

**THE SOCIALIST**

**SEMINAR**

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Study Seminar 79: Socialist Strategies of Development

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2. International, National and Military Forms and Relations of Force

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- Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans.
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# The Arms Trade and Society

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Despite the world recession, one sector of western economies is becoming — the arms manufacturing sector. In particular, there has been a dramatic increase in the export in the arms to the Third World.

The explosion in the arms trade raises a number of crucial questions about the role of force in the international system, about waste in the world economy, and about the nature of industrial development in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres.

This article attempts to set out a framework for answering these questions by analysing the role of force in society. The basis of the analysis is the proposition that every type of military technology is the product of a particular society, that the organisations, techniques and the forms taken by force is a microcosm or epitome of society in general

DESPITE the world recession, one sector of western economies is booming — the arms manufacturing sector. In particular, there has been a dramatic increase in the export of arms to the Third World. In 1974 alone, sales of major weapons — ships, aircraft, tanks and missiles — to the Third World increased by 40 per cent and a similar increase is thought to have occurred in 1975. This explosion in the arms trade raises a number of crucial questions about the role of force in the international system, about waste in the world economy, and about the nature of industrial development in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres.

This article attempts to set up a framework for answering the questions by analysing the role of force in society. The basis of the analysis is the proposition that every type of military technology is the product of a particular society, that the organisations, techniques and the form taken by force is a microcosm or epitome of society in general. From this it follows that the export of arms is a reflection of the expansionary tendencies of society, while the import of arms represents the import of social change. Similar statements might be made about other forms of technology but I would argue that military technology has a special significance because of the fundamental role of force in class divided societies. Put in another way, the trade of arms could be described as a form of class struggle, as an international struggle between different social formations.

In what follows I concentrate on the concept of form of force and its relation to the social formation, particularly in advanced capitalism, and the implication of exporting the forms of force for social formations in peripheral regions. Inevitably, a number of important issues raised by the subject are neglected or subjected to broad generalisation. It is impossible to write

about this subject — and this relates to its fundamental nature — without making certain very general tendencies of modern capitalism and the nature of the international system. The subject does not need these assumptions and indeed a more thorough exploration would provide important insights into them.

## Form of Force and Social Formation

The form of force can be defined as comprising the techniques of force and the relations of force. The techniques of force are the weapons and the way they are used. The relations of force are the organisation of men, the nature of military hierarchy, the way men are drawn into the armed forces. The techniques of force are at once the product of the level of technology in society and the appropriate tool for a particular set of military relations. The relations of force are those most convenient for organising a body of men, in a given society, and those most likely to generate loyalty to the social formation.

Marxist writers have tended to place most emphasis on the techniques of force. Karl Liebknecht in his tract on militarism which he published in Berlin in 1906 argued that "the basis of every social relation of power is the superiority of physical force..."<sup>1</sup> But this is not simply the physical strength of individuals; it depends on the armaments carried by men, the "technique of arms". "An armed man increases his physical strength many times through his possession of a weapon. The degree of the increase depends upon the development of the technique of arms including fortification and strategy (whose form is essentially a consequence of the technique of arms). The intellectual and economic superiority of one interest group over another is turned into a simple physical superiority

through the possession of arms, or better arms, on the part of the ruling class." Engels said much the same thing: "the producer of more perfect tools, vulgo arms, beats the producer of more imperfect ones."

In this there is a strong element of technological determinism. Military organisation, or the relations of force are also important. It took the introduction of a market for soldiers, i.e. mercenaries, before guns, the product of bourgeois technology, were accepted into the armed forces. They were unsuitable for the feudal formations of knights. Similarly, North Vietnam and the Vietnamese liberation movement had capitalist arms (or imitations of them) but the relations of force enabled them to use their weapons more effectively than could the Americans.<sup>2</sup>

The form of force is thus a reflection of the social formation. The techniques of force reflect the available technology and the relations of force arise out of the relations of society as a whole. But the form of force can also alter the social formation. This is not simply through victory in a war between different types of armed forces but also through the experiences of such wars. The German response to the Napoleonic wars contributed to the democratisation in Germany. Equally, the counter insurgency operations of the Peruvian and Portuguese armies might be termed a radicalising experience.

But it is not only through the role of force as an instrument of destruction that the social formation is influenced. Armaments are also the products of labour and require labour to operate them. The form of force has important implications, therefore, for the social allocation of labour. In addition, a particular significance, which is the basis for much of the discussion of the arms economy, is attached to the fact that armaments do not re-enter the production process as means of production or means of subsistence and the

labour that went into them can only be realised out of surplus product. While arms may be necessary for the functioning of the production process and, indeed, may make possible the realisation of surplus product, they represent a tax on production, a reduction in the funds or labour available for consumption and investment.

The form of force that characterises advanced capitalist societies is the permanent arms race. Two features of this form of force are of interest. One is the weapons system concept. The armed forces, with the possible exception of the infantry, are organised around the weapons system, which comprises the weapons platform — the ship, aircraft, tank, etc — the weapon, and the means of communication. Formerly, the weapon was the instrument of the soldier. Today, the soldier appears to be the instrument of the weapons system. The resulting organisation is hierarchical, atomistic and dehumanising. It reflects the importance accorded to industrial products, particularly machines, in society as a whole. Furthermore, the weapons systems are themselves ranked and subdivided into an hierarchical military organisation, minimising the possibilities for individual or small group action. At the apex of the navy is the aircraft carrier making it possible for aircraft to operate from its deck, destroyers, frigates and submarines to defend it, and supply ships to replenish it. The bomber and the battle tank have similar functions in the air force and army. The liberal ideal of the fighter pilot as the modern hero of individual combat is a convenient myth. In reality, 50 men are required to operate each combat aircraft, together with the men required to operate supporting aircraft, so that the special importance accorded to the pilot is merely symbolic.

The second feature of the permanent arms race is the built-in tendency for expansion. Permanent technical progress implies a permanent process of obsolescence. The continuous development of new weapons, incorporating improved firepower, mobility or communication, necessitates the continuous replacement of existing weapons. The process can be entirely autonomous, requiring nothing more than the existence of an external enemy. It can be assumed that any plausible military developments will be applied by the enemy, the American "worst case analysis", and because of the long gestation of modern weapons systems, the response must be adopted as quickly as

possible. The new technology involves expansion, the technical improvements are more complex to manufacture and operate, requiring more labour for both production and use.

In one sense, however, the technical progress is conservative. It is socially circumscribed by the structure imposed by the weapons system. A revolutionary technology, involving perhaps less expenditure, is ruled out by the organisation of the armed forces. The development of missile technology, for example, could have implications that are as revolutionary as was the development of firearms. Already, missiles have rendered all weapons platforms extremely vulnerable. (Until anti-submarine detection is more developed, as it will be soon, the submarine escapes this generalisation.) This fact alone has reduced the grandiose marvels of modern technology — the aircraft carrier, bomber or battle tank — to expensive absurdities. Indeed, the obsolescence of the capital ship, of which the aircraft carrier is the current example, was demonstrated as long ago as World War I. Yet the concept is defended, in the vague terms of modern strategy, as "flexible response" (US) or a "balance of forces" across the "whole spectrum of operations" (UK), because the weapons system based force structure is intimately connected to the structure of modern industry and of society as a whole.

The permanent arms race can be traced back to the Anglo-German naval arms race before World War I. For most of the post-Napoleonic era, arms spending remained relatively constant. In Britain it rose by £2m between 1858 and 1883. Thereafter, expenditure on arms rose dramatically: from £27m in Britain in 1883, to £59m in 1908, to £77m in 1918. Most of the increase was devoted to the navy, which was to play an insignificant role in the war. The rise in arms spending was associated with the introduction of the private manufacture of arms and the rise of oligopoly. Prior to this period, factories for the manufacture of arms were government owned, manufacturing facilities were not very specialised and the manufacturing process did not require long gestation. At little cost, excess capacity could be maintained for expansion in time of war. In the 1880s the manufacture of arms, mainly ships, was contracted out to private companies, in the words of a British government committee "to stimulate inventors and manufacturers to vie with one another

to produce the best possible article'.<sup>3</sup> These companies could not afford to maintain excess capacity; they had to provide the technological justification for continuous employment. The rise of oligopoly meant that technical progress was bound to take the form of product improvement, rather than process improvement, of bigger and better weapons, rather than cheap and simple weapons. Indeed, Berghahn<sup>4</sup> has shown how, in Germany, the Tirpitz plan for naval procurement was closely related to the concern in shipbuilding and heavy industry about the deepening of recessions and the problems of excess capacity. The warships were not conceived for use, although they were seen as a symbol of imperial power in much the same way as intercontinental missiles are justified today. The naval arms race should not be seen as a response to imperialism. Rather it derived from the same cause — the structural problems of industry under late 19th century capitalism.

Through the twentieth century, the development of the armed forces proceeded alongside the development of the arms industry. Each weapons system was the product of a particular company and the centre of a military unit. The manufacturing capabilities of a company were at one and the same time the performance characteristics of a weapons system and the strategic doctrine of a military unit. The relationship between different military units exactly paralleled the structure of industry. Changes in the structure of industry, as in Britain in the late fifties and early sixties, were associated with changes in the relations of force. A more current example is the trend towards multinational defence companies in Europe, which is accompanied by new doctrines about the need to standardise and integrate European armed forces.

But, in general, these changes are resisted because the armed forces are frozen in the industrial structure which created their current form. Thus the navy and naval shipbuilding have a relatively predominant role in Britain, reflecting their zenith in the late 19th century. The US armed forces are a World War II creation, dominated by the structure of aerospace. The new military technologies which challenge these decaying military apparatus are the product of new dynamic industries, like electronics, and are most liable to be adopted by countries dominated by those industries, such as Germany and Japan.

The significance of the weapons system concept lies, therefore, not so much in their use, but in the commitment they create to use force in defence of certain interests. For the armed forces, the preservation of their own structure also means the preservation of a particular industrial structure and the social organisation on which the structure is founded. Quite apart from its direct importance to the production process, in creating employment for example, the significance of this elaborate form of force is political. The direct military aspects are minor.

## II

### Exporting Forms of Force

The export of arms plays a central role in the imperialist process; imperialism meaning, not territorial annexation, but the absorption of peripheral economies into the world capitalist system.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the fact of arms exports implies the absence of territorial annexation and the existence of local ruling classes in the periphery who use imported arms to appropriate part of the surplus/product produced in their regions. Under European imperialism, force was directly under the control of the colonial powers.

Increases in the export of arms have in general been associated with intense periods of "peaceful" inter-imperialist rivalry. (In wartime, force is used directly.) Like the association of warships with imperialism, this does not necessarily derive from the use of arms to secure political or strategic objectives. Rather it derives from the same causes. On the one hand, intensified industrial competition may strengthen the position of local ruling classes. On the other, the marginal markets become more important. The purchase of arms does not only channel surplus product from the periphery to the arms producers, directly. It also helps to secure supplies of raw materials and markets for other commodities. Take the recent American decision to sell 80 F-14 fighter aircraft to Iraq. It reflects the growing power of the Shah of Iran. It ensures the survival of Grumman Aircraft Corporation, without necessitating additional aid from the US government, and this is surely its most important feature from the American point of view. And it also has implications for the more generalised competition between the United States and Europe and Japan; it helps to secure US control over oil and it brings, in its trail, markets for non-military American goods. More importantly, perhaps, it

has consequences for Iranian society: consequences that explain why Iran, as well as other Third World countries, should continue to be a focal point for the competition between industrial powers.

In analysing these consequences, it is useful to make a broad distinction between two model forms of force in underdeveloped countries. Obviously much more refined distinctions can be made, corresponding to complex class structures. The first model is the pre-industrial army — the Bedouin levies of the Middle East, the retinue armies of pre-colonial Africa, the nineteenth century militia and Caudillos of Latin America.<sup>6</sup> Typically, these are infantry or cavalry based; the weapon being still the instrument of the soldier. The method of recruitment and the organisation reflects the relationships prevalent in society. Thus the Bedouin levies owe military service to their leaders, the Sheikhs and Kings of Arabia, in much the same way as feudal serfs owed military service to their lords in the Middle Ages. The weapons, however, are largely imported although the choice of weapons is delineated by the relations of force. In some cases, quite sophisticated weapons prove appropriate; the White Guard of Saudi Arabia has, since 1963, made use of Vigilant man-portable anti-tank missiles. In others, arms are designed in the metropolis especially for their use, *etc.*, the ornate bayonets still manufactured by Churchill's gunmakers in London (owned, incidentally, by the American firm, Interarmco), for the use of Persian Gulf Sheikhs. But these armies cannot make use of the major weapons which might whittle down their conservatism. This is why, for example, African armies have so long opposed the introduction of tanks.

This form of force does not necessarily involve capitalist relations of force, but it is dependent on capitalist techniques. In this it corresponds to the social formation in which it operates. This is generally characterised by the production of one or two basic commodities for export, sometimes by wage labour and sometimes on a slave or feudal based mode of production. The revenue from these exports is spent on necessities (where not produced alongside the export commodity) and on prestige goods and arms for the ruling class. The arms are used directly for repression, to preserve the position of the ruling class.<sup>7</sup> Thus the social formation may not be capitalist, in the sense of employing capitalist techni-

ques and utilising a free market for labour, but it is dependent upon and essential to a capitalist world system.

The second model form of force is the industrial army. This is based on the weapons system concept, which strictly limits the possible variations in the relations of force. The form of force tends to be an imitation of the form prevailing in the metropolis. The rise of these armies is associated with the beginnings of industrialisation. As well as arms the revenue from commodity exports is now spent on imported capital goods which are used to produce manufactured goods for consumption by the urban elite and by landowners. Whereas military expenditure previously consisted largely of expenditure of foreign exchange and could be seen as a method of channelling resources from the periphery to the metropolis, now the bourgeoisie can claim a larger share of the surplus product and military expenditure can also be seen as a method of channelling resources from the countryside to town. Military expenditure is paid for largely out of surplus generated in the countryside but it is spent in the metropolis and in the towns. Apart from the soldiers subsistence, local military expenditure requires repair and maintenance facilities, infrastructure such as roads and telephones, the manufacture of uniforms, etc. In some advanced cases — India or Brazil — the weapons are manufactured domestically from imported parts. (Often the cost of parts is greater than the cost of the total system.) Of course, the country may be receiving foreign military assistance; but then it is also necessary to take into account the repayment of debt as well as the repatriation of profits from foreign owned industries. The military assistance may eventually have to be paid for with agricultural earnings.

This is the role that the industrial army plays in the allocation of resources. It is a role that is not peculiar to arms expenditure. What makes armaments special is their function as instruments of force, their use in preserving a social structure in which the production process can take place. The pre-industrial armies used their guns directly for repression. The industrial armies, like their progenitors in the metropolis, are rarely used directly, except in external war against a competing ruling class with a similar form of force. When direct repression is necessary, they revert to the methods of the pre-industrial armies, or to the use of simple "intermediate technology" weapons,

designed in the metropolis, especially for the purpose. As in the metropolis, the true significance of the weapons system concept is political; it creates a commitment to industrialisation, and, more particularly, to a model of industrialisation based on the kinds of industries that created existing military technology and that condemn peripheral countries to an industrial structure that is decaying by advanced western standards. The primary function of the industrial army is not so much combat as political intervention. It is through the military coup that the army preserves the system. The major weapons may have prestige significance and they may be used in external war and, on occasion, domestically. (Tanks and aircraft have proved effective as instruments of terror.) But, first and foremost, they orientate the soldier toward a particular political tendency.

The case of Pakistan may be taken to illustrate this model.<sup>8</sup> Of the two wings which comprised Pakistan from independence until 1971, the Eastern wing was predominantly agricultural, producing jute and rice for export, while the Western wing had a small but growing industrial base. The Muslim League had included the Punjabi landowning class, the nascent West Pakistani industrialists, many of whom were also landowners, and the Bengali peasantry who had opposed their Hindu landlords. As soon as these disparate elements were pulled apart, the parliamentary form of government began to disintegrate and the country was effectively ruled by the state apparatus, the army and bureaucracy. This situation was formalised by the military coup of 1958.

The significance of military rule lay in the fact that it enabled the government to pursue an economic policy that discriminated in favour of West Pakistan or, more particularly, in favour of industrialisation. In the period 1958-68, Pakistan achieved very high growth rates and the share of industry in total output rose significantly. This rapid expansion was achieved largely through the substitution of imported consumer goods by domestically produced equivalents. It was financed by the easy availability of foreign aid and by a complicated system of indirect controls for channelling resources from agriculture to industry. It can be shown that more savings were generated in East Pakistan than in West Pakistan and less was invested in the region. East Pakistan received only 30 per cent of total investment allocations during the ten-year

period, although its total product was nearly equal to that of West Pakistan and its rate of saving, because of the more inequitable distribution of income, was greater. Similarly, West Pakistan had a surplus in its balance of trade with East Pakistan and a large and growing deficit with the rest of the world, while East Pakistan, for most of the period, had a foreign surplus. In other words, earnings from East Pakistani exports to the rest of the world, primary commodities, were spent on goods, often manufactured goods, produced in West Pakistan, at a higher price than they would have fetched on world markets. West Pakistan, in turn, was able to spend its earnings from exports to East Pakistan on imports from the rest of the world. This process was facilitated by the system of import licensing and foreign exchange rationing which favoured industrial goods at the expense of agriculture. In this way, foreign exchange earned in East Pakistan could be used to further the industrialisation of West Pakistan. Not surprisingly, the economic expansion was concentrated in West Pakistan, particularly the Punjab and Karachi. East Pakistan experienced small and sometimes negative growth rates.

Military expenditure played an important role in this process. Even before Independence, the army, which had been part of the Indian army, was relatively "sophisticated". In 1954, Pakistan joined the western military alliances SEATO and CENTO (then the Baghdad Pact) and subsequently received substantial American military assistance. It is estimated that two-thirds of Pakistan's military requirements were financed by the United States. The remaining third was financed domestically and, presumably, the greater contribution was made by the Eastern wing. Further, any debt repayments or imports tied to the aid was financed to a greater extent by the export earnings of East Pakistan. The bulk of the military expenditure, however, took place in West Pakistan. The armed forces were situated there, mainly because of Kashmir, but also because they were equipped by the Americans to meet a Russian "threat", which was expected in the North West. East Pakistani units, the Bengal Rifles, a relic of the colonial army, did not receive US military aid.

The function of the imported weapons systems received under the aid programme was not primarily military. Relatively primitive weapons like lathis were sufficient for the suppression of riots. Their function was partly pre-

stigious, to improve the image of the ruling class, and partly political. In prestige terms, the imported arms preserved the Western image of a military balance *vis-a-vis* India. This was important because Pakistan was held together by the ideology of Muslim nationalism, united against the external Hindu enemy. Pakistan's manpower inferiority was claimed to be offset by its firepower superiority. In Western conventional terms, its Patton tanks, its F-104 Starfighters armed with missiles and its heavy artillery were considered to surpass anything possessed by India. And this view was accepted in both India and Pakistan. Finally, in political terms, the form of force carried with it an aspiration to the American model of development. Pakistan's firepower superiority was, after all, based on American technology and could be operated best in an institutional framework based on the American model. Pakistan's economic strategy was a text book case for the American development theorists — indeed it was largely devised by Harvard economists. Their abstract justifications removed the unpleasant necessity of explaining its inequitable and exploitative aspects.

The 1965 war with India destroyed the system on which Pakistan's expansion was based.<sup>9</sup> Not only did it destroy the ideological appeal of the State apparatus, but it also destroyed the government's economic strategy because it led to the American decision to halt economic and military aid. Had Pakistan won the war, the matter might have been different. Indeed, war between ruling classes, the main opportunity for the direct use of industrial armies, represents an acceleration of the industrialisation process, at any rate for the victor.<sup>10</sup> Gavin Kennedy has shown how the Nigerian war of the late sixties promoted Nigerian growth by restricting private consumption, imposing import controls and injecting cash into industry. "The war imposed economic discipline and gave an impetus to local manufacturing and the emergency provided the kind of stimulus to economic nation-building that seven years of independence had failed to produce." Had Nigeria lost the war, it would also have lost the oil revenues through which its "nation-building" was financed.

