagonistic and history cannot have them both. To believe it a foolishness, an attitude ignorant of the process of history. But where does this lack of logics come from, this ignorance, on the part of people who are not short of intelligence? A lot of it comes from fear. Fear in front of the revolutionary process of history. A social fear, not an individual one. It also comes from the lack of historic experience in the Communist parties. Our role consists in transmitting to them this experience, and in developing it.

We are communists who are not in the Communist Party. We must fulfil the function that we are playing. As we could not do it by joining a Communist Party, this is what we had to do. Trotsky could have been vice-president of the Soviet Union, but then, he would not have been Trotsky. Such is the task that Trotsky undertook and for which he was assassinated. This is the task that needs continuing. Old Trotskyism did not prepare for this. It did not put in place the political, cultural and programmatic life to this end. And now keeps going with the old conceptions: "And the Permanent Revolution? ... And the Political Revolution? ..."

The elimination of Stalin marked one of the essential moments in the Political Revolution. The spine of Stalinian power was broken. We are not the rivals or competitors of the Communist parties. We are communists like them. We believe in the necessity to organise political life in the way we do, but it is the Communist Party that has the strength and the power. Because the Communist parties acquired their structures empirically, and not just opportunistically, they continue to work empirically. As Communist Party members who have to play their roles outside the Communist Party, our duty is to assist them, and without dogmatism. If our numbers and political capacity must increase, it must be to exercise this function.

Ethiopia has absolutely nothing, but it decides to create a peasant army. This example is directly retaken from Trotsky. Trotsky created a peasant army based on the political program of social transformation. How not to feel a great joy about this? Ethiopia has perhaps only 1% of the wealth available in Greece, but it adopts the program to build Socialism. Do Ethiopians have superior genes? Are they more resolute? No. What they have won is political understanding. Mengistu⁴ reads all the political masters: Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. He follows keenly all the experiences of the world. Many are the communist and socialist leaders who have read nothing and continue to work with a group mentality.

We are not an instrument of protection. We are a necessary part of what elevates the political life of the Communist parties. If we remain separate from those parties, it is because we cannot carry out our task otherwise. The old Trotskyists still think that *Political Revolution* means fighting the bureaucracy and overthrowing the Soviet leadership. They watch Cuban troops arriving in Angola and Mozambique, but they see no sign of Political Revolution there. But this is the Political Revolution! Here it is, and just as Trotsky wanted! Trotsky never sought Political Revolution to take revenge on Stalin. He sought Political Revolution to impel the world revolution. The old Trotskyists see nothing of this.

I have been a Trotskyist since 1935. Of those who come from the start of Trotskyism like me, I am the only one left. There are no others, they all went. That I am of working-class origins is emblematic of this stage of history. Our historic stage already lets the proletariat play a leading intellectual and programmatic role above its simple station as a force of great social weight. The leaders of Angola and Mozambique speak in the same terms as us. If Samora Machel (Mozambique) writes like

⁴ Mengistu Haile Mariam became head of state in Ethiopia in 1977. He came from the revolutionary army and was the general secretary of the Workers Party of Ethiopia from 1984 to 1991.

Posadas, it is because Machel reasons like us. The same goes for Agostinho Neto (Angola), and the Vietnamese. They come to conclusions similar to our own. They welcome the very important and profound conclusion that, among other things, there must be '*to each according to their needs*'. They accept this principle because they understand the social possibility of implementing it even when the economic means are missing. Those who say the economic bases must first be created use backward and individual reasoning. In the places where the life of the Party exerts an intense communist influence, people view '*to each according to their needs*' as perfectly logical.

Old Trotskyism does not see this, and neither do the Communist parties. Some Communists understand this better like Alvaro Cunhal (GenSec Portuguese Communist Party 1961-1992), who develops very fine and important ideas. He is a Communist who actually lives the experiences. We do not agree with everything, but he expresses more communist love than many communist leaders. Old Trotskyism and a part of the world communist movement give this no importance. They view the Communist Party only as a source of power - but the Party is not just an instrument for power. It is an instrument for the progress of history in includes the struggle for power.

We have looked at all the aspects of class struggle, Permanent Revolution and Partial Regeneration⁵, their perspectives and their conclusions. It has not been a discussion or a polemic, but a course in Marxism. We have followed the arc of historic development from now to where the struggle against capitalism ends, and socialism gets built. We focused on what Trotskyism must be doing today, young or old. The very reference to 'old Trotskyism' uncovered a very important historic differentiation that the Conference took into account.

⁵ See the book by J Posadas on this site: "The role of the USSR in this stage of History", page 6: <https://en.quatrieme-internationale-posadiste.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/08/Role-of-USSR-vol1.pdf> - On Partial Regeneration.

