

technology, and adapt itself to the changing needs of the capitalist market. This is the law of life for the bourgeoisie. The development of the productive forces in the imperialist epoch is, of course, retarded if compared with what a social system will do, but within the framework of capitalist production, the bourgeoisie continues the pursuit, with breakneck speed, of the development of technology. The feudal classes were not only static but they based their existence, as Marx pointed out as early as the Communist Manifesto, on the preservation of the old methods of production.

The bourgeoisie bases itself on constantly revolutionizing the method of production. The old mode of feudal production (or chattel slavery as it existed in the United States) having been destroyed, the bourgeoisie by the mere automatic processes of capitalist production and the blind forces of the market was ultimately able to reduce all previous social classes to its sway. Thus, elements of the landed aristocracy in Britain ultimately became bourgeois industrialists. The bourgeoisie for a long time used a feudal monarchy and was able to convert it into a bourgeois monarchy. And the former parties of the feudal classes were absorbed into the bourgeois political system and became bulwarks of reaction on behalf of the bourgeois ruling class against revolutionary threats by the proletariat and oppressed peoples.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BOURGEOIS AND SOCIALIST SYSTEMS

The socialist system, at least in its initial formative stages, does not develop automatically; by its very nature it has to be consciously planned and organized. And in this respect it differs vitally from the bourgeois mode of production which is regulated by blind economic forces.

Because the first two great socialist proletarian revolutions took place not in the industrialized capitalist countries, but in underdeveloped countries, they faced some of the same problems that the early bourgeoisie faced in its struggle as a nascent ruling class.

Every political upheaval at the summit of governmental leadership is a symptom of social disturbance below.

An attempted coup, such as is attributed to Lin Piao, can only be a reflection of serious instability in the social and political relations between the basic classes in contemporary Chinese society.

According to the official statement issued by the Chinese Embassy in Algiers on Lin Piao, the explanation for Lin Piao engaging in a plot to assassinate Chairman Mao and seize power through a coup can be understood in a large measure from (1) "his underhanded nature" (2) "he was a two-faced man" who in reality was opposed to the "revolutionary foreign policy of Mao," and (3) "did not change his perverse nature one iota."

Acceptance of such an explanation for an enormous historical event does violence to history itself, especially if one examines the array of leaders involved.

These include: Lin Piao, the Defense Minister, Politburo member and military leader since the early Thirties; Chen Po-ta, a member of the standing committee of the Politburo, a leader of the Cultural Revolution and for many years Mao's personal secretary; Huang Yung-sheng, former chief of the general staff of the armed forces; Wu Fa-hsien, commander of the air force; Li Tso-peng, deputy chief of staff and political commissar of the navy; Chiu Hui-tso, deputy chief of staff of the army and head of the logistics department; Yeh Chun, a member of the party Politburo and director of the administrative office of the party military affairs committee; and Lin Li-kuo, Lin's son who was deputy director of the air force operations department.

Such a conception brings us back to pre-Marxist notions of history where good men and evil fought plots and counter plots and where the reign of the arbitrary was the supreme rule of history.

But Marx's development of the materialist conception of history demonstrates conclusively that all political phenomena have a class base. It is especially true of political events of such enormous historical import as this elimination of an entire stratum of leadership. They not only were most prominent during the Cultural Revolution, but some of them spent their entire lifetime in the midst of the leadership of the CPC throughout the course of the Chinese Revolution.

Lenin wrote on December 24, 1922, in one of his last letters, regarding "grave differences in our party" which might cause a split. He went on to say: "Our party relies on two classes (workers and peasants) and therefore its instability would be possible and its downfall inevitable if there were no agreement between those two classes. In that event this or that measure, and generally all talk about the stability of our C.C., would be futile. No measures of any kind could prevent a split in such a case. But I hope that this is too remote a future and too improbable an event to talk about."

COLLECTIVIZATION IN CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION

Lenin wrote this, of course, before collectivization in the Soviet Union took place. But even a collectivized peasantry is by no means a proletarian class. Collectivization sets the framework, and the socialist future depends on a multitude of factors in which a thoroughgoing industrialization and rationalization based on the most modern technique is most essential. The gap between rural life and life in the city is a great factor. It cannot be easily overcome even under the best of conditions.

The political denouement of the Lin-Chen grouping is the objective result of the instability of class relations in China, following upon the