Mikhail Gorbachev died

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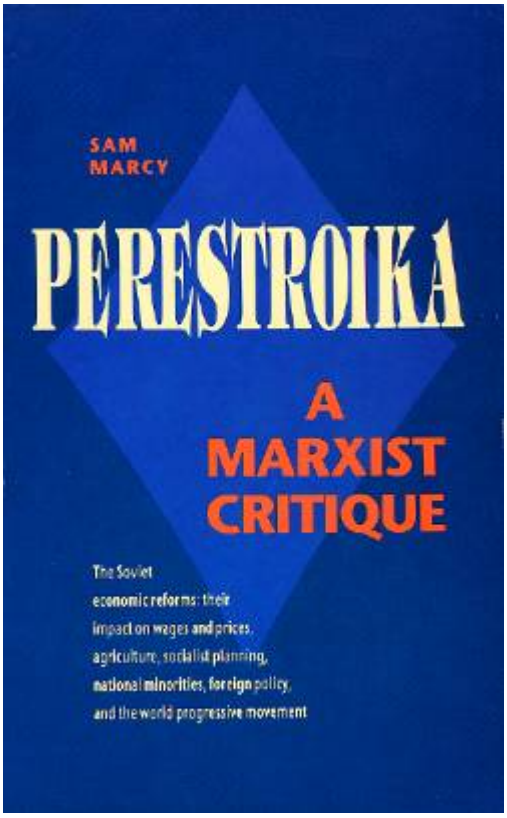
Mikhail Gorbachev died on August 30. His legacy?

Under Gorbachev, the Soviet economy fell into recession as the government began to dismantle the planned economy. Under Gorbachev, socialist industry was dismantled.

Russia's GDP dropped by 40%. Real wages were halved. Poverty ballooned from 2.2 million in 1987-88 to 66 million in 1993-95. Millions died under the brutal regime of privatization and shock therapy. Half a million women were trafficked into sexual slavery. Life expectancy fell to 57 years.

Gorbachev and what followed are now remembered as perhaps the worst period in Russia's 1,000-year history. This was the greatest economic disaster any country has seen in modern times, in war or peace.

Following is the introduction to "Perestroika: A Marxist Critique" by Marxist leader Sam Marcy, first published in 1990. It gives crucial background to the destructive legacy of Gorbachev.



Introduction

This book deals with a critique of perestroika (the Gorbachev restructuring reforms), written from the vantage point of the world struggle for socialism. It is impossible to analyze such a vast social and political phenomenon as perestroika solely on the basis of the exigencies of the USSR alone. It can only be understood in the context of the contemporary world struggle and more particularly the struggle of the working class and oppressed peoples everywhere against capitalist exploitation and imperialist oppression.

There is no way to properly discuss the situation of the USSR without continual reference to its relations with the capitalist countries. It is no secret that, ever since the victory of the Bolshevik Revolution, the USSR has endured the unmitigated

enmity, indeed the morbid hatred, of all the imperialist powers and their reactionary servitors of all stripes. Yet the USSR has been able to maintain itself and to grow strong, notwithstanding the most formidable historical objective conditions standing in its way. At the core of the world struggle lies the fact that we are dealing with two diametrically opposed social systems, each of which rests on a different class base.

Much of the material in this book first began appearing in July 1987 as a series of articles on the Soviet economic reforms.[1] For some time, we proceeded cautiously in our evaluation of the scope and character of the reforms. We didn't want to rush to judgment or present an analysis based on preconceived notions of what would happen.

Can Marxists in the U.S. of all places forget that much of the supposedly constructive criticism of the Soviet Union has in fact been in tune with bourgeois efforts to defame the USSR and socialism itself? A progressive audience in particular is reluctant to listen to criticism of the USSR out of consideration for the enormous objective difficulties it has encountered in its long and arduous struggle against capitalist encirclement and the attempts to hinder the construction of a socialist society through economic and political strangulation.