Conference gave a complete analysis and demonstration of the revolutionary dialectical process in this stage of history. It took on board the testimonies of this development and assorted tasks. It underlined also the concentration of the process. Mozambique, Algeria, Angola, China, Indochina, Cuba, Madagascar, Ethiopia, Libya are revolutionary developments adopting Workers-State forms that hover between revolution and Workers State. This intermediate step hints at a new process, a stage between revolution and Workers State. Far from today being historic delay, we see a rapid revolutionary development starting from very backward economic levels, passing through the Revolutionary State stage, ascending in the direction of the Workers State. Countries adopt Workers-State forms even before having the bases for them. This was not happening when Trotsky lived. We interpreted it to atune to the tasks flow from it.

Conference showed also how the present process takes place in the context of force relations favourable to revolution. We produced the definition of *Revolutionary State*⁶ in accord with a quality of programme from which to derive our tasks. No Party is discussing this. Our conference centred on the tasks of Trotskyism today.

J POSADAS

3-4 July 1978

⁶ See on this site the book by J Posadas, *The Revolutionary State*.
https://quatrieme-internationale-posadiste.org/book_pdf/EN/1_THE%20REVOLUTIONARY%20STAT-4_PRINT.pdf

Notes:

- (1) J Posadas gave this Conference in Greece on the invitation of the 'Association of Jurists' and with the participation of various Communist militants and leaders.
- (2) Ben Khedda, Ferrat Abas and Ben Bella: leaders of the NLF (National Liberation Front) of Algeria. More by J Posadas about this in: 'Algeria, Revolutionary Progress and the Construction of Socialism'.
- (3) Tchang Kai Chek: Followed Sun Yat Sen in the leadership of the Kuo Ming Tang, bourgeois nationalist movement in China. In 1945, Stalin tried to force the Chinese Communist Party into another alliance with Chek. But Mao Tse Tung and the Chinese Communist Party refused, took power and established the Popular Republic of China in 1949.
- (4) Eurocommunism: this concept came up in some European Communist parties, as if there could be a European Road to Socialism. Of course, it ran counter to the theory of Marxism-Leninism. More by J Posadas about this in: 'The crisis of capitalism, Eurocommunism and the need for a Socialist Society' 19.10.77.

ON TROTSKY'S TOPICALITY

J. POSADAS

12 October 1980

The International Seminar organised by the Feltrinelli Foundation in Italy was held to the satisfaction of its organisers. But its leading panel of experts showed no interest in Trotsky's essential ideas, his role today or his continuing topicality. Of course, for this to happen, an entirely different panel would have been needed. This Seminar successfully managed to stop all debate on Trotsky.

The debate that was needed on Trotsky is no different today from what it was yesterday and will be tomorrow: Trotsky applied his huge theoretical ability - on a par with that of Marx and Lenin - to the essential question: The role of the USSR.

When we say that the USSR is an instrument of history, this wants for an analysis of the function, composition and leadership of the USSR. If the latter is limited, it may be due to insufficient leaders and not to the instrument. For our part, we still pose the unconditional defence of the USSR. The USSR is an instrument for the progress of history. As Workers State, it musters forces incomparably superior to any others, in any country or movement.

The First Seven Years of the Russian Revolution (1917-1924) enshrined the consciousness that Communism is a necessity of life and of history's progress. The bases for Communism were laid during those years. They built the foundations for the cultural and social sense of security that keeps humanity not

only looking forward, but capable of re-starting from these foundations even after the atomic war of imperialism.

Profoundly aware of the importance of the USSR and its role, Trotsky defended it unconditionally. Whether the USSR retreated, advanced or stagnated, he saw it as the social instrument for progress. Through the abolition of private property, the USSR attained more in a few years than what capitalism ever did in centuries.

Take Yugoslavia: For years capitalism ignored the swamps that used to cover entire regions. This was only resolved when Yugoslavia became Workers State. In only a few years, Yugoslavia gave itself schools and factories. And what do you see in developed countries like the United States? You see popular layers - Blacks, but also Whites - who have no houses, or houses with no toilets, etc. Trotsky defended the Workers State as the basic starter for human progress.

This Seminar on Trotsky discussed none of these questions. The only thing remarkable about it was its absence of fairness and logical intent. It expressed also a great deal of incapacity and incompetence. The speakers did not try to learn from the experiences of history, and what they lacked in theoretical and political comprehension, they more than made up with individual arrogance.

It is worth recalling that to defend the USSR means to defend the leading role of the working class – working class and indeed any intelligent person – this being the instrument of progress. In 1940, Trotsky was asked whether he was going to fall in line with all of Stalin's enemies. He said 'no', adding that instead, it was necessary to make an alliance with Stalin against the Nazis, and that Stalin would be dealt with afterwards.

