

particularly stubborn in promoting this view and even the CP leaders in this country, undoubtedly getting their cue from the Soviet leaders, while expressing solidarity with a fraternal party nonetheless conveyed the impression that they too, in a large measure, regarded it as basically an agrarian revolution successfully carried out. Whether this objectively reflected the arrogance implicit in the attitude of an imperialist ruling class toward a formerly colonial country, only history will be able to confirm. It is at least as likely that the reservations of the Western CP leaders, generally, reflected the fear of the Soviet bureaucracy of the consequences that a proletarian revolution in China would entail in the struggle for leadership over the Communist movement and of the world working class.

As we have seen, the Chinese Revolution can be divided into two great phases. The first one — we are still using the words of Engels — “displaced one definite class rule by another” — in this case the ouster of the bourgeois-landlord class from power and the establishment of what was in essence a Proletarian Dictatorship. But this victorious revolution, like all previous victorious revolutions (at least in European history) became endangered by restorationist elements. What was needed historically, was a second, supplementary revolution, in order to fortify, consolidate, and safeguard the fundamental accomplishment of the first revolution, the new class dictatorship. Hence the Cultural Revolution. In the minds of its participants it might have been conceived as an entirely new revolution, a revolution which had far loftier objectives than the mere safeguarding and securing of new property relations which had already been won more than a decade ago. But the subjective desires of the participants and the objective historical result, while not completely at variance, certainly did not conform with reality as it has unfolded.

HISTORICAL PARALLELS

What was the historical mission of the Jacobin dictatorship? It was to clear the road for the rule of the French bourgeoisie. In France more than anywhere else, feudalism had been extinguished, cut root and branch, by the Revolution. Yet the bourgeoisie did not, until late in the nineteenth century, hold exclusive political power. It again and again fell back to sharing it with other class formations. Even more so in England. The bourgeoisie there never held undivided sway. “Even after the victory of 1832,” says Engels, “the bourgeoisie left the landed aristocracy in almost exclusive possession of the leading government offices.” It took Bismarck to unify Germany. He swept away the feudal obstructions to the development of German capitalism. He himself was, of course, a junker and it was the junker feudal landed aristocracy that dominated Germany. Indeed the German bourgeoisie did not rule directly until the Weimar Republic (after World War I).

The basic reason why it is possible for the bourgeoisie to share power with segments of the older feudal classes such as the aristocracy, is, of course, that they are both possessing classes, both exploiting classes, and they share a common hostility to the exploited. Their interests, nevertheless, are antagonistic.

This is equally well demonstrated by the Civil War in the United States. What was the historic mission of the North's struggle against the South? In order to arrive at a conclusion, we ought to view the entire period of the Civil War and Reconstruction as two phases, two great historical turning points, just as in the Chinese Revolution. What was the objective of the struggle? The Northern ruling class and the Southern ruling class, as we said, were both possessing, oppressing, and exploiting classes. But the North based itself in and had its origin and development in the modern capitalist mode of production which is based on the private ownership of the means of production *and on wage labor*. The Southern ruling class was also an exploiting, oppressing, possessing class no more avaricious than the Northern ruling class. It too based itself on the private ownership of the means of production but on *chattel (slave) labor, not on wage-labor*. Slavery in the U.S. was an integral part of the bourgeois mode of production in the system of commodity production. But whereas the North based itself on the modern capitalist industrial form of *wage exploitation* (“free labor”), the South was based wholly on slave labor. The two systems were economically incompatible. A struggle between them became inevitable because the slave system could not adequately compete with the wage system of exploitation and was doomed to destruction.

In the minds of its progressive participants, the struggle was between “freedom and slavery.” But the struggle of the Northern bourgeoisie against the slaveowning aristocracy was not out of any regard for freedom as such, but was pursued because the slave system of exploitation was inhibiting the expansion of the modern capitalist system of wage slavery, capitalist production, and accumulation. Four years of Civil War proved inadequate to firmly establish the capitalist wage system and the economic framework necessary for its functioning or to completely root out the remnants of chattel slavery which later took the form of a feudal type of peasant-landlord relationship on the land (peonage). This tended to reduce the mass of the emancipated slaves to second degree citizenship, devoid of the rights of emancipated wage labor in the North. The period in history known as Reconstruction was a great effort by the Radical Republicans to bring about full freedom (“free labor”), full political equality for all (all males). This was the second phase of the revolution. It was historically needed, not as it was conceived in the minds of many who participated in it, to bring about full political equality of all citizens, but merely to secure, as Engels