The examples of Pakistan and Nigeria are not isolated. The association between industrialisation, repression and foreign dependence can be found in many Third World countries. To give only the extreme cases, Brazil, Taiwan,

South Korea, the Philippines and the oil-rich countries of the Middle East are all characterised by high arms imports, high rates of industrial growth and high levels of military spending. This can be partly explained by the direct role of the armed forces in the allocation of resources, absorbing surplus product created in the countryside and mobilising its expenditure in tow. But it might also be the result of their indirect role in so far as their training and equipment predisposes them to support those groups which pursue an industrialisation strategy, aimed at imitating the structure prevailing in the metropolis, and in so far as their military and political capacities enable them to maintain the inequitable conditions necessary for such a strategy. The results are not necessarily beneficial for development. The benefits accrue to small groups in the towns and in the metropolis. Foreign dependence increases, while the ability to "catch up" with metropolitan countries is limited by the fact that the new industries established in the periphery are already on the decline in the metropolis. If the people in Third World countries are to aim seriously at indigenous economic and social development, they must rethink about the nature of their armies and the role of or-

ganised force in society. And if they do so, this could have profound effects on a global scale; such is the dependence of industrial countries on the export of arms and on the markets and resources secured for them by Third World armies.

#### Notes

- 1 Karl Liebknecht, "Militarism and Anti-Militarism", 1973 translation, Rivers Press, Cambridge, 1973.
- 2 Of course, it could be argued that the Vietnamese victory was not due to organisation but to the limits of technology. Liebknecht argued that under capitalism, the last class-divided society, technology would reach an ultimate limit: "We can suppose that the time will come — even if it is far in the future — when technique and the easy domination by man of the most powerful forces of nature will reach a stage which makes the application of the technique of murder quite impossible, since it would mean the self-destruction of the human race. The exploitation of technical progress will then take on a new character; from a basic plutocratic activity it will to a certain extent become a democratic general possibility".
- 3 Quoted in Alfred Wags, "A History of Militarism. Civil and Military", Revised edition, Free Press, New York, 1959.
- 4 Berghahn, V R, "Germany and the Approach of War in 1914", Papermac, London, 1975.
- 5 Much of this argument can be found in Albrecht, *et al.*, "Armaments and Underdevelopment", *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, January 1974.
- 6 These last might be better described as absence of form, reflecting perhaps profound social and economic disorder. The irregular guerilla bands and bandits of modern Bangladesh and Burma might be placed in a similar category.
- 7 This model has much in common with Terray's description of Gyaman in pre-colonial Africa. Here, long distance trade, including arms, led to the introduction of slavery, alongside a kin-base mode of subsistence production. The slaves were used to produce gold for export and the revenue was spent on prestige goods and guns to capture and maintain more slaves. (Terray, E, "Long Distance Exchange and the Formation of the State: The Case of the Abren Kingdom of Gyaman", *Economy and Society*, Volume 3, Number 3.)
- 8 This is elaborated at greater length in Ansari and Kaldor, "Imported Military Technology and Conflict Dynamics: The Bangladesh Crisis of 1971", forthcoming.
- 9 The war also demonstrated that so-called technical advance in modern weaponry is not related to military effectiveness.
- 10 Gavin Kennedy "The Military and the Third World", Duckworth, London, 1974, Chapter II.

## II

### THE FORCE THEORY

"In my system, the relation between general politics and the forms of economic law is determined in so definite a way and at the same time a way *so original* that it would not be superfluous, in order to facilitate study, to make special reference to this point. The formation of *political* relationships is, *historically, the fundamental thing*, and instances of *economic* dependence are only *effects* or *special cases*, and are consequently always *facts of a second order*. Some of the newer socialist systems take as their guiding principle the conspicuously mere semblance of a completely reverse relationship, in that they assume that political phenomena are subordinate to and, as it were, grow out of the economic conditions. It is true that these effects of the second order do exist as such, and are most clearly perceptible at the present time; but the *primary* must be sought in *direct political force* and not in any indirect economic power." This conception is also expressed in another passage, in which Herr Dühring "starts from the principle that the political conditions are the decisive cause of the economic situation and that the reverse relationship represents only a reaction of a second order . . . so long as the political grouping is not taken for its own sake, as the starting-point, but is treated merely as a *stomach-filling agency*, one must be harbouring a hidden portion of reaction in one's mind, however radical a socialist and revolutionary one may seem to be."

That is Herr Dühring's theory. In this and in many other passages it is simply set up, decreed, so to speak. Nowhere in the three fat tomes is there even the slightest

attempt to prove it or to disprove the opposite point of view. And even if the arguments for it were as cheap as blackberries,<sup>79</sup> Herr Dühring would give us none of them. For the whole affair has been already proved through the famous original sin, when Robinson Crusoe made Friday his slave. That was an act of force, hence a political act. And inasmuch as this enslavement was the starting-point and the basic fact underlying all past history and inoculated it with the original sin of injustice, so much so that in the later periods it was only softened down and "transformed into the more indirect forms of economic dependence"; and inasmuch as "property founded on force" which has maintained its legality right up to the present day, is likewise based on this original act of enslavement, it is clear that all economic phenomena must be explained by political causes, that is, by force. And anyone who is not satisfied with that is a reactionary in disguise.

We must first point out that only one with as much self-esteem as Herr Dühring could regard this view as so very "original," which it is not in the least. The idea that political acts, grand performances of state, are decisive in history is as old as written history itself, and is the main reason why so little material has been preserved for us in regard to the really progressive evolution of the peoples which has taken place quietly, in the background, behind these noisy scenes on the stage. This idea dominated all the conceptions of historians in the past, and the first blow against it was delivered only by the French bourgeois historians of the Restoration period<sup>80</sup>; the only "original" thing about it is that Herr Dühring once again knows nothing of all this.

Furthermore: even if we assume for the moment that Herr Dühring is right in saying that all past history can be traced back to the enslavement of man by man, we are still very far from having got to the bottom of the matter. For the question then arises: how did Crusoe come to enslave Friday? Just for the fun of it? No such thing. On the contrary, we see that Friday "is compelled to render *economic* service as a slave or as a mere tool and is maintained only as a tool." Crusoe enslaved Friday only in order that Friday should work for Crusoe's benefit. And



how can he derive any benefit for himself from Friday's labour? Only through Friday producing by his labour more of the necessaries of life than Crusoe has to give him to keep him fit to work. Crusoe, therefore, in violation of Herr Dühring's express orders, "takes the political grouping" arising out of Friday's enslavement "not for its own sake as the starting-point, but merely as a stomach-filling agency"; and now let him see to it that he gets along with his lord and master, Dühring.

The childish example specially selected by Herr Dühring in order to prove that force is "historically the fundamental thing," in reality, therefore, proves that force is only the means, and that the aim is economic advantage. And "the more fundamental" the aim is than the means used to secure it, the more fundamental in history is the economic side of the relationship than the political side. The example therefore proves precisely the opposite of what it was supposed to prove. And as in the case of Crusoe and Friday, so in all cases of domination and subjection up to the present day. Subjugation has always been—to use Herr Dühring's elegant expression—a "stomach-filling agency" (taking stomach-filling in a very wide sense), but never and nowhere a political grouping established "for its own sake." It takes a Herr Dühring to be able to imagine that state taxes are only "effects of a second order," or that the present-day political grouping of the ruling bourgeoisie and the ruled proletariat has come into existence "for its own sake," and not as "a stomach-filling agency" for the ruling bourgeois, that is to say, for the sake of making profits and accumulating capital.

However, let us get back again to our two men. Crusoe, "sword in hand," makes Friday his slave. But in order to pull this off, Crusoe needs something else besides his sword. Not everyone can make use of a slave. In order to be able to make use of a slave, one must possess two kinds of things: first, the instruments and material for his slave's labour; and secondly, the means of bare subsistence for him. Therefore, before slavery becomes possible, a certain level of production must already have been reached and a certain inequality of distribution must already have appeared. And for slave-labour to become the

dominant mode of production in the whole of a society, an even far higher increase in production, trade and accumulation of wealth was essential. In the ancient primitive communities with common ownership of the land, slavery either did not exist at all or played only a very subordinate role. It was the same in the originally peasant city of Rome; but when Rome became a "world city" and Italic landownership came more and more into the hands of a numerically small class of enormously rich proprietors, the peasant population was supplanted by a population of slaves. If at the time of the Persian wars the number of slaves in Corinth rose to 460,000 and in Aegina to 470,000 and there were ten slaves to every free-man,<sup>81</sup> something else besides "force" was required, namely, a highly developed arts and handicraft industry and an extensive commerce. Slavery in the United States of America was based far less on force than on the English cotton industry; in those districts where no cotton was grown or which, unlike the border states, did not breed slaves for the cotton-growing states, it died out of itself without any force being used, simply because it did not pay.

Hence, by calling property as it exists today property founded on force, and by characterizing it as "that form of domination at the root of which lies not merely the exclusion of fellow-men from the use of the natural means of subsistence, but also, what is far more important, the subjugation of man to make him do servile work," Herr Dühring is making the whole relationship stand on its head. The subjugation of a man to make him do servile work, in all its forms, presupposes that the subjugator has at his disposal the instruments of labour with the help of which alone he is able to employ the person placed in bondage, and in the case of slavery, in addition, the means of subsistence which enable him to keep his slave alive. In all cases, therefore, it presupposes the possession of a certain amount of property, in excess of the average. How did this property come into existence? In any case it is clear that it may in fact have been robbed, and therefore may be based on force, but that this is by no means necessary. It may have been got by labour, it may have been stolen,

or it may have been obtained by trade or by fraud. In fact, it must have been obtained by labour before there was any possibility of its being robbed.

Private property by no means makes its appearance in history as the result of robbery or force. On the contrary. It already existed, though limited to certain objects, in the ancient primitive communes of all civilized peoples. It developed into the form of commodities within these communes, at first through barter with foreigners. The more the products of the commune assumed the commodity form, that is, the less they were produced for their producers' own use and the more for the purpose of exchange, and the more the original natural division of labour was extruded by exchange also within the commune, the more did inequality develop in the property owned by the individual members of the commune, the more deeply was the ancient common ownership of the land undermined, and the more rapidly did the commune develop towards its dissolution and transformation into a village of small-holding peasants. For thousands of years Oriental despotism and the changing rule of conquering nomad peoples were unable to injure these old communities; the gradual destruction of their primitive home industry by the competition of products of large-scale industry brought these communities nearer and nearer to dissolution. Force was as little involved in this process as in the dividing up, still taking place now, of the land held in common by the village communities (*Gehöferschaften*) on the Moselle and in the Hochwald; the peasants simply find it to their advantage that the private ownership of land should take the place of common ownership.<sup>82</sup> Even the formation of a primitive aristocracy, as in the case of the Celts, the Germans and the Indian Punjab, took place on the basis of common ownership of the land, and at first was not based in any way on force, but on voluntariness and custom. Wherever private property evolved it was the result of altered relations of production and exchange, in the interest of increased production and in furtherance of intercourse—hence as a result of economic causes. Force plays no part in this at all. Indeed, it is clear that the institution of private property must already be in existence for a rob-

ber to be able to *appropriate* another person's property, and that therefore force may be able to change the possession of, but cannot create, private property as such.

Nor can we use either force or property founded on force in explanation of the "subjugation of man to make him do servile work" in its most modern form—wage-labour. We have already mentioned the role played in the dissolution of the ancient communities, that is, in the direct or indirect general spread of private property, by the transformation of the products of labour into commodities, their production not for consumption by those who produced them, but for exchange. Now in *Capital*, Marx proved with absolute clarity—and Herr Dühring carefully avoids even the slightest reference to this—that at a certain stage of development, the production of commodities becomes transformed into capitalist production, and that at this stage "the laws of appropriation or of private property, laws that are based on the production and circulation of commodities, become by their own inner and inexorable dialectic changed into their very opposite. The exchange of equivalents, the original operation with which we started, has now become turned round in such a way that there is only an apparent exchange. This is owing to the fact, first, that the capital which is exchanged for labour-power is itself but a portion of the product of others' labour appropriated without an equivalent; and, secondly, that this capital must not only be replaced by its producer, but replaced together with an added surplus. . . . At first the rights of property seemed to us to be based on a man's own labour. . . . Now, however (at the end of the Marxian analysis), property turns out to be the right, on the part of the capitalist, to appropriate the unpaid labour of others or its product, and to be the impossibility, on the part of the labourer, of appropriating his own product. The separation of property from labour has become the necessary consequence of a law that apparently originated in their identity."<sup>83</sup> In other words, even if we exclude all possibility of robbery, force and fraud, even if we assume

<sup>82</sup> *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow 1961, pp. 583-84.—Ed.



that all private property was originally based on the owner's own labour, and that throughout the whole subsequent process there was only exchange of equal values for equal values, the progressive evolution of production and exchange nevertheless brings us of necessity to the present capitalist mode of production, to the monopolization of the means of production and the means of subsistence in the hands of the one, numerically small, class, to the degradation into propertyless proletarians of the other class, constituting the immense majority, to the periodic alternation of speculative production booms and commercial crises and to the whole of the present anarchy of production. The whole process can be explained by purely economic causes; at no point whatever are robbery, force, the state or political interference of any kind necessary. "Property founded on force" proves here also to be nothing but the phrase of a braggart intended to cover up his lack of understanding of the real course of things.

This course of things, expressed historically, is the history of the evolution of the bourgeoisie. If "political conditions are the decisive cause of the economic situation," then the modern bourgeoisie cannot have developed in struggle with feudalism, but must be the latter's voluntarily begotten pet child. Everyone knows that what took place was the opposite. Originally an oppressed estate liable to pay dues to the ruling feudal nobility, recruited from all manner of serfs and villains, the burghers conquered one position after another in their continuous struggle with the nobility, and finally, in the most highly developed countries, took power in its stead: in France, by directly overthrowing the nobility; in England, by making it more and more bourgeois, and incorporating it as their own ornamental head. And how did they accomplish this? Simply through a change in the "economic situation," which sooner or later, voluntarily or as the outcome of combat, was followed by a change in the political conditions. The struggle of the bourgeoisie against the feudal nobility is the struggle of town against country, industry against landed property, money economy against natural economy; and the decisive weapon of the bourgeoisie in this struggle was its means of economic power, constantly

increasing through the development of industry, first handicraft, and then, at a later stage, progressing to manufacture, and through the expansion of commerce. During the whole of this struggle political force was on the side of the nobility, except for a period when the Crown played the burghers against the nobility, in order to keep one estate in check by means of the other; but from the moment when the bourgeoisie, still politically powerless, began to grow dangerous owing to its increasing economic power, the Crown resumed its alliance with the nobility, and by so doing called forth the bourgeois revolution, first in England and then in France. The "political conditions" in France had remained unaltered, while the "economic situation" had outgrown them. Judged by his political status the nobleman was everything, the burgher nothing; but judged by his social position the burgher now formed the most important class in the state, while the nobleman had been shorn of all his social functions and was now only drawing payment, in the revenues that came to him, for these functions which had disappeared. Nor was that all. Bourgeois production in its entirety was still hemmed in by the feudal political forms of the Middle Ages, which this production—not only manufacture, but even handicraft industry—had long outgrown; it had remained hemmed in by all the thousandfold guild privileges and local and provincial customs barriers which had become mere irritants and fetters on production.

The bourgeois revolution put an end to this. Not, however, by adjusting the economic situation to suit the political conditions, in accordance with Herr Dühring's precept—this was precisely what the nobles and the Crown had been vainly trying to do for years—but by doing the opposite, by casting aside the old mouldering political rubbish and creating political conditions in which the new "economic situation" could exist and develop. And in this political and legal atmosphere which was suited to its needs it developed brilliantly, so brilliantly that the bourgeoisie has already come close to occupying the position held by the nobility in 1789: it is becoming more and more not only socially superfluous, but a social hindrance; it is more and more becoming separated from productive activ-

ity, and, like the nobility in the past, becoming more and more a class merely drawing revenues; and it has accomplished this revolution in its own position and the creation of a new class, the proletariat, without any hocus-pocus of force whatever, in a purely economic way. Even more: it did not in any way will this result of its own actions and activities—on the contrary, this result established itself with irresistible force, against the will and contrary to the intentions of the bourgeoisie; its own productive forces have grown beyond its control, and, as if necessitated by a law of nature, are driving the whole of bourgeois society towards ruin, or revolution. And if the bourgeois now make their appeal to force in order to save the collapsing “economic situation” from the final crash, this only shows that they are labouring under the same delusion as Herr Dühring: the delusion that “political conditions are the decisive cause of the economic situation”; this only shows that they imagine, just as Herr Dühring does, that by making use of “the primary,” “the direct political force,” they can remodel those “facts of the second order,” the economic situation and its inevitable development; and that therefore the economic consequences of the steam-engine and the modern machinery driven by it, of world trade and the banking and credit developments of the present day, can be blown out of existence by them with Krupp guns and Mauser rifles.

## III

## THE FORCE THEORY

(Continuation)

But let us look a little more closely at this omnipotent “force” of Herr Dühring’s. Crusoe enslaved Friday “sword in hand.” Where did he get the sword? Even on the imaginary islands of the Robinson Crusoe epic, swords have not, up to now, been known to grow on trees, and Herr Dühring provides no answer to this question. If Crusoe could procure a sword for himself, we are equally entitled to assume that one fine morning Friday might appear with a loaded revolver in his hand, and then the whole “force” relationship is inverted. Friday commands, and it is Crusoe who has to drudge. We must apologize to the readers for returning with such insistence to the Robinson Crusoe and Friday story, which properly belongs to the nursery and not to the field of science—but how can we help it? We are obliged to apply Herr Dühring’s axiomatic method conscientiously, and it is not our fault if in doing so we have to keep all the time within the field of pure childishness. So, then, the revolver triumphs over the sword; and this will probably make even the most childish axiomatician comprehend that force is no mere act of the will, but requires the existence of very real preliminary conditions before it can come into operation, namely, *instruments*, the more perfect of which gets the better of the less perfect; moreover, that these instruments have to be produced, which implies that the producer of more perfect instruments of force, commonly called arms, gets the better of the producer of the less

perfect instruments, and that, in a word, the triumph of force is based on the production of arms, and this in turn on production in general—therefore, on “economic power,” on the “economic situation,” on the *material* means which force has at its disposal.

Force, nowadays, is the army and navy, and both, as we all know to our cost, are “devilishly expensive.” Force, however, cannot make any money; at most it can take away money that has already been made—and this does not help much either—as we have seen, also to our cost, in the case of the French milliards.<sup>83</sup> In the last analysis, therefore, money must be provided through the medium of economic production; and so once more force is conditioned by the economic situation, which furnishes the means for the equipment and maintenance of the instruments of force. But even that is not all. Nothing is more dependent on economic prerequisites than precisely army and navy. Armament, composition, organization, tactics and strategy depend above all on the stage reached at the time in production and on communications. It is not the “free creations of the mind” of generals of genius that have had a revolutionizing effect here, but the invention of better weapons and the change in the human material, the soldiers; at the very most, the part played by generals of genius is limited to adapting methods of fighting to the new weapons and combatants.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, gunpowder came from the Arabs to Western Europe, and, as every school child knows, completely revolutionized the methods of warfare. The introduction of gunpowder and fire-arms, however, was not at all an act of force, but a step forward in industry, that is, an economic advance. Industry remains industry, whether it is applied to the production or the destruction of things. And the introduction of fire-arms had a revolutionizing effect not only on the conduct of war itself, but also on the political relationships of domination and subjection. The procurement of powder and fire-arms required industry and money, and both of these were in the hands of the burghers of the towns. From the outset, therefore, fire-arms were the weapons of the towns, and of the rising town-supported monarchy against the

feudal nobility. The stone walls of the noblemen's castles, hitherto unapproachable, fell before the cannon of the burghers, and the bullets of the burghers' arquebuses pierced the armour of the knights. With the defeat of the nobility's armour-clad cavalry, the nobility's supremacy was broken; with the development of the bourgeoisie, infantry and artillery became more and more the decisive types of arms; compelled by the development of artillery, the military profession had to add to its organization a new and entirely industrial subsection, the corps of engineers.