The objective of the reforms, as it was stated very early in the Gorbachev administration, was to modernize and streamline the Soviet economy through the introduction of new management techniques and technology in use elsewhere in the world, particularly in the highly developed imperialist countries. Through perestroika and the political opening known as glasnost, the new Soviet leadership also promised to tackle social privileges and inequities which had accumulated over the years. But as time went on, it became evident that there was much more to the modernization program than restructuring industry and reequipping the technological infrastructure of the USSR in order to move forward and perfect socialist construction. The enthusiasm evoked in the beginning over the expectation

that new techniques would lead to an improvement in working conditions, labor productivity, and the availability of consumer goods has now, four years into the reforms, given way to skepticism and even mass anger. The most forceful evidence of this was given by the Soviet coal miners, who showed what they thought of the Gorbachev administration's performance by striking en masse. (See Articles 22 and 23.) And no wonder there is such widespread anger among the workers. Instead of perestroika's promised increase in the material wellbeing of the masses, we have the familiar phenomenon of austerity, so rampant in capitalist society.

As our later articles show, what has emerged is a wholesale retreat from socialist goals in the area of social and economic relations. This retreat went along with the introduction of private cooperatives, the weakening of central planning, concessions to imperialist investors interested in joint ventures and other openings to the Soviet market, and erratic and ill-disguised steps leading away from collective and state farms and toward the privatization of agriculture.

This is what explains the effusive praise for Gorbachev that has come from the imperialist camp, especially from those well-known as arch-foes of the labor movement and social progress. When Margaret Thatcher pronounced her verdict – "I like him" – after Gorbachev's first visit to London, it might have been taken as a judgment by an individual imperialist politician. But since then the triumphal receptions arranged for him in Washington and Bonn have made it clear that the collective opinion of the imperialist bourgeoisie heartily welcomes the shift in Soviet policies represented by the Gorbachev leadership. This is in striking contrast to the attitude of the countries oppressed by imperialism, which have been able to muster only the most subdued support for Gorbachev, when they haven't been silent altogether.

The reader will find that our analysis of the reforms has required us to examine them not only as legal abstractions, as pronouncements on economic policy by

officials and government bodies, but as specific developments, of a social and political as well as economic character, whose details reveal the direction in which they have been moving. Thus, in the series of articles appearing in Part II of this book, we paid a great deal of attention to the national question. An upsurge of severe national conflicts swept through many areas of the USSR soon after the reforms were introduced. At the time of these struggles in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, as well as the Baltic states (which must be treated separately), we showed how they were inextricably connected to the social consequences of the economic reforms. However, the Gorbachev leadership attributed them to the machinations of local authorities resistant to perestroika, making light of what can only be seen as a most ominous phenomenon fraught with dangers for the future of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Without repeating here our analysis of these events, which appears later in this book, we do want to draw the reader's attention to comments in the youth paper Komsomolskaya Pravda regarding widespread fighting in Kazakhstan in June 1989 which appears to have caused some loss of life. We feel that this brief extract fully confirms our view of the problem, which is that the consequences of the reforms fall most heavily on those areas of the USSR which were less developed at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution but which – until the reforms – had been advancing due to a broad "affirmative action" program made possible by the revolutionary internationalism of the Bolshevik Revolution and later by nationwide centralized planning. (The attitude of the imperialist bourgeoisie towards these attempts by earlier Soviet governments to raise the level of the less developed republics has been, of course, just as hostile as it is to affirmative action here.)

According to the youth paper, the fighting in the Kazakh city of Novyy Uzen, near the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, began when young people at a dance, many of them unemployed, began arguing about various economic shortages and then set off through the town, turning over newsstands and setting fire to cars. "The young

people were demanding an end to all rationing systems and to close down cooperatives, which, in their view, are the main culprits in the rise in prices and the shortages of foodstuffs," said Komsomolskaya Pravda.[2] "Special discontent was expressed about unequal social positions and salaries," the report said.