The fundamental aspects of *Political Revolution* and *Permanent Revolution* have changed in form, not in substance. The Political Revolution goes on in the Workers States, right now. It does not take a violent form against the leaders and there are no movements against the State. We observe instead the Workers States increasingly opposing the capitalist system. Therefore, and just as Trotsky did in 1940, we pose that it is necessary to side with the Workers States against the capitalist system. The present conditions justify this entirely.

The people who spoke in this Seminar had no time for such lessons of history. They did not wonder whether there is, or not, a process of Permanent Revolution in Cuba, Vietnam or Ethiopia. It is a fact that these countries emerge from slavery. How to explain, then, that they are building Workers States? And who cares, in the end, who was the first to talk about 'Permanent Revolution'? The Permanent Revolution *is*. It is in full swing. That is the point. What do you call the passing from slavery to the Workers State? The Permanent Revolution! It is neither a leap in the air, nor a leap from one stage to another. It is a dialectical leap where the working class carries out at once the tasks which the bourgeoisie should have carried out long ago. The reason why the working class can do this - right from the start and completely - is because it produces the most complete democracy where all the people get involved. They discuss, participate and intervene about how to bring about progress, not unlike when all doctors gather together to discuss the ways to cure a particular patient.

The second aspect to be raised is that of Trotsky's role and the function he still plays in the world. Who cares what he did, or did not do, in 1905? His early divergences with the Bolsheviks, the conflicts with Stalin? Those who are full of these things see little beyond it. This said however, it would have been apposite to mention that Trotsky became top Bolshevik leader one short

year after joining the Party. It occurred to no-one to object to this speedy rise. The Bolshevik leadership knew how to assess cadres. Above all, it knew how to value Trotsky's personal worth and previous actions where he never opposed the revolution. This is all facts, and not an apology of Trotsky. We are making here a historic evaluation of Trotsky as a man; a man of few errors who corrected them on the way. Lenin, who did not miss much, spurred him on up into the Party leadership. The Bolshevik leadership did not give a fig for Party seniority, this darling notion of the power seekers. What it treasured was historic and concrete excellence.

Trotsky never evinced any feeling of rancour or hatred towards the Workers State or the Party leadership. He was a powerhouse of reasoning instead. After Stalin's first attempt on his life, his immediate reaction was to call for unity against the rise of Nazism. In history, this is a golden example of objective conduct. When we say today that the *Permanent Revolution* and the *Partial Regeneration* are taking place, we use the same method. In 1940, Trotsky (himself threatened) foresaw that "within ten years", millions of revolutionaries will know how to move heavens and earth. He had complete confidence in the historic instruments represented by the Workers State and the working class. This enabled him to do what he did, and to show us how to behave. Trotsky means all this!

Trotsky's guidance is still benefiting humanity through his use of the Marxist method. For without that method, thought is at a loss. What would Trotsky have made of our present epoch? He did not use the phrase '*Political Revolution*' as a soundbite! He is alive every time Socialism is being fought for, every time scientific thought is being applied to changing conditions. In Trotsky's time, the *Political Revolution* had different applications, but the principle remains. Today, the USSR has to adopt the stances and the roles demanded by the Political

Revolution. The bureaucracy is still in charge, but it can no longer behave as before. In the past, and driven by its fear to lose its dominion, it used to betray the revolutions. Now, no! Now, it supports the revolutions! This is why one cannot continue to give to *Political Revolution* the same meaning as when Trotsky was alive. We have accounted for this in our concept of the '*Partial Regeneration*'.

In Bulgaria, Zhivkov⁷ said: "We are for pacifism and against war, but we support all the revolutionary movements around the world". This is on a par with the *New Soviet Constitution* (1977) which stipulates that the USSR supports, and will support anywhere in the world, the movements of National Liberation and of social progress.

Who are these, then, who say that there is no *Political Revolution*?

The Seminar's participants kept saying: "We want the Political Revolution". In reality they were saying: "We want to carry on fighting the Soviet leadership". They showed no intention or inclination to make an objective study of the problems of history, quite apart from not having the capacity to do it.

Those who lead the talk kept rehashing abstractions from the sort of texts that keep you away from good reading. This said however, the fact that such a Seminar was organised shows that Trotsky occupies them, that he has an authority. And that Trotsky's thought and analyses are not mere historic artefacts. Of course, the organisers did not say a word about the Trotskyist-Posadist IV International. They brought out instead a dead and desiccated Trotsky, and talked about what Trotsky did at the age of 8, and what he ate at 10 o'clock on a morning.

⁷ Todor Hristov Zhivkov, leader of Bulgaria 1954-1989, Gen. Sec. Bulgarian Communist Party.

During this seminar, scientific thought was given no chance, otherwise there would have been attempts at seeing how Trotsky applies today. When human thought remains aloof, it cannot be scientific. The speakers based their studies on a Trotsky fossilized some 30 years after his assassination. But the scientific power of human thought has kept its momentum throughout the 2,500 years that separate us from the Greeks. No one can keep Trotsky separated from the ability to understand moving history.