The improvement of fire-arms was a very slow process. The pieces of artillery remained clumsy and the musket, in spite of a number of inventions affecting details, was still a crude weapon. It took over three hundred years for a weapon to be constructed that was suitable for the equipment of the whole body of infantry. It was not until the early part of the eighteenth century that the flint-lock musket with a bayonet finally displaced the pike in the equipment of the infantry. The foot soldiers of that period were the mercenaries of princes; they consisted of the most demoralized elements of society, rigorously drilled but quite unreliable and only held together by the rod; they were often hostile prisoners of war who had been pressed into service. The only type of fighting in which these soldiers could apply the new weapons was the tactics of the line, which reached its highest perfection under Frederick II. The whole infantry of an army was drawn up in triple ranks in the form of a very long, hollow square, and moved in battle order only as a whole; at the very most, either of the two wings might move forward or keep back a little. This cumbrous mass could move in formation only on absolutely level ground, and even then only very slowly (seventy-five paces a minute); a change of formation during a battle was impossible, and once the infantry was engaged, victory or defeat was decided rapidly and at one blow.

In the American War of Independence, these unwieldy lines were met by bands of rebels, who although not drilled were all the better able to shoot from their rifled guns; they were fighting for their vital interests, and therefore

did not desert like the mercenaries; nor did they do the English the favour of encountering them also in line and on clear, even ground. They came in open formation, a series of rapidly-moving troops of sharpshooters, under cover of the woods. Here the line was powerless and succumbed to its invisible and inaccessible opponents. Skirmishing was re-invented—a new method of warfare which was the result of a change in the human war material.

What the American Revolution had begun the French Revolution completed, also in the military sphere. It also could oppose to the well-trained mercenary armies of the Coalition only poorly trained but great masses of soldiers, the levy of the entire nation. But these masses had to protect Paris, that is, to hold a definite area, and for this purpose victory in open mass battle was essential. Mere skirmishes would not achieve enough; a form had to be found to make use of large masses and this form was discovered in the *column*. Column formation made it possible for even poorly trained troops to move with a fair degree of order, and moreover with greater speed (a hundred paces and more in a minute); it made it possible to break through the rigid forms of the old line formation; to fight on any ground, and therefore even on ground which was extremely disadvantageous to the line formation; to group the troops in any way if in the least appropriate; and, in conjunction with attacks by scattered bands of sharpshooters, to contain the enemy's lines, keep them engaged and wear them out until the moment came for masses held in reserve to break through them at the decisive point in the position. This new method of warfare, based on the combined action of skirmishers and columns and on the partitioning of the army into independent divisions or army corps, composed of all arms of the service—a method brought to full perfection by Napoleon in both its tactical and strategical aspects—had become necessary primarily because of the changed personnel: the soldiery of the French Revolution. Besides, two very important technical prerequisites had been complied with: first, the lighter carriages for field guns constructed by Gribeauval, which alone made possible the

more rapid movement now required of them; and secondly, the slanting of the butt, which had hitherto been quite straight, continuing the line of the barrel. Introduced in France in 1777, it was copied from hunting weapons and made it possible to shoot at a particular individual without the probability of missing him. But for this improvement it would have been impossible to skirmish with the old weapons.

The revolutionary system of arming the whole people was soon restricted to compulsory conscription (with substitution for the rich, who paid for their release) and in this form it was adopted by most of the large states on the Continent. Only Prussia attempted, through its *Landwehr* system,<sup>84</sup> to draw to a greater extent on the military strength of the nation. Prussia was also the first state to equip its whole infantry—after the rifled muzzle-loader, which had been improved between 1830 and 1860 and found fit for use in war, had played a brief role—the most up-to-date weapon, the rifled breech-loader. Its successes in 1866 were due to these two innovations.<sup>85</sup>

The Franco-German War was the first in which two armies faced each other both equipped with breech-loading rifles, and moreover both fundamentally in the same tactical formations as in the time of the old smoothbore flint-locks. The only difference was that the Prussians had introduced the company column formation in an attempt to find a form of fighting which was better adapted to the new type of arms. But when, at St. Privat on August 18<sup>86</sup>, the Prussian Guard tried to apply the company column formation seriously, the five regiments which were chiefly engaged lost in less than two hours more than a third of their strength (176 officers and 5,114 men). From that time on the company column, too, was condemned as a battle formation, no less than the battalion column and the line; all idea of further exposing troops in any kind of close formation to enemy gun-fire was abandoned, and on the German side all subsequent fighting was conducted only in those compact bodies of skirmishers into which the columns had so far regularly dissolved of themselves under a deadly hail of bullets, although this had been op-



posed by the higher commands as contrary to order; and in the same way the only form of movement when under fire from enemy rifles became the *double*. Once again the soldier had been shrewder than the officer; it was *he* who instinctively found the only way of fighting which has proved of service up to now under the fire of breech-loading rifles, and in spite of opposition from his officers he carried it through successfully.

The Franco-German War marked a turning-point of entirely new implications. In the first place the weapons used have reached such a stage of perfection that further progress which would have any revolutionizing influence is no longer possible. Once armies have guns which can hit a battalion at any range at which it can be distinguished, and rifles which are equally effective for hitting individual men, while loading them takes less time than aiming, then all further improvements are of minor importance for field warfare. The era of evolution is therefore, in essentials, closed in this direction. And secondly, this war has compelled all continental powers to introduce in a stricter form the Prussian *Landwehr* system, and with it a military burden which must bring them to ruin within a few years. The army has become the main purpose of the state, and an end in itself; the peoples are there only to provide soldiers and feed them. Militarism dominates and is swallowing Europe. But this militarism also bears within itself the seed of its own destruction. Competition among the individual states forces them, on the one hand, to spend more money each year on the army and navy, artillery, etc., thus more and more hastening their financial collapse; and, on the other hand, to resort to universal compulsory military service more and more extensively, thus in the long run making the whole people familiar with the use of arms, and therefore enabling them at a given moment to make their will prevail against the war-lords in command. And this moment will arrive as soon as the mass of the people—town and country workers and peasants—*will have* a will. At this point the armies of the princes become transformed into armies of the people; the machine refuses to work, and militarism collapses by the dialectics of its own evo-

lution. What the bourgeois democracy of 1848 could not accomplish, just because it was *bourgeois* and not proletarian, namely, to give the labouring masses a will whose content would be in accord with their class position—socialism will infallibly secure. And this will mean the bursting asunder *from within* of militarism and with it of all standing armies.

That is the first moral of our history of modern infantry. The second moral, which brings us back again to Herr Dühring, is that the whole organization and method of warfare, and along with these victory or defeat, prove to be dependent on material, that is, economic conditions: on the human material and the armaments material, and therefore on the quality and quantity of the population and on technical development. Only a hunting people like the Americans could rediscover skirmishing tactics—and they were hunters as a result of purely economic causes, just as now, as a result of purely economic causes, these same Yankees of the old States have transformed themselves into farmers, industrialists, seamen and merchants who no longer skirmish in the primeval forests, but instead all the more effectively in the field of speculation, where they have likewise made much progress in making use of large masses.

Only a revolution such as the French, which brought about the economic emancipation of the bourgeois and, especially, of the peasantry, could find the mass armies and at the same time the free forms of movement which shattered the old rigid lines—the military counterparts of the absolutism which they were defending. And we have seen in case after case how advances in technique, as soon as they became applicable militarily and in fact were so applied, immediately and almost forcibly produced changes and even revolutions in the methods of warfare, often indeed against the will of the army command. And nowadays any zealous N.C.O. could explain to Herr Dühring how greatly, besides, the conduct of a war depends on the productivity and means of communication of the army's own hinterland as well as of the theatre of war. In short, always and everywhere it is the economic conditions and the instruments of economic power which

help "force" to victory, without which force ceases to be force. And anyone who tried to reform methods of warfare from the opposite standpoint, on the basis of Dühringian principles, would certainly earn nothing but a beating.\*

If we pass now from land to sea, we find that in the last twenty years alone an even more complete revolution has taken place there. The warship of the Crimean War<sup>88</sup> was the wooden two- and three-decker of 60 to 100 guns; this was still mainly propelled by sail, with only a low-powered auxiliary steam-engine. The guns on these warships were for the most part 32-pounders, weighing approximately 50 centners,\*\* with only a few 68-pounders weighing 95 centners. Towards the end of the war, iron-clad floating batteries made their appearance; they were clumsy and almost immobile monsters, but to the guns of that period they were invulnerable. Soon warships, too, were swathed in iron armour-plating; at first the plates were still thin, a thickness of four inches being regarded as extremely heavy armour. But soon the progress made with artillery outstripped the armour-plating; each successive increase in the strength of the armour used was countered by a new and heavier gun which easily pierced the plates. In this way we have already reached armour-plating ten, twelve, fourteen and twenty-four inches thick (Italy proposes to have a ship built with plates three feet thick) on the one hand, and on the other, rifled guns of 25, 35, 80 and even 100 tons (at 20 centners) in weight, which can hurl projectiles weighing 300, 400, 1,700 and up to 2,000 pounds to distances which were never dreamed of before. The warship of the present day is a gigantic armoured screw-driven steamer of 8,000 to 9,000 tons displacement and 6,000 to 8,000 horse power, with revolving turrets and four or at most six heavy guns,

\* This is already perfectly well known to the Prussian General Staff. "The basis of warfare is primarily the economic way of life of the peoples in general," said Herr Max Jähns, a captain of the General Staff, in a scientific lecture (*Kölnische Zeitung*, April 20, 1876, p. 3).<sup>87</sup> (Note by Engels.)

\*\* German centner of 50 kilograms, i.e., half of the metric centner.—Ed.

the bow being extended under water into a ram for running down enemy vessels. It is a single colossal machine, in which steam not only drives the ship at a high speed, but also works the steering-gear, raises the anchor, swings the turrets, changes the elevation of the guns and loads them, pumps out water, hoists and lowers the boats—some of which are themselves also steam-driven—and so forth. And the rivalry between armour-plating and the fire power of guns is so far from being at an end that nowadays a ship is almost always not up to requirements, already out of date, before it is launched. The modern warship is not only a product, but at the same time a specimen of modern large-scale industry, a floating factory—producing mainly, to be sure, a lavish waste of money. The country in which large-scale industry is most highly developed has almost a monopoly of the construction of these ships. All Turkish, almost all Russian and most German armoured vessels have been built in England; armour-plates that are at all serviceable are hardly made outside of Sheffield; of the three steel-works in Europe which alone are able to make the heaviest guns, two (Woolwich and Elswick) are in England, and the third (Krupp) in Germany. In this sphere it is most palpably evident that the "direct political force" which, according to Herr Dühring, is the "decisive cause of the economic situation," is on the contrary completely subordinate to the economic situation, that not only the construction but also the operation of the marine instrument of force, the warship, has itself become a branch of modern large-scale industry. And that this is so distresses no one more than force itself, that is, the state, which has now to pay for one ship as much as a whole small fleet used to cost; which has to resign itself to seeing these expensive vessels become obsolete, and therefore worthless, even before they slide into the water; and which must certainly be just as disgusted as Herr Dühring that the man of the "economic situation," the engineer, is now of far greater importance on board than the man of "direct force," the captain. We, on the contrary, have absolutely no cause to be vexed when we see that, in this competitive struggle between armour-plating and guns, the war-

ship is being developed to a pitch of perfection which is making it both outrageously costly and unusable in war,\* and that this struggle makes manifest also in the sphere of naval warfare those inherent dialectical laws of motion on the basis of which militarism, like every other historical phenomenon, is being brought to its doom in consequence of its own development.

Here, too, therefore we see absolutely clearly that it is not by any means true that "the primary must be sought in direct political force and not in any indirect economic power." On the contrary. For what in fact does "the primary" in force itself prove to be? Economic power, the disposal of the means of power of large-scale industry. Naval political force, which reposes on modern warships, proves to be not at all "direct" but on the contrary *mediated* by economic power, highly developed metallurgy, command of skilled technicians and highly productive coal-mines.

And yet what is the use of it all? If we put Herr Dühring in supreme command in the next naval war, he will destroy all fleets of armoured ships, which are the slaves of the economic situation, without torpedoes or any other artifices, solely by virtue of his "direct force."

\* The perfecting of the latest product of modern industry for use in naval warfare, the self-propelled torpedo, seems likely to bring this to pass; it would mean that the smallest torpedo boat would be superior to the most powerful armoured warship. (It should be borne in mind that the above was written in 1878).<sup>69</sup> [Note by Engels.]

## IV

## THE FORCE THEORY

## (Conclusion)

"It is a circumstance of great importance that as a matter of fact the domination over *nature*, generally speaking (!), only proceeded (a domination proceeded!) through the domination *over man*. The cultivation of landed property in tracts of considerable size never took place anywhere without the antecedent subjection of man in some form of slave-labour or *corvée*. The establishment of an economic domination over things has presupposed the political, social and economic domination of man over man. How could a large landed proprietor even be conceived without at once including in this idea also his domination over slaves, serfs, or others indirectly unfree? What could the efforts of an individual, at most supplemented by those of his family, have signified or signify in extensively practised agriculture? The exploitation of the land, or the extension of economic control over it on a scale exceeding the natural capacities of the individual, was only made possible in previous history by the establishment, either before or simultaneously with the introduction of dominion over land, of the enslavement of man which this involves. In the later periods of development this servitude was mitigated, ... its present form in the more highly civilized states is wage-labour, to a greater or lesser degree carried on under police rule. Thus wage-labour provides the practical possibility of that form of contemporary wealth which is represented by dominion over wide areas of land and (!) extensive land-

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Comrade Fang Chih-min, a native of Yiyang, Kiangsi Province, and a member of the Sixth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, was the founder of the Red area in northeastern Kiangsi and of the Tenth Red Army. In 1934 he led the vanguard detachment of the Red Army in marching north to resist the Japanese invaders. In January 1935 he was captured in battle against the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang troops and in July he died a martyr's death in Nanchang, Kiangsi.

<sup>2</sup> The subjective forces of the revolution mean the organized forces of the revolution.

<sup>3</sup> The May 30th Movement was the nation-wide anti-imperialist movement in protest against the massacre of the Chinese people by the British police in Shanghai on May 30, 1925.

<sup>4</sup> Lu Ti-ping, a Kuomintang warlord, was the Kuomintang governor of Hunan Province in 1923.

<sup>5</sup> The war of March-April 1929 between Chiang Kai-shek, the Kuomintang warlord in Nanking, and Li Tzu-jen and Pai Chung-hsi, the Kuomintang warlords in Kwangsi Province.

<sup>6</sup> The third invasion of the Red Army's base area on the Chinghsiang Mountains by the Kuomintang warlords in Hunan and Kiangsi lasting from the end of 1928 to the beginning of 1929.

<sup>7</sup> The quotation is from Mencius, who compared a tyrant who drove his people into seeking a benevolent ruler to the otter which "drives the fish into deep waters".

<sup>8</sup> The Sixth National Congress of the Communist Party of China was held in July 1928. It pointed out that after the defeat in 1927, China's revolution remained bourgeois-democratic in nature, i.e., anti-imperialist and anti-feudal, and that since the inevitable new high tide in the revolution was not yet imminent, the general line for the revolution should be to win over the masses. The Sixth Congress liquidated the 1927 Right capitulationism of Chen Tu-hsiu and also repudiated the "Left" puritanism which occurred in the Party at the end of 1927 and the beginning of 1928.

<sup>9</sup> The statement in brackets has been added by the author.

<sup>10</sup> The regime set up in western Fukien came into being in 1929, when the Red Army in the Chinghsiang Mountains rallied eastward to build a new revolutionary base area and established the people's revolutionary political power in the counties of Longyen, Yongding and Shanghang in the western part of that province.

<sup>11</sup> Stable base areas were the relatively stable revolutionary base areas established by the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army.

<sup>12</sup> Chiang Po-cheng was then the commander of the Kuomintang peace preservation corps in Chekiang Province.

<sup>13</sup> Chen Kuo-hui and Lu Hsiang-pang were two notorious Fukien bandits whose forces had been incorporated into the Kuomintang army.

<sup>14</sup> Chang Chen was a divisional commander of the Kuomintang army.

<sup>15</sup> Chu Pei-teh, a Kuomintang warlord, was then the Kuomintang governor of Kiangsi Province.

<sup>16</sup> Hsiung Shih-hui was then a divisional commander of the Kuomintang army in Kiangsi Province.

## PROBLEMS OF STRATEGY IN CHINA'S REVOLUTIONARY WAR

December 1936

### CHAPTER I

#### HOW TO STUDY WAR

##### 1. THE LAWS OF WAR ARE DEVELOPMENTAL

*The laws of war* are a problem which anyone directing a war must study and solve.

*The laws of revolutionary war* are a problem which anyone directing a revolutionary war must study and solve.

*The laws of China's revolutionary war* are a problem which anyone directing China's revolutionary war must study and solve.

We are now engaged in a war; our war is a revolutionary war; and our revolutionary war is being waged in this semi-colonial and semi-feudal country of China. Therefore, we must study not only the laws of war in general, but the specific laws of revolutionary war, and the even more specific laws of revolutionary war in China.

It is well known that when you do anything, unless you understand its actual circumstances, its nature and its relations to other things, you will not know the laws governing it, or know how to do it, or be able to do it well.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung wrote this work to sum up the experience of the Second Revolutionary Civil War and used it for his lectures at the Red Army College in northern Shensi. Only five chapters were completed. The chapters on the strategic offensive, political work and other problems were left undone because he was too busy in consequence of the Sian Incident. This work a result of a major inner-Party controversy on military questions during the Second Revolutionary Civil War, gives expression to one line in military affairs as against another. The enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee held at Tsunyi in January 1935 settled

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War is the highest form of struggle for resolving contradictions, when they have developed to a certain stage, between classes, nations, states, or political groups, and it has existed ever since the existence of private property and of classes. Unless you understand the actual circumstances of war, its nature and its relations to other things, you will not know the laws of war, or know how to direct war, or be able to win victory.

*Revolutionary war*, whether a revolutionary class war or a revolutionary national war, has its own specific circumstances and nature, in addition to the circumstances and nature of war in general. Therefore, besides the general laws of war, it has specific laws of its own. Unless you understand its specific circumstances and nature, unless you understand its specific laws, you will not be able to direct a revolutionary war and wage it successfully.

*China's revolutionary war*, whether civil war or national war, is waged in the specific environment of China and so has its own specific circumstances and nature distinguishing it both from war in general and from revolutionary war in general. Therefore, besides the laws of war in general and of revolutionary war in general, it has specific laws of its own. Unless you understand them, you will not be able to win in China's revolutionary war.

Therefore, we must study the laws of war in general, we must also study the laws of revolutionary war, and, finally, we must study the laws of China's revolutionary war.

Some people hold a wrong view, which we refuted long ago. They say that it is enough merely to study the laws of war in general, or, to put it more concretely, that it is enough merely to follow the military manuals published by the reactionary Chinese government or the reactionary military academies in China. They do not see that these manuals give merely the laws of war in general and moreover are wholly copied from abroad, and that if we copy and apply them exactly without the slightest change in form or content, we shall be "cutting the feet to fit the shoes" and be defeated. Their argument is: why should knowledge which has been acquired at the cost of

the controversy about the military line, reaffirmed Comrade Mao Tse-tung's views and repudiated the erroneous line. In October 1935 the Central Committee moved to northern Shensi, and in December Comrade Mao Tse-tung made a report "On Tactics Against Japanese Imperialism" in which problems concerning the political line of the Party in the Second Revolutionary Civil War were systematically solved. He wrote this work a year later, in 1936, to explain the problems of strategy in China's revolutionary war in a systematic way.

blood be of no use? They fail to see that although we must cherish the earlier experience thus acquired, we must also cherish experience acquired at the cost of our own blood.