The cooperatives are a direct product of the reforms. They are new, privately owned ventures that have netted big profits for a growing number of entrepreneurs at a time when there is increasing resentment from the mass of the population over the ill effects of rising prices and unemployment, both recent phenomena in the USSR.

There is another development which we believe illustrates the direction in which the reforms are moving. That is the way in which these economic changes translate into politics. They have brought about a significant shift in the political weight of the different class groups in Soviet society, most importantly the proletariat.

As we have reiterated throughout this book, glasnost or the new policy of openness is unassailable as against reliance on arbitrary methods and repression. These latter run against the grain of the spirit of Bolshevik debate in the resolution of political issues, which had been the norm during Lenin's lifetime. In those early years, even during the worst days of the Civil War and imperialist intervention, the widest latitude was afforded for political discussion and debate. It was really only when the bourgeoisie resorted to terror that this was modified. The revival of socialist democracy, even on a limited level, has quite exploded the view long popular in the West that the USSR was a hopelessly self-perpetuating totalitarian society.

However, it must be acknowledged that at this time the political opening has favored and been taken advantage of by the more privileged sectors, many of whom lean in a bourgeois direction. The accompanying chart (page xiv) compares the composition of the newly elected Supreme Soviet in 1989 to that of 1984. The most striking change occurred in the percentage of deputies who are workers, collective farmers and

office employees. This dropped from 45.9% of the 1984 Supreme Soviet to only 23.1% of the same body in 1989! The chart was published in Izvestia on May 6, 1989, along with an accompanying article which shows that while the workers have been set back, they are not taking it lying down: “There are slightly [!] fewer worker- and peasant-Deputies in the Congress than there were in the 1984 Supreme Soviet. `The workers have now realized that they were deceived,’ a district Party committee secretary said at a meeting of the Bureau of the Odessa Province Party Committee (Sovetskaya kultura, April 18, 1989), and he is far from alone in trying to sharpen the feeling among rank-and-file working people that they have been socially wounded and to direct this feeling against the intelligentsia, which allegedly took advantage of the `free play of forces’ for its own interests.” [3]

At the time of the Russian Revolution, although the proletariat was only a minority of the population, it played the leading dynamic role in reshaping society, in alliance with the peasantry. Its political weight was expressed through the Communist Party and the Soviets, where its influence was enormous. Even later, in the time of the great purges, the growing numerical strength and political weight of the workers was reflected in the composition of the Soviets. Until this recent election, as the Izvestia article acknowledges, the nominations to the Supreme Soviet were ” `in accordance with a schedule of allocations’ that retained the sex, age-group, social, occupational, Party, etc., structure of the entire Supreme Soviet in proportion that the architects of that Supreme Soviet considered the most suitable and that more or less correlated (although, needless to say, did not coincide) with the makeup of the country’s active population.” [4] Even this was abandoned, however, at Gorbachev’s relentless urging. In the elections for the 19th Party Conference of June-July 1988 and in the 1989 Supreme Soviet elections, he vehemently stressed that the quotas should be dropped and only those who supported perestroika should be elected. Thus everyone with any kind of criticism, suggestion, demand or new idea must frame it within the terms of perestroika.

What does the phrase “in accordance with a schedule of allocations” mean? It is a truncated and watered-down version of what was often said hundreds of times in the early Leninist period, i.e., that the class character of the Soviet workers’ state had to be reflected in its representative institutions. The weight of the proletariat as the only class consistently socialist to the end, as well as the relative weight of its peasant allies, had to be fully reflected in the representative institutions if it was to exercise its class dictatorship in a world still dominated by imperialism abroad. That’s what Lenin meant by a Paris Commune-type state, which he so comprehensively analyzed in his “*The State and Revolution*.” [5] The Paris Commune of 1870-71, the most democratic form of the state ever achieved, was to be the model for the Soviet state. Engels, in his introduction to “The Civil War in France,” asked rhetorically, “Do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the dictatorship of the proletariat.” [6]

Now, however, when the workers have become an absolute majority in the USSR, there is a substantial decline in their political weight and an increase in the number of bourgeois intellectuals and administrators in the Supreme Soviet, as the chart clearly shows. The current orientation is toward a bourgeois parliament, and away from the Paris Commune-type state. Clearly, the expectation that glasnost will open the way for greater socialist democracy in the true sense, that is, the participation of the masses in running the affairs of society, has yet to be realized (but will happen, as we show later).