Trotsky taught that bureaucracy is a transitional phenomenon. Now the time has come to check whether he was right or not! Speakers in this Seminar contemplated an actor with a Trotsky stage-mask. They wanted to oppose Trotsky to Stalinism; but since they conflate Stalinism and the USSR, they gave credit to the notion that the present ills of the USSR have their origin in the Workers State. This is what this Seminar did: It opposed Trotsky to Stalin but it assimilated Stalin to the USSR and the other Workers States. And so, it discussed Trotsky without wondering for one moment how come present-day China opposes the USSR and supports itself on capitalism to do so.

Trotsky never stopped defending the USSR. In 1939, he advised the workers to keep close to the Workers State in the war that was coming. This, he said, would help defeat the Nazis and leave for afterwards the settling of accounts with Stalin. This lesson on tactics encapsulates the vigour of Trotsky's scientific thought. This was his objective thought: It guided the Fourth International, and it guides us.

Those involved in this Seminar never mentioned Trotsky's phrase: "In ten years, millions of revolutionaries will know how to move heaven and earth". They did not mention that ten years after the Second World War, millions of people actually

did move heaven and earth; instead, they portrayed Trotsky as an old and wizened bookworm.

They admitted that Trotsky had once been a War Commissar and Red Army organiser, but nothing more. They portrayed him like Hansen had done (once Trotsky's secretary) as an introverted and common man, intelligent and with foibles. In his film *On Trotsky*, Ellenstein (French Communist Party leader in the 1970's) shows a battered old intellectual. Rename this film: 'How Else Can I Use Trotsky?' and you have the idea. Ellenstein is that sort: he will profit from anybody's ideas.

Trotsky used to live in utmost simplicity. He would tend the flowers of the garden and write till his hand got stiff, tape-recording some articles. When I met Natalia, his wife, she told me that Trotsky would sometimes drop everything and rush away to write something. When I visited his house in Mexico, Natalia did not wish to enter the room with me, for that was where Trotsky had been assassinated and it pained her. But we sang the International together, over his tomb.

This Seminar made no mention of Trotsky's works, never mind that he had the most wondrous literary capacity, on a par with Marx and Lenin. Trotsky, Lenin and Marx wrote three times more, and better, than all the best authors and novelists of the world put together. Here you have the demonstration of what talent can do, when it is on the side of intelligence and reason. For when reason is absent, writing becomes a chore and silly topics are soon exhausted. The increasing concern for human relations causes the world to tire quickly of silly writings. Human inspiration is increasingly discriminating; it is drawing close to the aim of transforming society.

Through all his works, Trotsky imparts comprehension. He develops the method of analysis of history, of life, for

yesterday, for today and for tomorrow. His concrete programme is receding into the background of history - though aspects are still valid like the sliding scale of wages and of working hours, and the need to give way to the Women and Youth. But when it comes to method, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky will continue to serve, until Communism.

J. POSADAS

12 October 1980

J Posadas' short biography next page.

About J Posadas ...

J. Posadas was born in Argentina in 1912 and died in Italy in 1981. He started his activities as a Trade Union leader in the shoe industry. He soon adopted the ideas of Trotsky and joined the IV International. He then developed as a writer, theoretician, political leader and revolutionary organiser.

In view of the process of Peronism and revolutionary nationalism, he created a movement in Argentina and in Latin America based on texts such as: '**Five-Year Plan or the Permanent Revolution**' (1947), '**Peronism**' (1963) and '**From Nationalism to the Workers State**' (1966).

Those who belonged to the leading group of the IV International in those days greeted his ideas with incomprehension. J. Posadas separated himself from them as they were abandoning the Marxist principles needed to analyse the Soviet Union, the Communist parties and various mass parties like the Labour Party. In 1962 he organised the Trotskyist- Posadist IV International.

A flurry of his fundamental texts followed, such as: '**The Construction of the Workers State and from the Workers State to Socialism**', '**Partial Regeneration, Historic Re-encounter and the Process of the Permanent Revolution in this Stage**', '**The role of the USSR in History**', '**The Living Thought of Trotsky**' and '**The Revolutionary State**'.

In the more general field of Art, Science and Culture, J. Posadas has left many other writings. They incorporate into the Marxist analysis subjects ranging from 'human relations' to 'the Communist future of humanity'. It all forms part of his **History of the Human Civilisation** which remained unfinished due to his unexpected death.

The works of J. Posadas and the example of his life champion the confidence and security of humanity.

As he used to say: "*Socialism is not just a necessity of history, but of life itself*". Food for thought in his last words: "*Life has no sense without the struggle for Socialism, with all the consequences*".

<https://en.quatrieme-internationale-posadiste.org>