Others hold a second wrong view, which we also refuted long ago. They say that it is enough merely to study the experience of revolutionary war in Russia, or, to put it more concretely, that it is enough merely to follow the laws by which the civil war in the Soviet Union was directed and the military manuals published by Soviet military organizations. They do not see that these laws and manuals embody the specific characteristics of the civil war and the Red Army in the Soviet Union, and that if we copy and apply them without allowing any change, we shall also be "cutting the feet to fit the shoes" and be defeated. Their argument is: since our war, like the war in the Soviet Union, is a revolutionary war, and since the Soviet Union won victory, how then can there be any alternative but to follow the Soviet example? They fail to see that while we should set special store by the war experience of the Soviet Union, because it is the most recent experience of revolutionary war and was acquired under the guidance of Lenin and Stalin, we should likewise cherish the experience of China's revolutionary war, because there are many factors that are specific to the Chinese revolution and the Chinese Red Army.

Still others hold a third wrong view, which we likewise refuted long ago. They say that the most valuable experience is that of the Northern Expedition of 1926-27<sup>1</sup> and that we must learn from it, or, to put it more concretely, that we must imitate the Northern Expedition in driving straight ahead to seize the big cities. They fail to see that while the experience of the Northern Expedition should be studied, it should not be copied and applied mechanically, because the circumstances of our present war are different. We should take from the Northern Expedition only what still applies today, and work out something of our own in the light of present conditions.

Thus the different laws for directing different wars are determined by the different circumstances of those wars — differences in their time, place and nature. As regards the time factor, both war and the laws for directing wars develop; each historical stage has its special characteristics, and hence the laws of war in each historical stage have their special characteristics and cannot be mechanically applied in another stage. As for the nature of war, since revolutionary war and counter-revolutionary war both have their special characteristics, the laws governing them also have their own characteristics, and those



applying to one cannot be mechanically transferred to the other. As for the factor of place, since each country or nation, especially a large country or nation, has its own characteristics, the laws of war for each country or nation also have their own characteristics, and here, too, those applying to one cannot be mechanically transferred to the other. In studying the laws for directing wars that occur at different historical stages, that differ in nature and that are waged in different places and by different nations, we must fix our attention on the characteristics and development of each, and must oppose a mechanical approach to the problem of war.

Nor is this all. It signifies progress and development in a commander who is initially capable of commanding only a small formation, if he becomes capable of commanding a big one. There is also a difference between operating in one locality and in many. It likewise signifies progress and development in a commander who is initially capable of operating only in a locality he knows well, if he becomes capable of operating in many other localities. Owing to technical, tactical and strategic developments on the enemy side and on our own, the circumstances also differ from stage to stage within a given war. It signifies still more progress and development in a commander who is capable of exercising command in a war at its lower stages, if he becomes capable of exercising command in its higher stages. A commander who remains capable of commanding only a formation of a certain size, only in a certain locality and at a certain stage in the development of a war shows that he has made no progress and has not developed. There are some people who, contented with a single skill or a peep-hole view, never make any progress; they may play some role in the revolution at a given place and time, but not a significant one. We need directors of war who can play a significant role. All the laws for directing war develop as history develops and as war develops; nothing is changeless.

## 2. THE AIM OF WAR IS TO ELIMINATE WAR

War, this monster of mutual slaughter among men, will be finally eliminated by the progress of human society, and in the not too distant future too. But there is only one way to eliminate it and that is to oppose war with war, to oppose counter-revolutionary war with revolutionary war, to oppose national counter-revolutionary war with

strategic victory is determined by tactical successes alone is wrong because it overlooks the fact that victory or defeat in a war is first and foremost a question of whether the situation as a whole and its various stages are properly taken into account. If there are serious defects or mistakes in taking the situation as a whole and its various stages into account, the war is sure to be lost. "One careless move loses the whole game" refers to a move affecting the situation as a whole, a move decisive for the whole situation, and not to a move of a partial nature, a move which is not decisive for the whole situation. As in chess, so in war.

But the situation as a whole cannot be detached from its parts and become independent of them, for it is made up of all its parts. Sometimes certain parts may suffer destruction or defeat without seriously affecting the situation as a whole, because they are not decisive for it. Some defeats or failures in tactical operations or campaigns do not lead to deterioration in the war situation as a whole, because they are not of decisive significance. But the loss of most of the campaigns making up the war situation as a whole, or of one or two decisive campaigns, immediately changes the whole situation. Here, "most of the campaigns" or "one or two campaigns" are decisive. In the history of war, there are instances where defeat in a single battle nullified all the advantages of a series of victories, and there are also instances where victory in a single battle after many defeats opened up a new situation. In those instances the "series of victories" and the "many defeats" were partial in nature and not decisive for the situation as a whole, while "defeat in a single battle" or "victory in a single battle" played the decisive role. All this explains the importance of taking into account the situation as a whole. What is most important for the person in over-all command is to concentrate on attending to the war situation as a whole. The main point is that, according to the circumstances, he should concern himself with the problems of the grouping of his military units and formations, the relations between campaigns, the relations between various operational stages, and the relations between our activities as a whole and the enemy's activities as a whole — all these problems demand his greatest care and effort, and if he ignores them and immerses himself in secondary problems, he can hardly avoid setbacks.

The relationship between the whole and the part holds not only for the relationship between strategy and campaign but also for that between campaign and tactics. Examples are to be found in the

national revolutionary war, and to oppose counter-revolutionary class war with revolutionary class war. History knows only two kinds of war, just and unjust. We support just wars and oppose unjust wars. All counter-revolutionary wars are unjust, all revolutionary wars are just. Mankind's era of wars will be brought to an end by our own efforts, and beyond doubt the war we wage is part of the final battle. But also beyond doubt the war we face will be part of the biggest and most ruthless of all wars. The biggest and most ruthless of unjust counter-revolutionary wars is hanging over us, and the vast majority of mankind will be ravaged unless we raise the banner of a just war. The banner of mankind's just war is the banner of mankind's salvation. The banner of China's just war is the banner of China's salvation. A war waged by the great majority of mankind and of the Chinese people is beyond doubt a just war, a most lofty and glorious undertaking for the salvation of mankind and China, and a bridge to a new era in world history. When human society advances to the point where classes and states are eliminated, there will be no more wars, counter-revolutionary or revolutionary, unjust or just; that will be the era of perpetual peace for mankind. Our study of the laws of revolutionary war springs from the desire to eliminate all wars; herein lies the distinction between us Communists and all the exploiting classes.

## 3. STRATEGY IS THE STUDY OF THE LAWS OF A WAR SITUATION AS A WHOLE

Wherever there is war, there is a war situation as a whole. The war situation as a whole may cover the entire world, may cover an entire country, or may cover an independent guerrilla zone or an independent major operational front. Any war situation which acquires a comprehensive consideration of its various aspects and stages forms a war situation as a whole.

The task of the science of strategy is to study those laws for directing a war that govern a war situation as a whole. The task of the science of campaigns and the science of tactics<sup>2</sup> is to study those laws for directing a war that govern a partial situation.

Why is it necessary for the commander of a campaign or a tactical operation to understand the laws of strategy to some degree? Because an understanding of the whole facilitates the handling of the part, and because the part is subordinate to the whole. The view that

relation between the operations of a division and those of its regiments and battalions, and in the relation between the operations of a company and those of its platoons and squads. The commanding officer at any level should centre his attention on the most important and decisive problem or action in the whole situation he is handling, and not on other problems or actions.

What is important or decisive should be determined not by general or abstract considerations, but according to the concrete circumstances. In a military operation the direction and point of assault should be selected according to the actual situation of the enemy, the terrain, and the strength of our own forces at the moment. One must see to it that the soldiers do not overeat when supplies are abundant, and take care that they do not go hungry when supplies are short. In the White areas the mere leakage of a piece of information may cause defeat in a subsequent engagement, but in the Red areas such leakage is often not a very serious matter. It is necessary for the high commanders to participate personally in certain battles but not in others. For a military school, the most important question is the selection of a director and instructors and the adoption of a training programme. For a mass meeting, the main thing is mobilizing the masses to attend and putting forward suitable slogans. And so on and so forth. In a word, the principle is to centre our attention on the important links that have a bearing on the situation as a whole.

The only way to study the laws governing a war situation as a whole is to do some hard thinking. For what pertains to the situation as a whole is not visible to the eye, and we can understand it only by hard thinking; there is no other way. But because the situation as a whole is made up of parts, people with experience of the parts, experience of campaigns and tactics, can understand matters of a higher order provided they are willing to think hard. The problems of strategy include the following:

Giving proper consideration to the relation between the enemy and ourselves.

Giving proper consideration to the relation between various campaigns or between various operational stages.

Giving proper consideration to those parts which have a bearing on (are decisive for) the situation as a whole.

Giving proper consideration to the special features contained in the general situation.

Giving proper consideration to the relation between the front and the rear.

Giving proper consideration to the distinction as well as the connection between losses and replacements, between fighting and resting, between concentration and dispersion, between attack and defence, between advance and retreat, between concealment and exposure, between the main attack and supplementary attacks, between assault and containing action, between centralized command and decentralized command, between protracted war and war of quick decision, between positional war and mobile war, between our own forces and friendly forces, between one military arm and another, between higher and lower levels, between cadres and the rank and file, between old and new soldiers, between senior and junior cadres, between old and new cadres, between Red areas and White areas, between old Red areas and new ones, between the central district and the borders of a given base area, between the warm season and the cold season, between victory and defeat, between large and small troop formations, between the regular army and the guerrilla forces, between destroying the enemy and winning over the masses, between expanding the Red Army and consolidating it, between military work and political work, between past and present tasks, between present and future tasks, between tasks arising from one set of circumstances and tasks arising from another, between fixed fronts and fluid fronts, between civil war and national war, between one historical stage and another, etc., etc.

None of these problems of strategy is visible to the eye, and yet, if we think hard, we can comprehend, grasp and master them all, that is, we can raise the important problems concerning a war or concerning military operations to the higher plane of principle and solve them. Our task in studying the problems of strategy is to attain this goal.

#### 4. THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO BE GOOD AT LEARNING

Why have we organized the Red Army? For the purpose of defeating the enemy. Why do we study the laws of war? For the purpose of applying them in war.

To learn is no easy matter and to apply what one has learned is even harder. Many people appear impressive when discoursing on

attack hits a snag and makes no headway, then such correspondence is lacking. If the attack is properly timed, if the reserves are used neither too late nor too early, and if all the other dispositions and operations in the battle are such as to favour us and not the enemy, then the subjective direction throughout the battle completely corresponds with the objective situation. Such complete correspondence is extremely rare in a war or a battle, in which the belligerents are groups of live human beings bearing arms and keeping their secrets from each other; this is quite unlike handling inanimate objects or routine matters. But if the direction given by the commander corresponds in the main with the actual situation, that is, if the decisive elements in the direction correspond with the actual situation, then there is a basis for victory.

A commander's correct dispositions stem from his correct decisions, his correct decisions stem from his correct judgements, and his correct judgements stem from a thorough and necessary reconnaissance and from pondering on and piecing together the data of various kinds gathered through reconnaissance. He applies all possible and necessary methods of reconnaissance, and ponders on the information gathered about the enemy's situation, discarding the dross and selecting the essential, eliminating the false and retaining the true, proceeding from the one to the other and from the outside to the inside; then, he takes the conditions on his own side into account, and makes a study of both sides and their interrelations, thereby forming his judgements, making up his mind and working out his plans. Such is the complete process of knowing a situation which a military man goes through before he formulates a strategic plan, a campaign plan or a battle plan. But instead of doing this, a careless military man bases his military plans on his own wishful thinking, and hence his plans are fanciful and do not correspond with reality. A rash military man relying solely upon enthusiasm is bound to be tricked by the enemy, or lured on by some superficial or partial aspect of the enemy's situation, or swayed by irresponsible suggestions from subordinates that are not based on real knowledge or deep insight, and so he runs his head against a brick wall, because he does not know or does not want to know that every military plan must be based on the necessary reconnaissance and on careful consideration of the enemy's situation, his own situation, and their interrelations.

The process of knowing a situation goes on not only before the formulation of a military plan but also after. In carrying out the plan

military science in classrooms or in books, but when it comes to actual fighting, some win battles and others lose them. Both the history of war and our own experience in war have proved this point.

Where then does the crux lie?

In real life, we cannot ask for "ever-victorious generals", who are few and far between in history. What we can ask for is generals who are brave and sagacious and who normally win their battles in the course of a war, generals who combine wisdom with courage. To become both wise and courageous one must acquire a method, a method to be employed in learning as well as in applying what has been learned.

What method? The method is to familiarize ourselves with all aspects of the enemy situation and our own, to discover the laws governing the actions of both sides and to make use of these laws in our own operations.

The military manuals issued in many countries point both to the necessity of a "flexible application of principles according to circumstances" and to the measures to be taken in case of defeat. They point to the former in order to warn a commander against subjectively committing mistakes through too rigid an application of principles, and to the latter in order to enable him to cope with the situation after he has committed subjective mistakes or after unexpected and irresistible changes have occurred in the objective circumstances.

Why are subjective mistakes made? Because the way the forces in a war or a battle are disposed or directed does not fit the conditions of the given time and place, because subjective direction does not correspond to, or is at variance with, the objective conditions. In other words, because the contradiction between the subjective and the objective has not been resolved. People can hardly avoid such situations whatever they are doing, but some people prove themselves more competent than others. As in any job we demand a comparatively high degree of competence, so in war we demand more victories or, conversely, fewer defeats. Here the crux is to bring the subjective and the objective into proper correspondence with each other.

Take an example in tactics. If the point chosen for attack is on one of the enemy's flanks and it is located precisely where his weak spot happens to be, and in consequence the assault succeeds, then the subjective corresponds with the objective, that is, the commander's reconnaissance, judgement and decision have corresponded with the enemy's actual situation and dispositions. If the point chosen for attack is on another flank or in the centre and the

from the moment it is put into effect to the end of the operation, there is another process of knowing the situation, namely, the process of practice. In the course of this process, it is necessary to examine anew whether the plan worked out in the preceding process corresponds with reality. If it does not correspond with reality, or if it does not fully do so, then in the light of our new knowledge, it becomes necessary to form new judgements, make new decisions and change the original plan so as to meet the new situation. The plan is partially changed in almost every operation, and sometimes it is even changed completely. A rash man who does not understand the need for such alterations or is unwilling to make them, but who acts blindly, will inevitably run his head against a brick wall.

The above applies to a strategic action, a campaign or a battle. Provided he is modest and willing to learn, an experienced military man will be able to familiarize himself with the character of his own forces (commanders, men, arms, supplies, etc., and their sum total), with the character of the enemy forces (likewise, commanders, men, arms, supplies, etc., and their sum total) and with all other conditions related to the war, such as politics, economics, geography and weather; such a military man will have a better grasp in directing a war or an operation and will be more likely to win victories. He will achieve this because, over a long period of time, he has come to know the situation on the enemy side and his own, discovered the laws of action, and resolved the contradictions between the subjective and the objective. This process of knowing is extremely important; without such a long period of experience, it would be difficult to understand and grasp the laws of an entire war. Neither a beginner nor a person who fights only on paper can become a really able high-ranking commander; only one who has learned through actual fighting in war can do so.

All military laws and military theories which are in the nature of principles are the experience of past wars summed up by people in former days or in our own times. We should seriously study these lessons, paid for in blood, which are a heritage of past wars. That is one point. But there is another. We should put these conclusions to the test of our own experience, assimilating what is useful, rejecting what is useless, and adding what is specifically our own. The latter is very important, for otherwise we cannot direct a war.

Reading is learning, but applying is also learning and the more important kind of learning at that. Our chief method is to learn

warfare through warfare. A person who has had no opportunity to go to school can also learn warfare — he can learn through fighting in war. A revolutionary war is a mass undertaking; it is often not a matter of first learning and then doing, but of doing and then learning, for doing is itself learning. There is a gap between the ordinary civilian and the soldier, but it is no Great Wall, and it can be quickly closed, and the way to close it is to take part in revolution, in war. By saying that it is not easy to learn and to apply, we mean that it is hard to learn thoroughly and to apply skilfully. By saying that civilians can very quickly become soldiers, we mean that it is not difficult to cross the threshold. To put the two statements together, we may cite the Chinese adage, "Nothing in the world is difficult for one who sets his mind to it." To cross the threshold is not difficult, and mastery, too, is possible provided one sets one's mind to the task and is good at learning.

The laws of war, like the laws governing all other things, are reflections in our minds of objective realities; everything outside of the mind is objective reality. Consequently what has to be learned and known includes the state of affairs on the enemy side and that on our side, both of which should be regarded as the object of study, while the mind (the capacity to think) alone is the subject performing the study. Some people are good at knowing themselves and poor at knowing their enemy, and some are the other way round; neither can solve the problem of learning and applying the laws of war. There is a saying in the book of Sun Wu Tzu, the great military scientist of ancient China, "Know the enemy and know yourself, and you can fight a hundred battles with no danger of defeat,"<sup>2</sup> which refers both to the stage of learning and to the stage of application, both to knowing the laws of the development of objective reality and to deciding on our own action in accordance with these laws in order to overcome the enemy facing us. We should not take this saying lightly.

War is the highest form of struggle between nations, states, classes, or political groups, and all the laws of war are applied by warring nations, states, classes, or political groups for the purpose of achieving victory for themselves. Unquestionably, victory or defeat in war is determined mainly by the military, political, economic and natural conditions on both sides. But not by these alone. It is also determined by each side's subjective ability in directing the war. In his endeavour to win a war, a military man cannot overstep the limitations imposed

bourgeoisie wish to take an active part in the revolutionary war and to carry it to complete victory. They are the main forces in the revolutionary war, but, being small-scale producers, they are limited in their political outlook (and some of the unemployed masses have anarchist views), so that they are unable to give correct leadership in the war. Therefore, in an era when the proletariat has already appeared on the political stage, the responsibility for leading China's revolutionary war inevitably falls on the shoulders of the Chinese Communist Party. In this era, any revolutionary war will definitely end in defeat if it lacks, or runs counter to, the leadership of the proletariat and the Communist Party. Of all the social strata and political groupings in semi-colonial China, the proletariat and the Communist Party are the ones most free from narrow-mindedness and selfishness, are politically the most far-sighted, the best organized and the readiest to learn with an open mind from the experience of the vanguard class, the proletariat, and its political party throughout the world and to make use of this experience in their own cause. Hence only the proletariat and the Communist Party can lead the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie, can overcome the narrow-mindedness of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie, the destructiveness of the unemployed masses, and also (provided the Communist Party does not err in its policy) the vacillation and lack of thoroughness of the bourgeoisie — and can lead the revolution and the war on to the road of victory.

The revolutionary war of 1924-27 was waged, basically speaking, in conditions in which the international proletariat and the Chinese proletariat and their parties exerted political influence on the Chinese national bourgeoisie and its parties and entered into political co-operation with them. However, this revolutionary war failed at the critical juncture, first of all because the big bourgeoisie turned traitor, and at the same time because the opportunists within the revolutionary ranks voluntarily surrendered the leadership of the revolution.

The Agrarian Revolutionary War, lasting from 1927 to the present, has been waged under new conditions. The enemy in this war is not imperialism alone but also the alliance of the big bourgeoisie and the big landlords. And the national bourgeoisie has become a tail to the big bourgeoisie. This revolutionary war is led by the Communist Party alone, which has established absolute leadership over it. This absolute leadership is the most important condition enabling the revolutionary war to be carried through firmly to the end. Without it, it is incon-

by the material conditions; within these limitations, however, he can and must strive for victory. The stage of action for a military man is built upon objective material conditions, but on that stage he can direct the performance of many a drama, full of sound and colour, power and grandeur. Therefore, given the objective material foundations, i.e., the military, political, economic and natural conditions, our Red Army commanders must display their prowess and marshal all their forces to crush the national and class enemies and to transform this evil world. Here is where our subjective ability in directing war can and must be exercised. We do not permit any of our Red Army commanders to become a blundering hot-head; we decidedly want every Red Army commander to become a hero who is both brave and sagacious, who possesses both all-conquering courage and the ability to remain master of the situation throughout the changes and vicissitudes of the entire war. Swimming in the ocean of war, he not only must not flounder but must make sure of reaching the opposite shore with measured strokes. The laws for directing war constitute the art of swimming in the ocean of war.