The class character of the Soviet Union

The Gorbachev reforms rely so much on capitalist market mechanisms to stimulate the economy of the USSR that all this has inevitably raised once again the question of how to understand the social character of the Soviet Union. This is a subject that has preoccupied both friend and foe of the Russian Revolution, and has provoked commentary from the pedantic to the inane both inside and outside the USSR.

There have been at least three schools of thought on this question. Take, for instance, one of the earliest stalwarts, Winston Churchill, the illustrious prime minister of the British empire. No ivory-tower think-tank analyst was he. Churchill's claim to fame as a political analyst rested mainly on his career as a cunning practitioner of the art of imperialist diplomacy. His analyses are given far more weight in bourgeois circles than those of any professor precisely because he seemed to combine both theory and practice. During the Second World War in particular, every word he uttered in public seemed to the bourgeoisie like so many pearls of wisdom. Even before the war, when some imperialists looked askance at his advocacy of "collective security" among the great powers, that is, an anti-fascist coalition against Germany and Italy that included the Soviet Union, his views were generally considered profound.

Bearing all this in mind, what are we to make of Churchill's October 1939 speech in which he described the Soviet Union as "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma"?[7] What was he trying to say about the USSR, and what was there in the given historical context that infused it with supreme importance?

An enigma, a riddle, a mystery. *Roget's Thesaurus* tells us that these three terms are used fairly synonymously. Any one would well serve the purpose. What was Churchill trying to do by putting all three together without further explanation? Were this said by anybody else, it would have been regarded as tautological rubbish, lacking any glimmer of a sociological appraisal of the USSR. Indeed, what we have here is a bourgeois statesman squirming and attempting to exude profundity, but offering no clue as to the social character of the USSR.

At the time of his speech, Churchill had accumulated nearly 40 years of experience in imperialist diplomacy, 20 of them in venomous struggle against the Soviet Union. As British secretary of state for war and air (1919-1921), he had organized a coalition of 14 capitalist countries to invade the Soviet Union and try to overthrow

the Bolshevik government.

To understand Churchill's statement, one has to remember its historical context. For several years Britain, France and the United States had promoted the concept of collective security with the USSR against the Axis powers. Indeed, the Soviet Union was the leading and original proponent of this strategy. It had so vigorously promoted the concept of collective security against fascism that it would seem the policy was carved in granite. It was beginning to be regarded as a permanent feature of Soviet diplomacy.

Thus, when the Conservative Prime Minister of Britain, Neville Chamberlain, and Prime Minister Edouard Daladier, a bourgeois Radical Socialist representing France, decided to make a pact with Hitler and Mussolini in Munich in late September 1938, it seemed that the USSR had no choice but to accept it. By this diplomatic maneuver, Chamberlain and Daladier hoped to direct the aggressive thrust of Nazi Germany to the East, that is, into an attack on the Soviet Union, thus gaining breathing time for themselves. But the Soviet Union needed the breathing space for itself, and was less solicitous of its erstwhile democratic allies than had been expected. And so on August 22, 1939, the Soviet Union turned around and itself signed a non-aggression pact with Germany in order to gain time – essentially what the imperialist allies had wanted themselves. Ten days later World War II began. All of this is vitally important in understanding Churchill's tautological nonsense in the face of an enormous international development.

