

bourgeoisie to ideologically capture newly awakening sectors of revolutionary workers.

Viewed in this light, the Conference of European CPs is of special importance to the world working class movement and oppressed people everywhere. The bourgeois media everywhere have poured scorn upon it. They have shown a malicious delight in the "break from Moscow" of some of the West European CPs (the Italian, Spanish, and to a lesser extent the French).

JUBILATION IN THE BOURGEOIS CAMP

The jubilation in the camp of the bourgeoisie over this event should really surprise no one, least of all the class-conscious workers of the world. The imperialists are dead set against the USSR because it is a workers' state, or a socialist state, as it is most frequently called. Any break from the USSR, anything that would hurt the USSR, the imperialists welcome with open arms. They have never been reconciled to the USSR and never will be unless counter-revolution is completely triumphant there, a very, very unlikely prospect, based on present conditions.

Of course, it matters a great deal to the bourgeoisie what the character of the Soviet leadership is—whether it is reformist or revolutionary. In the final analysis, however, their estimate of the USSR as a class formation hostile to imperialism and in competition with the capitalist system has never varied greatly.

The fact that the bourgeoisie welcomes what amounts to the formal defection of the Italian, Spanish, and some other CPs is based on what they regard as their best interests. Does the split help them or hurt them? Does it advance their interests or the interests of the proletariat of the countries they represent? That's the way the ruling classes look at it. They're not confused by semantics, changes in phraseology, or flexibility in tactics. That's strictly for popular consumption by the masses.

AN INDEPENDENT PROLETARIAN VIEWPOINT

How should the European CP conference be viewed in the light of proletarian class interests?

The first thing is to establish the complete independence of the viewpoint of the proletariat as against that pushed by the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must make its own appraisal in the light of its own independent class interests, free from the clichés, the slogans, and the subtle influences of bourgeois journalism.

A proletarian party should first of all pose the question: What was the nature of the split? Was the split from the Soviet leadership a revolutionary one? Was the break away from the reformism and revisionism of the Soviet bureaucracy a move in the direction of proletarian policy? Obviously the answer to that is no.

A break should not in and of itself be hailed by the vanguard elements in the camp of the working class. To do that is to echo the bourgeois line, the line of imperialism. A revolutionary break with reformist policies is one thing. But a break which deepens the reformism of several of the parties, which is in effect not so much a break with the policies of Brezhnev, Khrushchev, and Stalin, but is also a break with the USSR as a workers' state and a break with Leninism—that is something entirely different. It is not only deplorable, but should be denounced. This should be done in a way that does not rubber-stamp in any way whatever the policies of the Soviet leadership. It is vital that this be done in such a way that it can't possibly be confused with bourgeois anti-communist or anti-Soviet propaganda.

It is unfortunate, but all too true, that in the literature of the radical left in this country, the break is hailed and sounds very much like an echo of the bourgeois line, even if it's not meant to be. Take the Guardian of July 14, 1976. Its headline on this subject reads, "Soviets no longer rule roost—Revisionist bloc crumbling."

While the headline is to some degree at variance with the accompanying article by Irwin Silber, it nevertheless is a fair representation of what the reader will gather from the view presented there. In the first place, the "Soviets" have not "ruled the roost" over the revisionist bloc for some 20 years now. Whatever truth there is in this headline is at least two decades behind the times.

Silber characterizes the role of the Soviet leadership in the conference as "superpower hegemony." The term superpower, which was invented by the bourgeoisie, serves its purposes very well. It conceals the class character of the Soviet Union and also hides the predatory character of imperialism, putting the USSR and imperialism on an equal footing. Employing this terminology not only confuses the reader but makes it impossible to put forth a clear-cut analysis of an important social phenomenon.

Palmiro Togliatti, former head of the Italian CP, in 1956 put the final end to any real dominance by the Soviet leadership over the Italian CP. At that time the Khrushchev report denouncing Stalin