So much for our methods.

## CHAPTER II

### THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY AND CHINA'S REVOLUTIONARY WAR

China's revolutionary war, which began in 1924, has passed through two stages, the first from 1924 to 1927, and the second from 1927 to 1936; the stage of national revolutionary war against Japan will now commence. In all three of its stages this revolutionary war has been, is and will be fought under the leadership of the Chinese proletariat and its party, the Chinese Communist Party. The chief enemies in China's revolutionary war are imperialism and the feudal forces. Although the Chinese bourgeoisie may take part in the revolutionary war at certain historical junctures, yet its selfishness and lack of political and economic independence render it both unwilling and unable to lead China's revolutionary war on to the road of complete victory. The masses of China's peasantry and urban petty

bourgeoisie could have been carried on with such perseverance.

The Chinese Communist Party has led China's revolutionary war courageously and resolutely, and for fifteen long years<sup>3</sup> has demonstrated to the whole nation that it is the people's friend, fighting at all times in the forefront of the revolutionary war in defence of the people's interests and for their freedom and liberation.

By its arduous struggles and by the martyrdom of hundreds of thousands of its heroic members and tens of thousands of its heroic cadres, the Communist Party of China has played a great educative role among hundreds of millions of people throughout the country. The Party's great historic achievements in its revolutionary struggles have provided the prerequisite for the survival and salvation of China at this critical juncture when she is being invaded by a national enemy; and this prerequisite is the existence of a political leadership enjoying the confidence of the vast majority of the people and chosen by them after long years of testing. Today, the people accept what the Communist Party says more readily than what any other political party says. Were it not for the arduous struggles of the Chinese Communist Party in the last fifteen years, it would be impossible to save China in the face of the new menace of subjugation.

Besides the errors of the Right opportunism of Chen Tu-hsiu<sup>4</sup> and the "Left" opportunism of Li Li-san,<sup>5</sup> the Chinese Communist Party has committed two other errors in the course of the revolutionary war. The first error was the "Left" opportunism of 1931-34,<sup>6</sup> which resulted in serious losses in the Agrarian Revolutionary War so that, instead of our defeating the enemy's fifth campaign of "encirclement and suppression", we lost our base areas and the Red Army was weakened. This error was corrected at the enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee at Tsunyi in January 1935. The second was the Right opportunism of Chang Kuo-tao in 1935-36<sup>7</sup> which grew to such an extent that it undermined the discipline of the Party and of the Red Army and caused serious losses to part of the Red Army's main forces. But this error was also finally rectified, thanks to the correct leadership of the Central Committee and the political consciousness of Party members, commanders and fighters in the Red Army. Of course all these errors were harmful to our Party, to our revolution and the war, but in the end we overcame them, and in doing so our Party and our Red Army have steeled themselves and become still stronger.

The Chinese Communist Party has led and continues to lead the stirring, magnificent and victorious revolutionary war. This war is not only the banner of China's liberation, but has international revolutionary significance as well. The eyes of the revolutionary people the world over are upon us. In the new stage, the stage of the anti-Japanese national revolutionary war, we shall lead the Chinese revolution to its completion and exert a profound influence on the revolution in the East and in the whole world. Our revolutionary war has proved that we need a correct Marxist military line as well as a correct Marxist political line. Fifteen years of revolution and war have hammered out such political and military lines. We believe that from now on, in the new stage of the war, these lines will be further developed, filled out and enriched in new circumstances, so that we can attain our aim of defeating the national enemy. History tells us that correct political and military lines do not emerge and develop spontaneously and tranquilly, but only in the course of struggle. These lines must combat "Left" opportunism on the one hand and Right opportunism on the other. Without combating and thoroughly overcoming these harmful tendencies which damage the revolution and the revolutionary war, it would be impossible to establish a correct line and win victory in this war. It is for this reason that I often refer to erroneous views in this pamphlet.

### CHAPTER III

## CHARACTERISTICS OF CHINA'S REVOLUTIONARY WAR

### 1. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT

People who do not admit, do not know, or do not want to know that China's revolutionary war has its own characteristics have equated the war waged by the Red Army against the Kuomintang forces with war in general or with the civil war in the Soviet Union. The experience of the civil war in the Soviet Union directed by Lenin and Stalin has a world-wide significance. All Communist Parties, including the Chinese Communist Party, regard this experience and its theoretical

concrete conditions.<sup>11</sup> That was precisely the point these comrades of ours forgot.

Hence one can see that, without an understanding of the characteristics of China's revolutionary war, it is impossible to direct it and lead it to victory.

### 2. WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF CHINA'S REVOLUTIONARY WAR?

What then are the characteristics of China's revolutionary war?

I think there are four principal ones.

The first is that China is a vast, semi-colonial country which is unevenly developed politically and economically and which has gone through the revolution of 1924-27.

This characteristic indicates that it is possible for China's revolutionary war to develop and attain victory. We already pointed this out (at the First Party Congress of the Hunan-Kiangai Border Area<sup>12</sup>) when in late 1927 and early 1928, soon after guerrilla warfare was started in China, some comrades in the Chinghsang Mountains in the Hunan-Kiangai border area raised the question, "How long can we keep the Red Flag flying?" For this was a most fundamental question. Without answering this question of whether China's revolutionary base areas and the Chinese Red Army could survive and develop, we could not have advanced a single step. The Sixth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1928 again gave the answer to the question. Since then the Chinese revolutionary movement has had a correct theoretical basis.

Let us now analyze this characteristic.

China's political and economic development is uneven — a weak capitalist economy coexists with a preponderant semi-feudal economy; a few modern industrial and commercial cities coexist with a vast stagnant countryside; several million industrial workers coexist with several hundred millions of peasants and handicraftsmen labouring under the old system; big warlords controlling the central government coexist with small warlords controlling the provinces; two kinds of reactionary armies, the so-called Central Army under Chiang Kai-shek and "miscellaneous troops" under the warlords in the provinces, exist side by side; a few railways, steamship lines and motor roads exist

summing-up by Lenin and Stalin as their guide. But this does not mean that we should apply it mechanically to our own conditions. In many of its aspects China's revolutionary war has characteristics distinguishing it from the civil war in the Soviet Union. Of course it is wrong to take no account of these characteristics or deny their existence. This point has been fully borne out in our ten years of war.

Our enemy has made similar mistakes. He did not recognize that fighting against the Red Army required a different strategy and different tactics from those used in fighting other forces. Relying on his superiority in various respects, he took us lightly and stuck to his old methods of warfare. This was the case both before and during his fourth "encirclement and suppression" campaign in 1931, with the result that he suffered a series of defeats. In the Kuomintang army a new approach to the problem was suggested first by the reactionary Kuomintang general Liu Wei-yuan and then by Tai Yueh. Their idea was eventually accepted by Chiang Kai-shek. That was how Chiang Kai-shek's Officers' Training Corps at Lushan<sup>13</sup> came into being and how the new reactionary military principles<sup>14</sup> applied in the fifth campaign of "encirclement and suppression" were evolved.

But when the enemy changed his military principles to suit operations against the Red Army, there appeared in our ranks a group of people who reverted to the "old ways". They urged a return to ways suited to the general run of things, refused to go into the specific circumstances of each case, rejected the experience gained in the Red Army's history of sanguinary battles, belittled the strength of imperialism and the Kuomintang as well as that of the Kuomintang army, and turned a blind eye to the new reactionary principles adopted by the enemy. As a result, all the revolutionary bases except the Shensi-Kansu border area were lost, the Red Army was reduced from 300,000 to a few tens of thousands, the membership of the Chinese Communist Party fell from 300,000 to a few tens of thousands, and the Party organizations in the Kuomintang areas were almost all destroyed. In short, we paid a severe penalty, which was historic in its significance. This group of people called themselves Marxist-Leninists, but actually they had not learned an iota of Marxism-Leninism. Lenin said that the most essential thing in Marxism, the living soul of Marxism, is the concrete analysis of

side by side with a vast number of wheelbarrow paths and foot-paths many of which are difficult to negotiate even on foot.

China is a semi-colonial country — disunity among the imperialist powers makes for disunity among the ruling groups in China. There is a difference between a semi-colonial country controlled by several countries and a colony controlled by a single country.

China is a vast country — "When it is dark in the east, it is light in the west; when things are dark in the south, there is still light in the north." Hence one need not worry about lack of room for manoeuvre.

China has gone through a great revolution — this has provided the seeds from which the Red Army has grown, provided the leader of the Red Army, namely, the Chinese Communist Party, and provided the masses with experience of participation in a revolution.

We say, therefore, that the first characteristic of China's revolutionary war is that it is waged in a vast semi-colonial country which is unevenly developed politically and economically and which has gone through a revolution. This characteristic basically determines our military strategy and tactics as well as our political strategy and tactics.

The second characteristic is that our enemy is big and powerful.

How do matters stand with the Kuomintang, the enemy of the Red Army? It is a party that has seized political power and has more or less stabilized its power. It has gained the support of the world's principal imperialist states. It has remodelled its army which has thus become different from any other army in Chinese history and on the whole similar to the armies of modern states; this army is much better supplied with weapons and *matériel* than the Red Army, and is larger than any army in Chinese history, or for that matter than the standing army of any other country. There is a world of difference between the Kuomintang army and the Red Army. The Kuomintang controls the key positions or lifelines in the politics, economy, communications and culture of China; its political power is nation-wide.

The Chinese Red Army is thus confronted with a big and powerful enemy. This is the second characteristic of China's revolutionary war. It necessarily makes the military operations of the Red Army different in many ways from those of wars in general and from those of the civil war in the Soviet Union or of the Northern Expedition.

The third characteristic is that the Red Army is small and weak. The Chinese Red Army, starting as guerrilla units, came into being after the defeat of the First Great Revolution. This occurred in a period of relative political and economic stability in the reactionary capitalist countries of the world as well as in a period of reaction in China.

Our political power exists in scattered and isolated mountainous or remote regions and receives no outside help whatsoever. Economic and cultural conditions in the revolutionary base areas are backward compared with those in the Kuomintang areas. The revolutionary base areas embrace only rural districts and small towns. These areas were extremely small in the beginning and have not grown much larger since. Moreover, they are fluid and not stationary, and the Red Army has no really consolidated bases.

The Red Army is numerically small, its arms are poor, and it has great difficulty in obtaining supplies such as food, bedding and clothing.

This characteristic presents a sharp contrast to the preceding one. From this sharp contrast have arisen the strategy and tactics of the Red Army.

The fourth characteristic is Communist Party leadership and the agrarian revolution.

This characteristic is the inevitable consequence of the first one. It has given rise to two features. On the one hand, despite the fact that China's revolutionary war is taking place in a period of reaction in China and throughout the capitalist world, victory is possible because it is under the leadership of the Communist Party and has the support of the peasantry. Thanks to this support, our base areas, small as they are, are politically very powerful and stand firmly opposed to the enormous Kuomintang regime, while militarily they place great difficulties in the way of the Kuomintang attacks. Small as it is, the Red Army has great fighting capacity, because its members, led by the Communist Party, are born of the agrarian revolution and are fighting for their own interests, and because its commanders and fighters are politically united.

The Kuomintang, on the other hand, presents a sharp contrast. It opposes the agrarian revolution and therefore has no support from the peasantry. Though it has a large army, the Kuomintang cannot make its soldiers and the many lower-ranking officers, who were originally small producers, risk their lives willingly for it. Its officers and men are politically divided, which reduces its fighting capacity.

Oppose the principle of maintaining a large rear service organization, and uphold the principle of small ones.

Oppose an absolutely centralized command, and favour a relatively centralized command.

Oppose the purely military viewpoint and the ways of roving rebels,<sup>14</sup> and recognize that the Red Army is a propagandist and organizer of the Chinese revolution.

Oppose bandit ways, and uphold strict political discipline.

Oppose warlord ways, and favour both democracy within proper limits and an authoritative discipline in the army.

Oppose an incorrect, sectarian policy on cadres, and uphold the correct policy on cadres.

Oppose the policy of isolation, and affirm the policy of winning over all possible allies.

Oppose keeping the Red Army at its old stage, and strive to develop it to a new stage.

Our present discussion of the problems of strategy is intended to elucidate these matters carefully in the light of the historical experience gained in China's ten years of bloody revolutionary war.

#### CHAPTER IV

### "ENCIRCLEMENT AND SUPPRESSION" AND COUNTER-CAMPAIGNS AGAINST IT — THE MAIN PATTERN OF CHINA'S CIVIL WAR

In the ten years since our guerrilla war began, every independent Red guerrilla unit, every Red Army unit or every revolutionary base area has been regularly subjected by the enemy to "encirclement and suppression". The enemy looks upon the Red Army as a monster and seeks to capture it the moment it shows itself. He is for ever pursuing the Red Army and for ever trying to encircle it. For ten years this pattern of warfare has not changed, and unless the civil war gives place to a national war, the pattern will remain the same till the day the enemy becomes the weaker contestant and the Red Army the stronger.

The Red Army's operations take the form of counter-campaigns against "encirclement and suppression". For us victory means chiefly victory in combating "encirclement and suppression", that is, strategic

### 3. OUR STRATEGY AND TACTICS ENSUING FROM THESE CHARACTERISTICS

Thus the four principal characteristics of China's revolutionary war are: a vast semi-colonial country which is unevenly developed politically and economically and which has gone through a great revolution; a big and powerful enemy; a small and weak Red Army; and the agrarian revolution. These characteristics determine the line for guiding China's revolutionary war as well as many of its strategic and tactical principles. It follows from the first and fourth characteristics that it is possible for the Chinese Red Army to grow and defeat its enemy. It follows from the second and third characteristics that it is impossible for the Chinese Red Army to grow very rapidly or defeat its enemy quickly; in other words, the war will be protracted and may even be lost if it is mishandled.

These are the two aspects of China's revolutionary war. They exist simultaneously, that is, there are favourable factors and there are difficulties. This is the fundamental law of China's revolutionary war, from which many other laws ensue. The history of our ten years of war has proved the validity of this law. He who has eyes but fails to see this fundamental law cannot direct China's revolutionary war, cannot lead the Red Army to victories.

It is clear that we must correctly settle all the following matters of principle:

Determine our strategic orientation correctly, oppose adventurism when on the offensive, oppose conservatism when on the defensive, and oppose flightism when shifting from one place to another.

Oppose guerrilla-ism in the Red Army, while recognizing the guerrilla character of its operations.

Oppose protracted campaigns and a strategy of quick decision, and uphold the strategy of protracted war and campaigns of quick decision.

Oppose fixed battle lines and positional warfare, and favour fluid battle lines and mobile warfare.

Oppose fighting merely to rout the enemy, and uphold fighting to annihilate the enemy.

Oppose the strategy of striking with two "fists" in two directions at the same time, and uphold the strategy of striking with one "fist" in one direction at one time.<sup>15</sup>

victory and victories in campaigns. The fight against each "encirclement and suppression" campaign constitutes a counter-campaign, which usually comprises several or even scores of battles, big and small. Until an "encirclement and suppression" campaign has been basically smashed, one cannot speak of strategic victory or of victory in the counter-campaign as a whole, even though many battles may have been won. The history of the Red Army's decade of war is a history of counter-campaigns against "encirclement and suppression".

In the enemy's "encirclement and suppression" campaigns and the Red Army's counter-campaigns against them, the two forms of fighting, offensive and defensive, are both employed, and here there is no difference from any other war, ancient or modern, in China or elsewhere.

The special characteristic of China's civil war, however, is the repeated alternation of the two forms over a long period of time. In each "encirclement and suppression" campaign, the enemy employs the offensive against the Red Army's defensive, and the Red Army employs the defensive against his offensive; this is the first stage of a counter-campaign against "encirclement and suppression". Then the enemy employs the defensive against the Red Army's offensive, and the Red Army employs the offensive against his defensive; this is the second stage of the counter-campaign. Every "encirclement and suppression" campaign has these two stages, and they alternate over a long period.

By repeated alternation over a long period we mean the repetition of this pattern of warfare and these forms of fighting. This is a fact obvious to everybody. An "encirclement and suppression" campaign and a counter-campaign against it — such is the repeated pattern of the war. In each campaign the alternation in the forms of fighting consists of the first stage in which the enemy employs the offensive against our defensive and we meet his offensive with our defensive, and of the second stage in which the enemy employs the defensive against our offensive and we meet his defensive with our offensive.

As for the content of a campaign or of a battle, it does not consist of mere repetition but is different each time. This, too, is a fact and obvious to everybody. In this connection it has become a rule that with each campaign and each counter-campaign, the scale becomes larger, the situation more complicated and the fighting more intense.

But this does not mean that there are no ups and downs. After the enemy's fifth "encirclement and suppression" campaign, the Red Army was greatly weakened, and all the base areas in the south were lost:

Also, it was wrong to say, "In the fifth 'encirclement and suppression' campaign which is being carried on by means of blockhouse warfare, it is impossible for us to operate with concentrated forces, and all we can do is to divide them up for defence and for short swift thrusts." The enemy's tactics of pushing forward 3, 5, 8, or 10 li at a time and building blockhouses at each halt were entirely the result of the Red Army's practice of fighting defensive actions at every successive point. The situation would certainly have been different if our army had abandoned the tactics of point-by-point defence on interior lines and, when possible and necessary, had turned and driven into the enemy's interior lines. The principle of concentration of forces is precisely the means for defeating the enemy's blockhouse warfare.

The kind of concentration of forces we advocate does not mean the abandonment of people's guerrilla warfare. To abandon small-scale guerrilla warfare and "concentrate every single rifle in the Red Army", as advocated by the Li Li-san line, has long since been proved wrong. Considering the revolutionary war as a whole, the operations of the people's guerrillas and those of the main forces of the Red Army complement each other like a man's right arm and left arm, and if we had only the main forces of the Red Army without the people's guerrillas, we would be like a warrior with only one arm. In concrete terms, and especially with regard to military operations, when we talk of the people in the base area as a factor, we mean that we have an armed people. That is the main reason why the enemy is afraid to approach our base area.

It is also necessary to employ Red Army detachments for operations in secondary directions; not all the forces of the Red Army should be concentrated. The kind of concentration we advocate is based on the principle of guaranteeing absolute or relative superiority on the battlefield. To cope with a strong enemy or to fight on a battlefield of vital importance, we must have an absolutely superior force; for instance, a force of 40,000 was concentrated to fight the 9,000 men under Chang Hui-tan on December 30, 1930, in the first battle of our first counter-campaign. To cope with a weaker enemy or to fight on a battlefield of no great importance, a relatively superior force is sufficient; for instance, only some 10,000 Red Army men were employed to fight Liu Ho-ting's division of 7,000 men in Chienning on May 29, 1931, in the last battle of our second counter-campaign.

us, positional warfare is generally inapplicable in attack as well as in defence.

One of the outstanding characteristics of the Red Army's operations, which follows from the fact that the enemy is powerful while the Red Army is deficient in technical equipment, is the absence of fixed battle lines.

The Red Army's battle lines are determined by the direction in which it is operating. As its operational direction often shifts, its battle lines are fluid. Though the main direction does not change in a given period of time, within its ambit the secondary directions may shift at any moment; when we find ourselves checked in one direction, we must turn to another. If, after a time, we also find ourselves checked in the main direction, then we must change it too.

In a revolutionary civil war, there cannot be fixed battle lines, which was also the case in the Soviet Union. The difference between the Soviet Army and ours is that its battle lines were not so fluid as ours. There cannot be absolutely fixed battle lines in any war, because the vicissitudes of victory and defeat, advance and retreat, preclude it. But relatively fixed battle lines are often to be found in the general run of wars. Exceptions occur only where an army faces a much stronger enemy, as is the case with the Chinese Red Army in its present stage.

