

result of the economic reforms in the USSR under the Khrushchev era and partly under Brezhnev.

In either case, so far as the reforms go, while they started off in a dangerous direction, they merely evinced and offered the possibility of a bourgeois restoration. The trends were nevertheless arrested. The basic conquests of the October Proletarian Revolution—the planned character of the Soviet economy and the public ownership of the means of production—have by no means been eroded and in some aspects have been strengthened even while there has been a contradictory growth of social inequality and accumulating political antagonisms.

The most serious bourgeois economists and the world bourgeoisie as a whole have not for a moment abandoned their conception of the USSR as a “centrally planned” society and their mortal and irreconcilable antagonism towards it.

Doctrine of chance vs. historic necessity

In constructing their conception of the USSR as a new hostile class formation, the “new” theoreticians have broken with Marxism as a doctrine of social evolution and have introduced the reign of the arbitrary in the domain of social evolution. For, according to them, political leaders can change social systems at will, overthrow new classes, and bring back old ones without the knowledge, let alone the participation, of the masses. Indeed, this is a throwback to pre-modern conceptions of history. Wherever a so-called material basis is offered, it can't stand the light of day. It's overthrown by reality.

When the bourgeoisie was young and full of enthusiasm, its most enlightened sections pursued the theory of evolution not only in nature but to some extent in social development as well. It is to be noted that Marx's *Critique of Political Economy* and Darwin's *The Origin of Species* were published almost simultaneously in the year of 1859. The advance of humanity from lower to higher stages of social development received wide approval and that was because the bourgeois intelligentsia saw the capitalist class as the bearer of social, political, and scientific progress. Capitalism was still on the ascending scale of history.

Today the bourgeoisie, needless to say, is bereft of all historic validity. It is declining everywhere. It has long exhausted its historic mission and its further existence can only wreak one catastrophe after another upon humanity. It is bewildered and

confused by its utter inability not only to control the productive forces it has brought into being but even to maintain them in the face of revolutionary upheavals everywhere.

Their philosophy has led them for a considerable period now to renounce in the strongest terms the theory of evolution and in particular the Marxist theory of social development, which not only shows that the class struggle is the motive force of history but that the class struggle of the proletariat inevitably leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Nevertheless, the ideology of the bourgeoisie permeates all sections of society with its message of decline.

Monod and Nicolaus

Only lately the bourgeoisie began to peddle in intellectual circles Jacques Monod's theory of “Chance and Necessity.” According to him it is not social evolution, the development from lower to higher forms of society based upon new modes of production, which governs society; it is all pure chance. Chance determines everything.

What else can the bourgeoisie really rely upon?

In its youth it believed in evolution. Now when it is bankrupt it can only rely on chance, on fortuitous circumstances and historical conjunctures. Strange, isn't it, that precisely such theoretical fulminations govern in one way or another those theoreticians who have proclaimed the USSR a bourgeois state?

Martin Nicolaus' *Restoration of Capitalism*, if one reads it carefully, leads to the ultimate conclusion that it was conspiracy that determined the fate of Stalin as well as of Khrushchev, and that Brezhnev and Kosygin maintained themselves in power as a result of pure chance. In his conception of the events that led to the “restoration of capitalism,” the “good guys” were overthrown by the “bad guys” while the masses slept.

A more vulgar application of contemporary American pragmatism to great historical phenomena is scarcely conceivable. The fact that there may be basic disagreements, among other things, as to who were the “good guys” and who were the “bad guys” is not even raised as an issue.

His analysis of the reforms during the Khrushchev and Brezhnev period cannot stand the light of day because they do not take into account the basic reality of the Soviet system—that the planned character of the Soviet economy and the public