But while Churchill's analysis was faulty at best, his class attitude, his class loyalty, and that of all the imperialist politicians was unambiguous. It was mortal hatred of the Soviet Union and all the revolutionary movements, as well as of the working class at home and the hundreds of millions of oppressed who suffered the yoke of colonialism. He and his class unfailingly knew which side they were on. He showed it very clearly when as chancellor of the exchequer (1924-1929) he lowered the

workers' standard of living, and then, when the trade unions responded with the first and only great general strike in Britain in 1926, his rabid editorials in the *British Gazette* led the government assault that broke the strike.

While it might have been difficult for Churchill to arrive at a sociological appraisal, that never prevented him from taking a class position on the Soviet Union, on the British general strike, and above all on British colonialism. The bourgeoisie always know where they stand when it comes to the practical, day-to-day struggle. **Their class bias in relationship to the socialist countries is merely an extension in foreign affairs of their position in the domain of domestic politics.**

In the U.S., this can be seen without fail whenever there is a strike. There hasn't been one instance where the capitalist class, as represented by its press, has ever taken the side of the workers against the bosses, or urged the bosses to agree to the demands of the workers. Literally not one. Occasionally they profess a treacherous neutrality, urging moderation on both sides, or they will criticize a particular company at a particular time, but never do they cross class lines, never do they go to the extent of actually supporting the workers against the bosses. The only strikes they have ever supported have been in Poland, and then they did it to weaken socialist construction, not to help the workers.

There is a second school of thought on the character of the Soviet state that goes by various names, but is best known as "bureaucratic collectivism," a term that originated among some adherents to the broad leftist opposition to Stalin, notably Bruno Rizzi and Ciliga, and was eventually taken up in the U.S. by Max Shachtman. According to this view, the political power of the government, Party and managerial bureaucracy completely pervaded all avenues of Soviet society, allowing no movement in the direction of socialist democracy. The bureaucracy as they saw it had become a new ruling class in relation to the means of production. The followers of this view saw in the victories of the Chinese Revolution and others that followed

merely confirmation of the tendency for bureaucratic collectivism to ultimately cover the face of the globe.

This political tendency began to disintegrate when the imperialist Allies adopted a posture of goodwill toward the USSR during World War II. However, once the Cold War began it was revived in the works of the Yugoslav ex-communist, Milovan Djilas, who wrote *The New Class*.

The recent trends in the direction of democratization in the USSR, even though limited as yet and without the independent participation of the working class in the political struggle, certainly invalidate the bureaucratic collectivist view. The prospect for proceeding to genuine proletarian democracy seems far more probable than any backsliding toward what the proponents of bureaucratic collectivism envisioned.

Bureaucratic collectivism saw as fundamental to the Soviet system those elements that in fact are part of the superstructure. Superstructural elements may in a given situation bolster or hamper the structure, as the case may be, but they are strictly derivative in character. Sometimes they serve as palliatives for reviving a decomposing social structure. At other times, they may be encrustations which paralyze a live and growing structure. In a broad and general way, history indicates that ultimately every new social structure which arises out of the needs of development of the productive forces will in time bring into correspondence its superstructure, or, failing that, will overthrow it.

Finally there is the Orwellian school, which contemplated a future in which humanity would be swallowed up by a totalitarian machine from which there can be no exit. George Orwell's first satirical novel on this subject, *Animal Farm,* was written in 1946, the year of Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech and the beginning of the Cold War. His gloomy outlook projecting a universal totalitarian regime was taken further in *1984,* written in 1948. It was taken up as the portrait of the future

by writers, politicians and bourgeois publicists of all sorts, as well as economists and sociologists. Now, 40 years later, when all the capitalist media have been full of the Reagan-Gorbachev summit meetings, followed by the Bush-Gorbachev meetings, and have been showering applause on the new hero of peaceful coexistence, one can clearly see that the Orwellian view was a product of the Cold War and had little to do with the evolution of the USSR or an appraisal of its internal dynamics.