Fluidity of battle lines leads to fluidity in the size of our base areas. Our base areas are constantly expanding and contracting, and often as one base area falls another rises. This fluidity of territory is entirely a result of the fluidity of the war.

Fluidity in the war and in our territory produces fluidity in all fields of construction in our base areas. Construction plans covering several years are out of the question. Frequent changes of plan are all in the day's work.

It is to our advantage to recognize this characteristic. We must base our planning on it and must not have illusions about a war of advance without any retreats, take alarm at any temporary fluidity of our territory or of the rear areas of our army, or endeavour to draw up detailed long-term plans. We must adapt our thinking and our work to the circumstances, be ready to sit down as well as to march on, and always have our marching rations handy. It is only by exerting ourselves in today's fluid way of life that tomorrow we can secure relative stability, and eventually full stability.

That is not to say we must have numerical superiority on every occasion. In certain circumstances, we may go into battle with a relatively or absolutely inferior force. Take the case of going into battle with a relatively inferior force when we have only a rather small Red Army force in a certain area (it is not that we have more troops and have not concentrated them). Then, in order to smash the attack of the stronger enemy in conditions where popular support, terrain and weather are greatly in our favour, it is of course necessary to concentrate the main part of our Red Army force for a surprise attack on a segment of one flank of the enemy while containing his centre and his other flank with guerrillas or small detachments, and in this way victory can be won. In our surprise attack on this segment of the enemy flank, the principle of using a superior force against an inferior force, of using the many to defeat the few, still applies. The same principle also applies when we go into battle with an absolutely inferior force, for example, when a guerrilla force makes a surprise attack on a large White army force, but is attacking only a small part of it.

As for the argument that the concentration of a large force for action in a single battle area is subject to the limitations of terrain, roads, supplies and billeting facilities, it should be evaluated according to the circumstances. There is a difference in the degree to which these limitations affect the Red Army and the White army, as the Red Army can stand greater hardships than the White army.

We use the few to defeat the many — this we say to the rulers of China as a whole. We use the many to defeat the few — this we say to each separate enemy force on the battlefield. That is no longer a secret, and in general the enemy is by now well acquainted with our way. However, he can neither prevent our victories nor avoid his own losses, because he does not know when and where we shall act. This we keep secret. The Red Army generally operates by surprise attacks.

## 7. MOBILE WARFARE

Mobile warfare or positional warfare? Our answer is mobile warfare. So long as we lack a large army or reserves of ammunition, and so long as there is only a single Red Army force to do the fighting in each base area, positional warfare is generally useless to us. For

The exponents of the strategy of "regular warfare" which dominated our fifth counter-campaign denied this fluidity and opposed what they called "guerrilla-ism". Those comrades who opposed fluidity managed affairs as though they were the rulers of a big state, and the result was an extraordinary and immense fluidity — the 25,000-li Long March.

Our workers' and peasants' democratic republic is a state, but today it is not yet a full-fledged one. Today we are still in the period of strategic defensive in the civil war, the form of our political power is still far from that of a full-fledged state, our army is still much inferior to the enemy both in numbers and technical equipment, our territory is still very small, and our enemy is constantly out to destroy us and will never rest content till he has done so. In defining our policy on the basis of these facts, we should not repudiate guerrilla-ism in general terms but should honestly admit the guerrilla character of the Red Army. It is no use being ashamed of this. On the contrary, this guerrilla character is precisely our distinguishing feature, our strong point, and our means of defeating the enemy. We should be prepared to discard it, but we cannot do so today. In the future this guerrilla character will definitely become something to be ashamed of and to be discarded, but today it is invaluable and we must stick to it.

"Fight when you can win, move away when you can't win" — this is the popular way of describing our mobile warfare today. There is no military expert anywhere in the world who approves only of fighting and never of moving, though few people do as much moving as we do. We generally spend more time in moving than in fighting and would be doing well if we fought an average of one sizable battle a month. All our "moving" is for the purpose of "fighting", and all our strategy and tactics are built on "fighting". Nevertheless, there are times when it is inadvisable for us to fight. In the first place, it is inadvisable to fight when the force confronting us is too large; second, it is sometimes inadvisable to fight when the force confronting us, though not so large, is very close to other enemy forces; third, it is generally inadvisable to fight an enemy force that is not isolated and is strongly entrenched; fourth, it is inadvisable to continue an engagement in which there is no prospect of victory. In any one of these situations we are prepared to move away. Such moving away is both permissible and necessary. For our recognition of the necessity



of moving away is based on our recognition of the necessity of fighting. Herein lies the fundamental characteristic of the Red Army's mobile warfare.

Mobile warfare is primary, but we do not reject positional warfare where it is possible and necessary. It should be admitted that positional warfare should be employed for the tenacious defence of particular key points in a containing action during the strategic defensive, and when, during the strategic offensive, we encounter an enemy force that is isolated and cut off from help. We have had considerable experience in defeating the enemy by such positional warfare; we have cracked open many enemy cities, blockhouses and forts and broken through fairly well-fortified enemy field positions. In future we shall increase our efforts and remedy our inadequacies in this respect. We should by all means advocate positional attack or defence when circumstances require and permit it. At the present time, what we are opposed to is the general use of positional warfare or putting it on an equal footing with mobile warfare; that is impermissible.

During the ten years' civil war, have there been no changes whatsoever in the guerrilla character of the Red Army, its lack of fixed battle lines, the fluidity of its base areas, or the fluidity of construction work in its base areas? Yes, there have been changes. The period from the days in the Ching Kang Mountains to our first counter-campaign against "encirclement and suppression" in Kiangsi was the first stage, the stage in which the guerrilla character and fluidity were very pronounced, the Red Army being in its infancy and the base areas still being guerrilla zones. In the second stage, comprising the period from the first to the third counter-campaign, both the guerrilla character and the fluidity were considerably reduced, the First Front Army of the Red Army having been formed and base areas with a population of several millions established. In the third stage, which comprised the period from the end of the third to the fifth counter-campaign, the guerrilla character and the fluidity were further reduced, and a central government and a revolutionary military commission had already been set up. The fourth stage was the Long March. The mistaken rejection of guerrilla warfare and fluidity on a small scale had led to guerrilla warfare and fluidity on a great scale. Now we are in the fifth stage. Because of our failure to smash the fifth "encirclement and suppression" campaign and because of this great fluidity, the Red Army and the base areas have been greatly reduced,

We are now on the eve of a new stage with respect to the Red Army's technical equipment and organization. We must be prepared to go over to this new stage. Not to prepare ourselves would be wrong and harmful to our future warfare. In the future, when the technical and organizational conditions in the Red Army have changed and the building of the Red Army has entered a new stage, its operational directions and battle lines will become more stable; there will be more positional warfare; the fluidity of the war, of our territory and of our construction work will be greatly reduced and finally disappear; and we will no longer be handicapped by present limitations, such as the enemy's superiority and his strongly entrenched positions.

At present we oppose the wrong measures of the period of the domination of "Left" opportunism on the one hand and on the other the revival of many of the irregular features which the Red Army had in its infancy but which are now unnecessary. But we should be resolute in restoring the many valuable principles of army building and of strategy and tactics by which the Red Army has consistently won its victories. We must sum up all that is good from the past in a systematic, more highly developed and richer military line, in order to win victories over the enemy today and prepare to go over to the new stage in the future.

The waging of mobile warfare involves many problems, such as reconnaissance, judgement, decision, combat disposition, command, concealment, concentration, advance, deployment, attack, pursuit, surprise attack, positional attack, positional defence, encounter action, retreat, night fighting, special operations, evading the strong and attacking the weak, besieging the enemy in order to strike at his reinforcements, feint attack, defence against aircraft, operating amongst several enemy forces, bypassing operations, consecutive operations, operating without a rear, the need for rest and building up energy. These problems exhibited many specific features in the history of the Red Army, features which should be methodically dealt with and summed up in the science of campaigns, and I shall not go into them here.

## B. WAR OF QUICK DECISION

A strategically protracted war and campaigns or battles of quick decision are two aspects of the same thing, two principles which should

but we have planted our feet in the Northwest and consolidated and developed the Shensi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region, our base area here. The three front armies which form the main forces of the Red Army have been brought under a unified command, which is unprecedented.

Going by the nature of our strategy, we may also say the period from the days in the Ching Kang Mountains to our fourth counter-campaign was one stage, the period of the fifth counter-campaign was another, and the period from the Long March to the present is the third. During the fifth counter-campaign the correct policy of the past was wrongly discarded; today we have correctly discarded the wrong policy adopted during the fifth counter-campaign and revived the earlier and correct policy. However, we have not thrown out everything in the fifth counter-campaign, nor revived everything that preceded it. We have revived only what was good in the past, and discarded only the mistakes of the period of the fifth counter-campaign.

Guerrilla-ism has two aspects. One is irregularity, that is, decentralization, lack of uniformity, absence of strict discipline, and simple methods of work. These features stemmed from the Red Army's infancy, and some of them were just what was needed at the time. As the Red Army reaches a higher stage, we must gradually and consciously eliminate them so as to make the Red Army more centralized, more unified, more disciplined and more thorough in its work — in short, more regular in character. In the directing of operations we should also gradually and consciously reduce such guerrilla characteristics as are no longer required at a higher stage. Refusal to make progress in this respect and obstinate adherence to the old stage are impermissible and harmful, and are detrimental to large-scale operations.

The other aspect of guerrilla-ism consists of the principle of mobile warfare, the guerrilla character of both strategic and tactical operations which is still necessary at present, the inevitable fluidity of our base areas, flexibility in planning the development of the base areas, and the rejection of premature regularization in building the Red Army. In this connection, it is equally impermissible, disadvantageous and harmful to our present operations to deny the facts of history, oppose the retention of what is useful, and rashly leave the present stage in order to rush blindly towards a "new stage", which as yet is beyond reach and has no real significance.

receive equal and simultaneous emphasis in civil wars and which are also applicable in anti-imperialist wars.

Because the reactionary forces are very strong, revolutionary forces grow only gradually, and this fact determines the protracted nature of our war. Here impatience is harmful and advocacy of "quick decision" incorrect. To wage a revolutionary war for ten years, as we have done, might be surprising in other countries, but for us it is like the opening sections in an "eight-legged essay" — the "presentation, amplification and preliminary exposition of the theme"<sup>97</sup> — and many exciting parts are yet to follow. No doubt developments in the future will be greatly accelerated under the influence of domestic and international conditions. As changes have already taken place in the international and domestic situation and greater changes are coming, it can be said that we have outgrown the past state of slow development and fighting in isolation. But we should not expect successes overnight. The aspiration to "wipe out the enemy before breakfast" is admirable, but it is bad to make concrete plans to do so. As China's reactionary forces are backed by many imperialist powers, our revolutionary war will continue to be a protracted one until China's revolutionary forces have built up enough strength to breach the main positions of our internal and external enemies, and until the international revolutionary forces have crushed or contained most of the international reactionary forces. To proceed from this point in formulating our strategy of long-term warfare is one of the important principles guiding our strategy.

The reverse is true of campaigns and battles — here the principle is not protractedness but quick decision. Quick decision is sought in campaigns and battles, and this is true at all times and in all countries. In a war as a whole, too, quick decision is sought at all times and in all countries, and a long drawn-out war is considered harmful. China's war, however, must be handled with the greatest patience and treated as a protracted war. During the period of the Li Li-san line, some people ridiculed our way of doing things as "shadow-boxing tactics" (meaning our tactics of fighting many battles back and forth before going on to seize the big cities), and said that we would not see the victory of the revolution until our hair turned white. Such impatience was proved wrong long ago. But if their criticism had been applied not to strategy but to campaigns and battles, they would have been perfectly right, and for the following reasons. First, the Red Army has no sources from which to replenish

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The Chinese Army

JOHN GITTINGS

*There can be no salvation for China until the military is brought under proper control . . . . Proper control of the military may not mean instant realization of orderly government, but orderly government is dependent on proper control of the military. China has suffered at the hands of the militarists in the recent past and still suffers today. She will continue to suffer unless a future regime is able to dominate instead of being dominated by the militarists.<sup>1</sup>*

THESE words were written by the leading Chinese political scientist, Ch'ien Tuan-sheng, just over a year before the communist victory of 1949. His remarks had particular relevance for the Nationalist army, which had shown itself to be incapable of achieving unity and cohesion even at such a time of dire emergency. They also reflected China's recent experience of endemic warlordism, which had largely contributed to the failure of the Republic and of its democratic experiment, and had badly inhibited effective resistance against the Japanese. Yet although it is the Nationalist army and the warlords whom Ch'ien's remarks bring immediately to mind, his warning was not without relevance to the Chinese communists as well. It is true that their army was a relatively homogeneous body, with a long tradition of obedience to party control and unified leadership. But this tradition might still be dissipated once they were victorious, if the army failed to adapt to peacetime conditions, or to adjust to the very different kind of role which would then be required of it. Looking back on the last seventeen years (in 1966) it is a considerable achievement that

<sup>1</sup> Ch'ien Tuan-sheng, 'The Role of the Military in Chinese Government', *Pacific Affairs*, Sept 1948, p. 251. Cf. also the following remarks by Franz Michael, written in 1946 ('Chinese Military Tradition', *Far Eastern Survey*, 13 & 27 Mar 1946, p. 87): 'The military unity sought by them [the present Chinese leaders] is not only a matter of party politics. It depends on a political and social system in which a centralized program of taxation will replace a local gentry leadership. The restoration of civilian control over the army will also depend not only on an active participation of the people in government but on improvements within the military leadership—on the choice of men of higher education and integrity. Then alone can the Chinese army change from a dominant factor in the political scene to a tool and servant of the people.'



since 1949 the PLA has, by and large, emerged successfully from this very necessary process of adaptation and adjustment. Although the process is still incomplete, and although many difficulties have arisen and continue to arise, China has at least not been 'dominated by the militarists' since 1949, and is unlikely to be so in the future.<sup>2</sup> This is the theme of this chapter: the way in which the PLA has been transformed from a revolutionary army to an established army of national defence, the difficulties which this transformation has created, especially in the PLA's political and social roles, and the implications of this upon China's military strategy.

#### CHINA'S MILITARY GEOGRAPHY

The geophysical, political, and economic features of China combine to lend themselves to military regionalism. The sheer size of the country presents a problem which is aggravated by the lack of good communication from north to south. The best lines of communications lie from east to west, along the three major river systems of the Yellow River, the Yangtze, and the West River. Broadly speaking, communication laterally along each river system is infinitely easier than vertically between one and the other. The Hwaiyang mountains seal off Hupeh and the central Yangtze from the Yellow River plain of north China. South China and the West River basin is even more effectively sealed off from the Yangtze region by the Nanling mountains. As one geographer has written, 'the basis of the regional division [of China] is broadly physiographical, i.e. great river basins, plateaux and inland drainage basins. Each region . . . is large; some are immense and are capable of almost infinite sub-division.'<sup>3</sup> The relative ease with which China could be divided into lateral sections, as contrasted with the comparative difficulty of maintaining vertical cohesion, goes a long way towards explaining the phenomenon of political division into north and south which China experienced during the Six Dynasties period, during the later half of the Sung dynasty, and for other briefer periods. An important sub-division is the Red Basin of Szechwan, which enabled the Nationalist government to hold out against the Japanese during the anti-Japanese war.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the army's role in the Cultural Revolution see below, pp. 220-3.

<sup>3</sup> T. R. Tregear, *A Geography of China* (London 1965), p. 206.

Other sub-divisions with significant political consequences in recent years are the entire north-east, adequately joined to China proper by only a narrow strip of coastal plain at Shanhaikuan, the loess region of north China centred on Shensi province, where the Chinese communists made their base after the Long March, and the southern coast area of the Liang-kuang (Kwangsi and Kwangtung provinces) where the Nationalists made their last stand in 1949. The Mongolian plateau, the Sinkiang basin, and the Tibetan highlands also lend themselves to major sub-divisions, and raise strategic problems from a military point of view of vast magnitude.<sup>4</sup>

The economic and political consequences of China's geographical diversity follow naturally. Centralized supply of food and provisions to military units far from the capital is cumbersome and awkward to arrange. They must therefore be principally supplied from within their own regions unless they are to be inadequately supplied and potentially dissident or ineffective. This may lead to dissent between military leaders and provincial officials on whom the burden of supply will fall. Alternatively, the military leaders may themselves be allowed to levy taxes in order to support their armies. This expedient may solve the supply problem at the price of putting excessive political power into regional military hands. This was the case with the new provincial armies of Li Hung-chang and Tseng Kuo-fan in the 1850s onwards, the forerunners of Yuan Shih-k'ai's New Armies and indirectly of the warlords.

The political consequences are twofold. First, China's geography makes for lack of mobility. There is a tendency for armies to assume the static character of a garrison force, increasingly identified with the region in which they are garrisoned, and reluctant to move outside it. This kind of reluctance greatly impeded Nationalist resistance first against the Japanese, and later against the communists in the civil war. Static disposition of a supposedly national army also encourages inefficiency and corruption among units who have grown comfortable and idle in their garrisons. Secondly, the geographical facts of life make centralized

<sup>4</sup> On Chinese military geography see further E. F. Carlson, *The Chinese Army* (New York, 1940), pp. 6-12. For general descriptions of Chinese geography, see Tregear; see also Theodore Shabad, *China's Changing Map* (London, 1956).

political control of regional units at the same time more important and more difficult to achieve. Even the most impressive system of control on paper may turn out to be grossly defective in practice.

There arises out of these circumstances an inherent contradiction within the handling by the central government of its armed forces. The unresolved question is whether to have a weak army which poses no threat to political stability, or a strong army which does so. The point of equilibrium, at which the army is both strong and receptive to central control, is in practice difficult to arrive at. The methods employed to exercise control themselves may tend to diminish military efficiency and to impair the army's strategic value. A relaxation of control may improve this value, but at the price of diminished political stability. This process is illustrated very clearly by the decline of the Ch'ing dynasty's military apparatus in the first half of the nineteenth century, and by the emergence of the new regional armies in the latter half of that century.

#### CH'ING MILITARY POLICY

The eight Manchu Banners were the élite fighting force of the Manchus, and were largely responsible for the overthrow of the Ming rulers and the establishment of the new Manchu 'Ch'ing' dynasty in 1644. Originally modelled upon the *wei* garrison system which the Ming dynasty had employed to pacify Manchuria, each Banner was under the separate command of a *Beile* or Manchu imperial prince. It was exclusively responsible in the area under its control for civil administration, taxation, and military service. Once the new dynasty had been established, however, the Ch'ing emperors consistently sought to curtail the Banners' power. Three of the eight Banners had already passed under the emperor's control by the time that the Ch'ing dynasty was inaugurated. The remaining five were taken away from *Beile* control by the Yung Cheng emperor (1723-35). The Banners were garrisoned at key strategic points throughout China, on the frontiers, around Peking in Chihli province, on important waterways (the Yangtze, Grand Canal, &c.), and in provinces of particular strategic significance (Szechwan, Shensi, &c.). They were no longer allowed to control civil administration, and were now a purely military force. Nor was the civil administration itself allowed to control them; a complex system of checks and balances ensured that military and

civil powers were evenly matched. The same balancing formula was applied to the division between Manchu and Chinese officials. Thus the Banners both counterbalanced and were counterbalanced by the Chinese 'Green Standard' provincial forces. The Banners were commanded by the Manchu Tartar general, who himself served to keep the power of the provincial governor in check. Members of the Banners were awarded special grants of land and other privileges. They were, however, debarred from seeking employment outside the service. The inevitable consequence was that the number of Banner dependants increased as time went on, and their land and pensions became inadequate to support them. By the nineteenth century many Bannermen were said to be reduced to the status of beggars. Hence the isolation of the Banner system as an élite fighting force encouraged its own ossification and decline. The counterbalancing formula also applied within the Banner system itself. Each Banner garrison was 'made up of a mixture of units from different banners, served by their respective banner administrations', writes Franz Michael. 'Even the Manchus' own security force was thus held down by administrative safeguards that could not but hamper its military effectiveness'.<sup>5</sup>

The last military campaign in which the Banners played a prominent part was the Sinkiang campaign of 1755-9. From then on, increasing use was made of the 'Green Standards' or Chinese provincial troops, until they too underwent a process of disintegration similar to that of the Manchu Banners. The Green Standard, it has been written, 'was a great constabulary rather than a combat army'.<sup>6</sup> They were employed in crime prevention and assisted in the transportation of bullion, grain, prisoners, and mail. They were stationed in small units throughout China and were under the control of the Ministry of Defence in Peking. By the time of the T'ai-p'ing rebellion the Green Standards in turn had degenerated. They were poorly equipped and poorly paid. Their officers embezzled the funds, and padded the pay-rolls, so that by the

<sup>5</sup> In his introd. to Stanley Spector, *Li Hung-chang and the Huai Army* (Seattle, 1964), p. xxxii.

<sup>6</sup> Ralph L. Powell, *The Rise of Chinese Military Power, 1895-1912* (Princeton, 1955), p. 13. See further *ibid.* ch. 1, 'The Chinese Armies Prior to 1895', pp. 3-50, on the Banners and Green Standards. See also Hsieh Pao-chao, *The Government of China, 1644-1911* (Baltimore, 1923); Franz Michael, *The Origin of Manchu Rule in China* (Baltimore, 1942).

beginning of the nineteenth century their real strength may have been less than half that recorded in the books. Training was superficial and based on classical military texts. Discipline was often lax, so that soldiers became virtually indistinguishable from bandits.

While the decline of the Banners and Green Standards partly reflected the more general decline in administrative efficiency of the Ch'ing emperors, it was also an almost inevitable consequence of Ch'ing military policy, which was more concerned to render its armed forces harmless to itself than to maintain them as an efficient fighting force. Besides, until Western powers began to knock at the gates of Canton, no foreign threat existed with which to galvanize the throne into overhauling its military machine. The Banners were deployed as a form of regional internal defence; the Green Standards performed the same function at a local level. The combination of external Western aggression and endemic internal rebellion in the mid-nineteenth century proved too much for the existing military structure.

#### RISE OF THE WARLORDS

In order to stem the T'ai-p'ing rebellion, the imperial court was reluctantly forced to sanction the creation of regional armies in the affected areas; Tseng Kuo-fan's Hunan Army (1853), Tso Tsung-t'ang's Ch'u Army (1860), and Li Hung-chang's Anhwei Army (1862). For the first time provincial officials were allowed to raise troops within their own province and to control them without any effective counterbalance from Peking. Personal loyalty was generated as much between the soldier and his general as between the soldier and the emperor. Previously military authority had been the exclusive monopoly of the central government; now it was passing into the hands of the provincial gentry. Furthermore, since Peking persisted in its unwillingness to fund the army adequately, its commanders were often allowed to hold concurrent provincial civil office, and to milk provincial taxes and other sources of revenue.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> It is not intended to suggest that the powerful provincial armies formed in this period represented, at the time, a threat to the government in Peking, nor that their commanders nourished political ambitions at the expense of the central authorities. As Prof. Mary Wright has observed, 'the leaders of the Hsiang [Hunan] and other new armies were literati, men who had a profound interest in the preservation and strengthening of the existing state'. Professor Wright nevertheless concludes that

Although the picture is complicated by a constant process of disbandment and re-formation, the regional armies of Tseng, Li, and others provided the essential nucleus for the new-style armies or *lu-chün* which emerged at the end of the nineteenth century, and which themselves were the forerunners of the warlord armies of the Republic. Attempts by the throne to resuscitate the Green Standards as an effective counterbalance and to maintain control of the new armies, were generally unsuccessful. Perhaps of greater importance, the officer élite which staffed the new-style armies, many of whom went on to become fully-fledged warlords, originated in the regional armies. Thus Yüan Shih-k'ai, first President of the Republic of 1912 and the foremost military leader, served as a young man with the Anhwei Army of Li Hung-chang, to whom he was linked by family connexions. A complex network of relationships, formed in the new armies before the Republic, joined nearly all of the leaders of the military cliques which helped bring about the Republic's disintegration between 1915 and 1927.

The 1911 revolution itself was very largely the creation of the new armies, and its success mainly determined by the new military class led by Yüan Shih-k'ai. Revolutionary propaganda among the new armies in the south was an important factor, but the decisive factor was Yüan's Peiyang group of armies in the north, which gave him the authority with which to mediate between the throne and the revolutionaries, to secure the dynasty's abdication, and to assume the presidency himself. The Peiyang Army was hardly disaffected at all by revolutionary propaganda, but it nourished entirely non-revolutionary grievances against the throne (over attempts to revive the Banners, inadequate pay, &c.). The foundation of the new Republic rested therefore upon an ambiguous basis; it was avowedly a political revolution, but its course had been largely decided by military leaders who were interested in power rather than reform. This ambiguity became painfully apparent by 1913, with the collapse of the first parliament, the abortive second revolution, and Yüan's steady progress towards the assumption of dictatorial powers. The military grouping on which his authority ultimately depended was itself highly fissionable;

'Certainly the shift of military power to the new armies was potentially dangerous to the central government . . . , and it cannot be denied that they contained the seeds of warlordism' (Mary C. Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism* (New York, 1966), pp. 199, 220-1).

his death in 1915 ushered in a decade of virtual political interregnum in which military cliques proliferated, supported at times by competing foreign powers, and political authority became increasingly fragmented into regional or even provincial military kingdoms.

#### THE NATIONALIST ARMY

The Nationalist army originated as a small and well-knit revolutionary army, with the Whampoa Military Academy as its central core. A system of political education and control on Soviet lines operated in very much the same way as it subsequently did in the communist army. But unlike the communist army, the KMT's national-revolutionary army never went through the slow process of organic growth which alone could preserve qualitative homogeneity during quantitative expansion. The Northern Expedition of 1926-7 was mounted by a coalition of armies, the KMT core plus its allies. After the success of the Expedition, only one out of the four Army Groups which made up the Nationalist army was chiefly composed of KMT units. The Second was Feng Yu-hsiang's Kuominchün, the Third was Yen Hsi-shan's Shansi Army, and the Fourth was controlled by the Kwangsi group led by Li Tsung-jen. In addition, the Manchurian Army under Chang Hsüeh-liang was still very largely intact and independent of the central government. Within three years of the Northern Expedition, all of these units had rebelled against the central government, although unsuccessfully. The growth of Japanese aggression in Manchuria helped to bring about unity, forcing the Manchurian army closer to the central government. By the mid-1930s unity appeared at long last to have been achieved. But it was an artificial unity which was based upon compromise and upon the need to come together against a common enemy. It had not been organically achieved, and this being so, it necessitated the use by Chiang Kai-shek of the familiar divide-and-rule tactics. F. F. Liu, author of the standard work on this period, has written that

In the ministry of war, whether it was deliberately planned or not, an intricate system of checks and balances seems to have existed. A minister's power could be balanced by vice-ministers and strategically placed bureau chiefs who could be counted on to keep an eagle eye on the minister's loyalty to the ruling interest. . . . The whole military

organization suffered from the fear, weakness, and indecision of its central administration.

And he concludes that 'in the hands of the president alone rested the one opportunity of ultimate military coordination'.<sup>8</sup> This concentration of power was essential for unity but destructive of efficiency. It led to the blind overruling of better-informed subordinates, about which American advisers so frequently complained both in the war against Japan and in the civil war. This led in turn to lack of initiative and factionalism at lower levels. The origins of the Nationalist army as a coalition of convenience were never entirely shaken off. There are numerous examples where government forces from different factions failed to aid each other. Strong armies were featherbedded by their provincial leaders while weak armies were annihilated next door. Rivalry in particular between the KMT core and the Kwangsi clique was a constant factor, emerging into the open in the last year of civil war, when Li Tsung-jen's last-ditch stand along the Yangtze was fatally hamstrung by lack of support from the Chiang-controlled air force and navy.

Two major *lacunae* in particular arise directly from the disparate origins of the Nationalist army. First was its inability to demobilize a chronic excess of manpower. Attempts to do this had led to the rebellions of 1929-30. Although these were defeated, Chiang was never strong enough to demobilize those whom he had beaten. Japanese aggression provided a convenient reason to defer demobilization indefinitely. But throughout the anti-Japanese and civil wars, the Nationalist army was too large for the job; quality was sacrificed for quantity—another frequent complaint of American advisers. Thus in 1946 at the start of the civil war, the Nationalist army was believed (no accurate figures were ever available) to number some 5 million men. Only 1½ million—less than a third—could be considered as first-line troops. Until the autumn of 1948, less than a year before the final communist victory, this meaningless numerical superiority over the communist army was maintained.

Secondly, the Soviet system of political departments and political commissars which had been followed in the National Revolutionary Army before 1927 seems to have disappeared in the

<sup>8</sup> *A Military History of Modern China, 1924-49* (Princeton, 1956), pp. 69-70.

wake of the Northern Expedition. This may have partly been a result of the purge in 1927 of the communists, many of whom had great influence in the political structure. It is also clear that the political network could not keep pace with rapid KMT expansion, nor could it be extended into the allied armies of the coalition. Furthermore, it appears to have been a casualty of the deliberate switch-over from 1928 onwards from the Soviet military model to that of Germany. German technical assistance and instructors began to mould the Nationalist army, and increasing numbers of Chinese officers went to study at military academies in Germany. As F. F. Liu writes, 'The outlook of the early Whampoa days drifted towards a pattern more closely resembling the orthodox plan of Western military schools'.<sup>9</sup> KMT party branches were widespread in the army, but their purpose was to control the military leadership rather than to educate and inspire the rank and file. This was perhaps the most significant area of difference between the Nationalist and communist armies.

#### ORIGINS OF THE COMMUNIST ARMY

The CCP was founded in 1921, at a time when the mutual rivalries of China's provincial warlords were at their peak. The party allied itself with the KMT led by Sun Yat-sen, which itself was in the process of building up sufficient military power with which to challenge the warlords' rule. In 1926 the KMT armies and their allies, now led by Chiang Kai-shek after the death of Sun Yat-sen in 1925, launched the Northern Expedition against the warlord cliques and achieved a greater measure of national unity than at any time since 1915. In 1927 Chiang Kai-shek, supported by the right wing of the KMT, conducted a bloody purge of his party's left wing and of the Communist Party.<sup>10</sup>

The lesson of this period of 'United Front' with the KMT was a simple but hard one. No political party could effectively survive in China without military backing. After a series of abortive attempts to capture towns or to organize urban risings, the CCP's centre of gravity shifted to the countryside, where it was to remain for the next twenty years. At first, in the southern province of Kiangsi, where from 1930-4 the CCP organized a Soviet Republic and held out against repeated Nationalist 'pacification campaigns', then during the 'Long March' to Shensi in the north (1934-6), and

<sup>9</sup> Liu, p. 83.

<sup>10</sup> See above, pp. 149 ff.

finally during the anti-Japanese war (1937-45), by the end of which communist areas in north and central China controlled some 100 million of the population,<sup>11</sup> communist political power depended in the last analysis upon their military strength. Political power, as Mao Tse-tung had said, 'grows out of the barrel of the gun'.

By the end of the anti-Japanese war, the communist army had expanded from approximately 80,000 in 1937 to 900,000 in 1945.<sup>12</sup> Communist territorial holdings in north China and Manchuria put them in a powerful bargaining position during the subsequent peace talks with the KMT, and when these broke down, enabled them to emerge victorious from the civil war which followed (1946-9).

Very little work has yet been done on the political and social roles and the essential structure of the communist Red Army<sup>13</sup> in the Kiangsi Soviet period. A mass of relevant material waits to be examined in the Ch'en Ch'eng papers and other primary sources. By the time of the anti-Japanese war, we can single out three distinctive features of the communist army which contributed materially to its success. These were the political control and education system, its social policies towards the civilian population, and its reliance upon popular mobilization. All three features had been present in varying degrees during the Kiangsi Soviet, and had been formulated even earlier by Mao Tse-tung in 1928-9. How far and how consistently they were put into practice is another matter. Official communist history claims that during the period of the three 'Left' lines, i.e. while Mao himself was not as yet undisputed leader of the CCP, his theories on 'people's war' were not fully implemented. In particular, the people's militia and the political structure were allowed to lapse.<sup>14</sup> While this may well be

<sup>11</sup> See below, p. 226.

<sup>12</sup> For statistics of communist military strength during the anti-Japanese war see Gittings, *The Role of the Chinese Army* (London, 1967), p. 303.

<sup>13</sup> The communist army was officially known as the Red Army during the Kiangsi Soviet and the Long March. From 1937 until the end of the anti-Japanese war it was identified by its two components as officially recognized in the United Front with the KMT, i.e. the Eighth Route Army in north China and the New Fourth Army in central China. In 1946 at the start of the civil war it adopted the title of People's Liberation Army, by which it has since been known.

<sup>14</sup> See the claim in *Liberation Army Daily*, editorial, 1 July 1958, 'Hold aloft the banner of the party committee system', that the 'system of party leadership' was abolished by the 'third Leftist line' during the later stage of the second revolutionary war (trans. in *SCMP*, no. 1881). See also criticism of the military policies of the three

an exaggeration, it is reasonable to suppose that in its early days, and under pressure first of KMT encirclement and then of the Long March, there were defects in the army's approach to these matters. It was not until the process of consolidation in Shensi under the United Front had begun that the revolutionary model for the army was constructed in all its details. It is perhaps significant that post-liberation panegyrics on the glorious revolutionary history of the PLA hark back almost without exception to the anti-Japanese war and no earlier. The Long March is cited as an example of heroism and struggle and of Mao Tse-tung's inspired leadership, without special emphasis on the army as such. Similarly, accounts of the Kiangsi Soviet period use the army's record in order to illustrate extraneous themes rather than to glorify the army itself and its leadership.

The crucial formative period of the communist army was therefore essentially that of the anti-Japanese war. This is not necessarily to say that without the stimulus of Japanese aggression the CCP would never have been able to reach the take-off point for expansion and consolidation, nor that it was of decisive importance in contributing to their ultimate victory. There is no doubt that resistance against Japan provided a common cause with which the CCP and the civilian population could jointly identify, or that the KMT-CCP United Front, which created a breathing-space for the communists in Shensi, stemmed directly from the outbreak of formal war with Japan in 1937. But the take-off point might well have been reached, although admittedly under much more difficult conditions, even if the circumstances had been different. It was primarily the rectification of the party under Maoist leadership, the sinification of Marxism to a more specific Chinese form, and the adoption of popular social and economic policies, including those of the army, which provided the essential basis on which the communists were able to build. It is probable that some such process of rectification and readjustment would have occurred in any case, once the Yen-an regime had been established and Mao's undisputed leadership of the CCP had allowed him for the first time to put his theories fully into practice. It is also probable that the political and economic decline of the Nationalist government

<sup>1</sup>'Left' lines in Mao Tse-tung, 'Resolution on certain questions in the history of our party' (adopted by the enlarged 7th plenary session of the 6th CCP central committee, 20 Apr 1945) (*Selected Works*, iii (Peking, 1965), pp. 205-8).

would have continued, although at a slower pace, thus generating popular resentment and unrest which favoured the communist cause.

Nevertheless, regardless of what might have occurred, it is a fact that the moulding of the army's revolutionary blueprint took place very largely during the anti-Japanese war. The vital time-span can indeed be narrowed even further, to the 'hard years' of KMT blockade and constant Japanese pressure which followed the communists' Hundred Regiments' offensive of autumn 1940, and which were not relaxed until mid-1944, when Japan once more turned her attention to the KMT in central China. It was during these years that the main lines of the army's social and economic policies were established, that the militia and People's Self-Defence Corps were put on a sound footing, and that the system of political education and control was radically overhauled.

During this period of revolution, the CCP went a long way towards reconciling the three basic contradictions which had traditionally weakened and at times crippled Chinese military policy.

#### (a) MILITARY AND POLITICAL UNITY

The failure of the democratic experiments of the Republic and the growth of the provincial warlords was primarily due to the lack of unity between China's political and military leadership. The history of the CCP, however, shows a remarkable lack of military-political conflict. (This occurred only at times of great stress, for example, immediately after the purge of 1927 and during the 'Long March'.) The system of dual party and military command was applied to the Red Army from its outset, with political groups and commissars down to company level. It was revived and strengthened during the rectification movement of 1942 onwards. Perhaps more important, in the circumstances of resistance against the Japanese and of civil war, military and political objectives tended to coincide, thus helping to eliminate potential conflict. Furthermore, almost all the top CCP leaders held concurrently military and political positions. The year 1942 also saw the introduction of a movement for 'military democracy' among the army rank and file, whose object was to improve relations between officers and men, and to create a larger measure of political awareness at basic levels.

*(b)* MILITARY AND POPULAR UNITY

In imperial China the military was widely held in disfavour. There was a saying that 'good iron is not used to make nails; good men are not used to make soldiers'. The warlord and KMT armies did little to change this attitude. By contrast, the CCP made consistent attempts to promote good relations between army and people. Theft, rape, looting, enforced conscription, &c., were not only prohibited in theory but to a large extent in practice (though there were, of course, exceptions). This policy was not only desirable but vital to the continued existence of the CCP. The communist armies depended for support and for recruits upon popular goodwill. They were not garrison armies; they lived on and in the countryside. Peasant opposition would make their situation untenable. The army must live among the people, in Mao's simile, 'as the fish swim in water'. During the worst years of the anti-Japanese war, regular army units turned from fighting to the fields 'with a hoe in one hand and a gun in the other', and were exhorted to make themselves economically self-sufficient. Special procedures were also created to ensure that civilian grievances against the army were remedied.

*(c)* POPULAR MOBILIZATION

Another characteristic of imperial and Nationalist China was a reluctance to put arms in the hands of the peasantry. Such arms had a habit of being turned against their donors. In the early days of the CCP there was a similar reluctance. But during the anti-Japanese war, popular guerrilla and militia forces played an increasingly important role in regional defence.

Regular army units were subject to transfer from one communist area to another. But within each area a local guerrilla force was organized to a strength of as much as 50 per cent of the regular forces. In addition, an armed militia force of approximately 5 per cent of the population was responsible for internal security, sabotage and local defence against the Japanese. This was supplemented by the People's Self-Defence Corps—numbering some 10 per cent of the population, which was primarily a civil defence organization. These popular organizations also provided a reservoir of manpower for the regular army.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> For more detailed discussion of the military-political and military-popular

## LIBERATION AND AFTER

Thus in 1949, when the Chinese communists came to power, their military machine was in much better shape and more firmly under their control than those of most other revolutionary movements. Its loyalty to the Communist Party and the machinery for enforcing it had been tested by twenty years of civil war. It was a homogeneous body with traditions and a mystique of its own, and it could draw upon a considerable reserve of popular goodwill and support. Nevertheless, by the very act of victory, it entered upon a new phase and a new role in which it had little or no experience. By exchanging its revolutionary role for one of national defence, it severed the most important bond of unity with the Communist Party and with the people—the sense of common identity and struggle which had permeated the communist areas and linked army, party, and people together in the revolutionary period. It was not simply a question of how the army would adapt to its new role as guardian of China's national defence; it was also a question of how the party leadership itself would view the army's status and position in the People's Republic.

One of the special features of China since 1949 is the way in which policies once formulated are applied across the board to all sectors of society and at all levels of organization. It is therefore extremely difficult to talk about the Communist Party's policy towards the army—or towards any other professional group in China—in isolation from its nation-wide policy at any particular time. The structure of the policy-making hierarchy is a vertical one, with the central committee at its apex. Any decision of the central committee which is remotely relevant to society at large—and there are very few which are not—will be passed down through the usual channels to the General Political Department of the PLA for implementation. This would apply equally to, for instance, a decision to promote the study of the works of Chairman Mao, and to a decision to promote a movement for the destruction of flies, sparrows, and other pests.