Today these views have generally been replaced by a new bourgeois theory that the USSR will inevitably yield to capitalist restoration. This outlook is a product of the present historical conjuncture just as much as the Orwellian view was a product of the Cold War period. Neither is an independent, dispassionate conclusion based upon a study of the internal dynamics of the Soviet Union as a new historical social formation. The current view of the USSR is being pushed by bourgeois economists and sociologists with a vigor and enthusiasm comparable to the critical acclaim accorded the Orwellian view during the period of the Cold War.

By now there have been scores of bourgeois studies of the Soviet reforms. Some give them high praise. Some may profess to show their shortcomings, but all, without exception, start with the built-in bias that a centralized, planned economy is invalid, economically inefficient and unworkable. Therefore, a return to the capitalist market is not only desirable but inevitable. Without this sacred predisposition, no analysis of the Soviet reforms is acceptable to the capitalist class. There are no studies whatsoever from the bourgeois side to show that a planned socialist economy is ever possible or desirable. Such a viewpoint must first be excluded before beginning any kind of analysis. This is true for all the “Sovietologists” – the Gerry Houghs, the Marshall Goldmans, the Ed Hewetts and other analysts of their ilk in capitalist academia.

The way the capitalist class explains the Gorbachev reforms, they are all but carved in stone. It would seem there’s no road open except to move further and faster until

the full restoration of capitalism. This we believe to be wholly unfounded, both on the basis of historical evidence as well as on the inherent possibilities for a socialist regeneration which flow from the class structure of the Soviet Union.

The problem with so many bourgeois analysts of the Soviet Union is their utter inability to really and truly come to grips with the social character of the USSR as a brand-new, dynamic social system. Invariably they view it mechanically, often statically, but not dialectically. Lenin explained "the essence of dialectics" as "the splitting of a single whole and the cognition of its contradictory parts."[8] What the bourgeois analysts fail to see in the USSR is precisely this contradiction, between the revolutionary social structure of the USSR and its superstructure, which is all too frequently at variance with its class basis. There is a continuing struggle between structure and superstructure, now open, now hidden, often violent.

This contradiction has its origin in the fact that the legacy of czarism left the USSR with extremely low productive forces which were incapable of affording the USSR a socialist character immediately after the war. To a large extent, this has persisted for close to 70 years. Now, however, that the Soviet Union has achieved the rank of second only to the United States in its total productive forces, the contradiction which holds back its development is the urgent need to upgrade the social relations, to move forward in communizing the social relations especially in areas of the economy which have not sufficiently advanced from bourgeois forms. This cannot be resolved on the basis of a retreat to anachronistic, capitalist reforms that suit some privileged groupings.

History teaches us that no new society, no new social system ever vanishes without fully exhausting its possibilities. Furthermore, no new social system ever emerges without the ground being fully prepared for it. It is often said that the USSR might not have emerged as a revolutionary new social formation without the conjuncture of the imperialist war. It had always been affirmed that the Russian Revolution

occurred as a break in the weakest link in the imperialist chain. But the fact that it has survived for over 70 years and has not been reabsorbed into the imperialist system, and that moreover the Russian Revolution has been followed by socialist revolutions in China, Cuba, Vietnam, Korea, Albania, Ethiopia and elsewhere – all this demonstrates that a new social system has emerged from the old. It thereby proves not only the inevitability of socialism but its viability as well, especially when one considers the continuing unparalleled historic struggle between the two systems.

That each of the succeeding governing groups of the USSR has been unable to achieve the stability, the correspondence between base and superstructure, which capitalism developed after several centuries (and then only among the very richest capitalist powers with immense overseas colonies), attests to the severe birth pangs which a newly emerged society must go through and upon whose body politic the birthmarks of the old society continue to persist.

The Soviet Union is a contradictory social phenomenon. An attempt to unravel it would show that this phenomenon has a revolutionary class structure, in that it overthrew the landlords, bankers and industrialists, but has had a superstructure, for most of the time the USSR has existed, which is relatively at variance with its class structure. The still fragile class structure is vulnerable in the face of the global capitalist economy.

In bourgeois society, the governing groups can change many times, from monarchists to fascists, from democrats to military dictators, but because the capitalist system is based upon the automatic forces of the capitalist market and private property, the system continues with its superprofits and with its poverty. The fact that one clique of administrators is ousted and another takes its place may somewhat retard capitalist development at one time or accelerate it at another, but the system continues under the domination of the same ruling class. For instance,

when Donald Regan, a multi-millionaire from Wall Street, was forced to resign his post as Ronald Reagan's White House chief of staff, he did not thereby cease to be a capitalist and owner of millions of dollars in cash, stocks and bonds. He did not lose his membership in the capitalist class, he merely lost his office in the governing group. Needless to say, the same was true of Nelson Rockefeller after his tenure as vice president.

It is otherwise with the Soviet government. From the point of view of administration, the Soviet state is in the hands of a vast bureaucracy. But the ownership of the means of production, meaning the bulk of the wealth of the country including its natural resources, is legally and unambiguously in the hands of the people – the working class, who make up the overwhelming majority of the population. Those in the governing group are merely the administrators of the state and state property. If Politburo members Gorbachev, Ligachev or Yakovlev were to lose their posts, they would not take with them the departments or ministries they headed. They have pensions due and even may have accumulated personal funds, but they do not own a part of the state as such. The ownership of the means of production in the hands of the working class is truly the most significant sociological factor in the appraisal of the USSR as a workers' state, or socialist state as it is called in deference to the aspirations of the people.

Even the Gorbachev reforms, which tend to erode the power of the working class, would have to go a long, long way in order to invalidate the ownership of the means of production by the working class.

When capitalism established its class dictatorship, it not only assimilated the experiences of previous exploiting societies but also integrated some of the social strata of the previous ruling classes, even at the cost of serious concessions to them. These helped the new ruling bourgeoisie to exercise its class dictatorship over the exploited workers and oppressed peoples. Capitalism was not born full-blown. It took

centuries of development to achieve a degree of stability as against the insurgent masses. But finally it could afford to have two or three different governing or warring groups expressed in political parties which managed the affairs of the bourgeois state. That is what bourgeois democracy has meant in the epoch of the bourgeoisie. In Britain, Holland, Belgium, France and also Japan, this democracy and stability, however precarious, was achieved by the super-exploitation of the hundreds of millions of colonial peoples, allowing some of the super-profits to reach the upper echelons of the working class in the metropolitan countries, the so-called labor aristocracy.

The bourgeois scholars of today are incapable of facing up to the real problems of historical appraisal, that is, charting the course of social evolution. Human history shows a universal sequence from communal life to slavery, then feudalism, then capitalism. They won't dare deny that capitalism is the product of social evolution, but they want to stop there. They exclude even the possibility that capitalism is being replaced by a new social system which inevitably brings with it the ownership of the means of production by society, beginning with ownership in the hands of the working class.

The retreat by the Soviet leadership into bourgeois norms and capitalist innovations will unquestionably fail. They will become a danger to the social foundations of the USSR; the base (the workers' state) will rebel against the superstructure (the political and economic bureaucracy) to bring the superstructure into conformity with its needs. We can already see evidence of this forthcoming development in what happened in China, where the reforms went as far as they could. The government in June 1989 had to say bluntly, "Thus far and no further." A forceable solution was the only viable course.

   The lesson of China is of tremendous importance. The bourgeoisie can't get over it. Not all their sanctions, all their bulldozing can change

what happened. It's the most significant lesson that has come out of the socialist camp in the last 30 years. It is too early to tell how far the new course in China will or can go, given the new effort at economic strangulation by the imperialist bourgeoisie. But it is impossible that this will not have reverberations in the USSR, and it is particularly important in the light of the renewal of normal relations between these two great socialist countries.

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