It is therefore more than usually fruitless to talk about 'military policy' in a vacuum. One can only talk about military policy as a component part of the totality of policy formulation. This

relationships, and of popular mobilization, during the anti-Japanese war, see Gittings, pp. 48-61, 111-16.



indeed is the key to our understanding of the role of the PLA, as its story since 1949 is to a large extent the story of the way in which its own priorities, demands, and requirements have at some times coincided with overall policy and at other times have conflicted with it. There are also occasions when military considerations play the decisive part in the formulation of overall policy. On other occasions, military considerations appear to have been devalued or even shelved.

Bearing this in mind, we can identify two basic sets of policies which have affected the PLA's role since 1949. The first set of policies places top priority upon politico-military goals, either internally, or more usually in foreign policy. This was the situation during the Korean war, when all other aspects of Chinese policy were subordinated to the needs of the Korean front. The second and more frequent set of policies places the higher priority on domestic politico-economic goals. This was the case during the Great Leap Forward, when the PLA's requirements were subordinated almost entirely to those of the great economic and social revolution which swept the Chinese countryside. There are also periods of relative equilibrium when overall policy is neither dominated by military requirements nor does it conflict with them to any significant degree.

Against this variable background of the changing status of the armed forces on the ladder of policy priorities, we can set the permanent factors which affect the role of the PLA in China. Firstly, its internal health in terms of morale and relations between enlisted men and officers, which affects its performance and loyalty to the government. Secondly, its relations with the Communist Party, both between its personnel and those of the party, and in its understanding of and support for particular party policies. Thirdly, its relations with the civilian population, the strain which it throws upon civilian resources, or the way in which such strain is alleviated; and the social popularity which it enjoys or the hostility or apathy which it arouses. These are the permanent factors which, as has been pointed out, are inherent in the role of any Chinese army.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> It should be added that the interrelationship of the above-mentioned permanent factors and variable background raises some problems. One would assume, for instance that relations between the army and the people were good during the Korean war and bad in subsequent years, since little criticism is voiced of them until the war is

It may therefore be useful to look first of all at the way in which military policy has intermeshed with national policy since 1949, and the difficulties which this has created. Secondly, we shall consider the exact relations between the army and the people, within the army itself, and between the army and party. Or to use the short-hand phrases employed in Chinese: army-people, officer-men, and army-party relations.

#### THE PLA AND NATIONAL POLICY

If a graph were constructed of the PLA's position in the order of priorities since 1949, it would show a series of waves—a short dip during the first half of 1950, when plans were begun for its participation in production work and for partial demobilization, followed by a swift rise to an all-time high priority peak during the Korean war. The line descends very gradually and almost imperceptibly in 1954-5, the period when the army was being reorganized along the Soviet model, although its needs were no longer of such paramount importance as during the Korean war. From 1956 to 1959 the line descends at an increasingly sharper angle, as ever more demands are made upon it for participation in non-military tasks, and its professional status comes under critical scrutiny. The period 1958-9 sees an all-time low, with the PLA heavily criticized for alleged 'deviations', and the Minister of Defence himself dismissed for 'right opportunism' in September of 1959. Since 1959, under the new Minister Lin Piao, the graph has shown a steady improvement, until by 1964 the entire Chinese nation was exhorted to 'learn from the achievements of the PLA'. Political control of the PLA, and its participation in non-military tasks, continued to be insisted upon, yet these demands on it were harmonized with its own requirements in such a way as to avoid excessive strain between the two. By 1964 the graph could be said to have reached a temporary state of equilibrium, although by 1965-6 it was again starting to show signs of imbalance.

To recapitulate the course of events outlined above in more detail: After liberation in the autumn of 1949, the new government

over. But one must take into account the shift in policy priorities. During the war, the PLA's behaviour towards civilians was regarded with much greater tolerance because its role was valued so highly. After the war its role became subject to successive devaluation until it was the target of persistent criticism. Yet its actual behaviour over the entire period had not necessarily altered as drastically as might be supposed.



of the CPR was faced with a major problem of reconverting the economic and social fabric of China to a peacetime footing. This problem had been accentuated by the very speed of the PLA's success in winning the civil war over the previous three years. Victory had come far more quickly than the communist leadership had anticipated. As late as the summer of 1948, Mao Tse-tung and his colleagues still thought the civil war would last until at least 1951. They did not expect the Nationalist armies to collapse with such demoralizing speed as they did during the following autumn and winter of 1948-9. This collapse had two important consequences; first, the communists gained possession of the overwhelming part of the Chinese mainland with such rapidity that they were hard put to it to find the necessary personnel and administration with which to govern their newly acquired responsibilities. Secondly, because such a large proportion of the Nationalist armies surrendered or were captured without a fight, and were therefore incorporated into the PLA, the PLA's size attained vast dimensions—some 5 million by 1950, of whom well over half had defected from the KMT in the last year and a half.<sup>17</sup> To put it crudely, fewer soldiers had been killed than expected; the problem of resettlement and of demobilization was that much greater.

The top priority for 1950, repeatedly emphasized in government statements, was therefore 'national reconstruction'. Already in December 1949 the PLA had been ordered to devote as much of its manpower as possible to productive work—reclaiming land, building irrigation dykes, laying roads and railway tracks, whatever work suited the needs of the locality and the skills of the military units stationed there. It was also decided to make plans for large-scale demobilization, although their implementation was not felt to be feasible until 1951. For the time being, the great majority of military and civil government employees, whether communist or ex-Nationalist, were to be kept on an official payroll which now totalled 9 million employees, rather than risk social upheaval and mass unemployment by their dismissal. But by June

<sup>17</sup> PLA strength increased from 1,278,000 in June 1946 to 1,950,000 (June 1947), 2,800,000 (June 1948), 4,000,000 (June 1949), 5,000,000 (June 1950). According to PLA claims, a total of 4,586,750 KMT troops were captured during the civil war and a further 1,773,490 surrendered or changed sides. Over 75 per cent of these KMT losses occurred in the final years 1948-50. The figures may be inflated, but they probably convey the right order of magnitude (Chang Chün-ying, *Ko-ming yü fan-ko-ming ti chieh-chun* (Peking, 1961), p. 113; see also Gittings, Table 2, p. 304).

1950, plans for demobilization of PLA men had been speeded up. Mao Tse-tung told the central committee that the PLA should demobilize 'part of its troops' in that same year. The 'main forces' of the PLA were to be kept under arms to carry out the unfinished military business still on hand—the suppression of bandits and other forms of armed opposition still at large on the mainland, the occupation of Tibet, and the liberation of Taiwan.<sup>18</sup> By the 'main forces', Mao probably meant the regular or first-line PLA units totalling some 2½ million. As many again were therefore scheduled for demobilization.

These plans were brought almost to a sharp halt by the Korean war and China's intervention. Production work by the PLA was virtually suspended throughout China, except for the north-west province of Sinkiang where a special Production Corps of semi-demobilized soldiers was engaged in reclamation of barren land. Elsewhere production became at best a 'spare-time activity' performed in token quantities for the sake of good public relations. Demobilization was halted, and some troops who had already been released from service were recalled. Although demobilization of those no longer capable of service was apparently resumed in the next year, the Chinese People's Volunteers in Korea required the raising of replacements, and I have estimated elsewhere that during the course of the Korean war between 1½ and 2 million soldiers were recruited for service either in the PLA or CPV.<sup>19</sup>

The effects of the Korean war upon the PLA can hardly be exaggerated, both with regard to its modernization and professionalization, and to its relations with the party and with the civilian population.<sup>20</sup>

As far as the PLA was concerned, the Korean war helped to

<sup>18</sup> Mao Tse-tung, 'The struggle for a basic turn for the better in the financial and economic situation of the state', 6 June 1950, NCNA (London), Spec. Suppl. 30, 16 June 1950.

<sup>19</sup> Gittings, ch. 6.

<sup>20</sup> Nor have I space to consider the wider consequences of the war upon China's domestic and foreign policy. One can only suggest that in domestic politics, the war brought about a rapid intensification of land reform, and contributed largely to the series of oppressive campaigns against political nonconformity in China—the 'suppression of counter-revolutionaries', the '3 & 5-antis', and the like (see also below, pp. 272 f.). In foreign policy, the war drove China closer into the arms of the Soviet Union, widened the chasm between China and the West, destroyed all hope of better understanding between China and the US, and by preventing the return of Formosa to Chinese hands helped to create a permanent block to the normalization of China's position in Asia.

raise its status once again, and to ensure that the modernization of China's armed forces, which had been endorsed in principle in the Common Programme announced at the formation of the People's Republic, would begin to take effect. The Korean war was directly responsible for the re-equipment of the PLA with modern weapons systems, for the wide range of military training colleges which were hastily set up or expanded to meet the need for qualified officers and n.c.o.s, for changes towards a more complex staff structure with centralized control in Peking—in short, for the creation of a more sophisticated and professional PLA, adequately equipped with Soviet arms and modelled on the pattern of the Soviet Red Army. In 1954 a number of reforms were introduced which broke completely with the past. An annual draft system was put into effect, bringing in between 500,000 and 700,000 recruits a year for an average of three years' service, so that once the system had completed its first rotation, as much as three-fifths of the PLA was composed of short-term conscripts.<sup>21</sup> A fully articulated system of ranks and insignia was instituted for the officers, with all the epaulettes, badges, and other paraphernalia which distinguishes a regular army. In 1955 military awards were bestowed on those senior officers who had been singled out for meritorious service during the revolution. A new disciplinary code was promulgated which stressed loyalty and unquestioning obedience rather than the old revolutionary concept of 'military democracy'. Some veteran elements in the PLA opposed these innovations on the grounds that they were incompatible with its traditions, but others, especially the new generation of young officers who had been trained during the Korean war in the new military academies, appear to have welcomed the privileges and *esprit de corps* of a modern-style army.

But the PLA'S enhanced status during the Korean war helped to bring about its own reversal as China returned to peacetime conditions when the war was over. In the first place, the PLA'S modernization and re-styling had been closely associated with the Soviet Union, which provided the necessary aid and advice. This meant that the position of the PLA would in future be vulnerable

<sup>21</sup> The terms of service were army—3 yrs; air force—4 yrs; navy—5 yrs. In 1965, these were extended by one year each, except for the special arms and the public security forces of the army (extended by 2 years), and the shore arms of the navy (remained the same).

to any political changes resulting from a deterioration in Sino-Soviet relations, since it would to some extent be regarded as pro-Soviet and as a partly Soviet creation. Secondly, during the Korean war the PLA had necessarily lost some of its popular character, and this was further dissipated by the trend towards professionalization.

From 1956 onwards, therefore, a number of different pressures combined to bring about a devaluation of the PLA'S role, and to increase criticism of it by the party leadership. There was the simple fact that under peacetime conditions military requirements were accorded a lower priority. For instance military expenditure had more than doubled between 1950 and 1955. By 1958 it had fallen again by almost one-quarter.<sup>22</sup> There was the growing alienation between army and party, and also the deteriorating relations with the civilian population. Professionalization, combined with the new disciplinary code and the replacement of revolutionary veterans by conscript soldiers, had led to some estrangement between officers and rank and file. The policy of taking the Soviet army as the 'model' for the PLA had also been carried to excess. In many cases, the form but not the substance of the Soviet model appears to have been copied, so that bureaucracy and stereotyped manoeuvres led to inferior leadership and loss of efficiency.

The seriousness of these developments should not however be exaggerated. It is very doubtful whether army-party and army-people relations deteriorated to such an extent as was later alleged, or whether the Soviet model proved so totally inappropriate as was later claimed. More important perhaps was the fact that the form which the army was assuming, that of a regular professional army concerned exclusively with national defence, jarred with the basic concept to which China's veteran leadership still clung of what a communist army should be like. This was part of the whole trend in the late 1950s away from the mechanical application of foreign experience back to specifically Chinese and 'revolutionary' models. It was the same dynamic which powered the Great Leap

<sup>22</sup> Military budgetary expenditure rose from 2,827 m. yuan in 1950 to 6,500 m. in 1955, when it represented just under 25 per cent of total expenditure. By 1958 it had fallen to 5,000 m. or 15.1 per cent. It rose again to 5,826 m. in 1960, but continued to decline as compared to total expenditure (8.3 per cent). No figures are available since 1960. It is probable that expenditure on nuclear weapons development is totally excluded from these figures. See further Gittings, *Chinese Army*, Table 7, p. 309.

Forward. The PLA was also affected by changes in strategic planning brought about by loss of confidence in the Soviet Union as the Sino-Soviet rift deepened.

At first the Chinese leadership attempted to solve the difficulties which had arisen in the PLA by the wholesale application of measures which had proved effective in the revolutionary period. It was made to take part in production on a massive scale, to practise all kinds of economies, both trivial and fundamental, often at the expense of military efficiency. 'Military democracy' was revived and almost carried to excess, with officers going to the ranks and humbling themselves before the rank and file in a way which was no doubt good for the soldiers' morale but probably bad for their own. When the Great Leap was launched in the autumn of 1958, the 'Everyone a Soldier' movement was also launched as part of it, with a quite unrealistic target of enrolling every able-bodied man and woman into the militia, arming them and training them.

Most of these reforms and innovations seem only to have worsened the situation, creating the very antagonism between army and party which they were intended to prevent. This was not so much the fault of the reforms themselves as of the headlong pace and indiscriminate way in which they were carried out. These were of course the same defects which brought the whole of the Great Leap Forward grinding to a halt.

In September 1959 the Minister of Defence, P'eng Teh-huai, was dismissed together with a handful of his senior staff. He is believed to have both opposed the measures enacted against the PLA and favoured closer co-operation with the Soviet Union in the military sphere. Negotiations designed to secure Soviet aid for China's nuclear weapons programme had broken down shortly before, and P'eng may have been held responsible for their failure. It was now clear that China would have to 'go it alone' in defence. Her strategic arrangements since then have centred on three objectives; first, to acquire her own independent nuclear capability, secondly, to build up the militia, although on a less ambitious scale than originally envisaged, and thirdly to restore the PLA's morale and political reliability.

This last has been achieved by essentially the same policy as had been tried before, but it is now applied with more intelligence. For the PLA, as well as for the rest of Chinese society, it is a case

of 'back to the revolution', and the old customs and traditions of the revolutionary struggle have been revived. The policy appears to have been successful primarily for two reasons: first because measures are no longer taken to excess—army production work, for instance, has fallen steadily year by year; and secondly because a major effort has been made to secure the individual loyalty and commitment to the regime and its policies of the rank and file soldier at the basic company level.

The party organization at the basic company level has been completely overhauled. In 1960 it was discovered that 60 per cent of the companies within the PLA had no company party branch and a similar number of platoons had no party cell. These have now been re-established. The Soldiers' Committee—a democratically elected body which had been popular during the revolution but had later been allowed to lapse—was also revived. The role at company level of the Young Communist League in acting as a political 'spearhead' was also re-defined. And the post of Company Political Commissar, with special responsibilities for political education and ideological work, was also restored. The company was now seen as the most sensitive link in the political chain which leads from the Military Affairs Committee of the central committee right down to the individual soldier, and whose party branch and personnel must be kept in good health.

The content of political education has also been enlarged to include almost every aspect, however trivial, of the average soldier's life. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the variety of subjects, ranging from the most important to the most mundane, which are now embraced under the heading of political education. It may include the way in which a cook prepares the meals for a company mess, as well as the way to educate the rank and file to the significance of the latest polemic against Khrushchevite revisionism. The *Selected Works* of Chairman Mao, especially the fourth volume which deals with the civil war period, are studied intensively, both privately and in classes throughout the PLA.<sup>23</sup>

Mao's works are the canon or bible in which guidance may be

<sup>23</sup> The choice of the fourth volume is of particular interest, since it underlines the way in which the Chinese leadership sees a direct analogy between its position in the civil war, when it 'relied upon its own resources' and fought the KMT with no outside help, and today, when once again self-reliance is the key-note of Chinese economic and foreign policies, and China stands in splendid isolation with both major powers as potential enemies.

sought and found for every problem whether trivial or important. The revolutionary period is the historical myth, whose story provides countless object lessons in how to maintain revolutionary standards today. If young soldiers are tempted to forget the need for vigilance or to relax in the more comfortable conditions of peacetime, they are reminded of the 'bitterness of things past' by veterans who remember the hard days before 1949 better than they do.

This return to the revolutionary model, or the socialist education movement as it is known, far from being confined to the army in China today, is standard procedure for every segment of Chinese society.<sup>24</sup> It is part of the struggle to combat 'revisionism' at home, to encourage the emergence of 'revolutionary successors', and to substitute an indigenous model and pattern of behaviour instead of the foreign models—especially those of the Soviet Union—which were absorbed in the 1950s. Its application to the army is, however, of special interest, because one would have expected a modernized and professional army to be less receptive to the moral exhortations and emphasis on doctrinal purity embodied in the socialist education movement. Far from this being so, from 1960 onwards, the army appears to have been used as a test-bed in which the revolutionary model was intensively applied before being more generally practised among the people at large. Here again there is an analogy with the revolutionary period, when the Red Army was itself perhaps the most important engine of social change.

The party's success in strengthening its control over the army and in raising the PLA's level of political awareness was impressive. By February 1963, after two and a half years of intensive work, new regulations on political control were introduced which raised the status of the political commissar and relegated that of the military commander to little more than an executive officer without powers of decision-making.<sup>25</sup> The fact that these new regulations could be introduced without apparent dissent from the officer corps suggests that the party already had the latter well under control. Final proof of the rehabilitation of the PLA in the

<sup>24</sup> See also below, pp. 270, 279 ff.

<sup>25</sup> See *Liberation Army Daily*, 8 May 1963, editorial, 'Raise aloft the great red banner of the thought of Mao Tse-tung, resolutely implement regulations governing PLA political work', 10 May 1963 (*SCMP* 2984).

party's favour came in February 1964, when the entire Chinese nation was exhorted to 'learn from the experience of the PLA in political and ideological work'. Movements such as the 'Five-Good' emulation contest for the individual soldier, and the parallel 'Four-Good' campaign for army companies were extended into civilian life.<sup>26</sup> Army cadres and demobilized army officers were detached to take up positions in industry and commerce, bringing the PLA's 'revolutionary style of work' to bear upon sensitive sectors of the country's economy.

Yet although the party strengthened its control over the PLA to an unparalleled extent, it also took care not to infringe upon its prestige. The party had evidently learnt from the mistakes made in 1956-9 when it first attempted to 'rectify' the 'deviations' to which it objected in the PLA. It no longer expected the army to take part in a variety of mass campaigns without regard for their effect on efficiency or their intrinsic value. Army participation in production work, for instance, declined from 59 million man-days in 1959—or nearly a month per soldier—to 5½ million—about two days per soldier—in 1964. Frugality and economy in personal life among the army continued to be urged, but the sort of major cuts in the PLA's budget and equipment which were imposed in 1957-8 were no longer inflicted. The army was no longer openly criticized for unsatisfactory behaviour; on the contrary, it was praised to the skies and offered as a model sector of society.

If this account of the PLA were to stop short at 1964, its rehabilitation over the previous four years under the leadership of Marshal Lin Piao might almost be regarded as an unqualified success story. But there have been increasing signs since 1964 of a recurrence of party dissatisfaction with the PLA, and of opposition within the PLA to the new anti-revisionist militancy of the party leadership. Party leaders have denounced 'the revisionist military line', and have criticized 'those whose heads are crammed full of foreign doctrines'. The charge that bourgeois elements within the PLA are opposed to party leadership has been revived. In June 1965 it was decided to abolish formal ranks within the PLA, and

<sup>26</sup> The 'Five-Good' movement of 1958 called for good performance in study, care of weapons, practice of economy and production and physical training; the goal of the 'Four-Good' movement of 1961 was to be good in political thought, in working style, in military training, and in management of living.

to revert to the single and functional distinction of revolutionary days whereby there were only two ranks—'Commanders' (officers) and 'Fighters' (rank and file). It was explained that this would help to 'eliminate certain objective factors contributing to breed class consciousness and ideas to gain fame and wealth'.<sup>27</sup> By the beginning of 1966 it was acknowledged that 'the question of whether the gun will direct the Party or the Party will direct the gun' had still to be finally settled.<sup>28</sup> The militia, which itself had made a comeback of sorts in 1964-5, and had been praised as the spearhead of the class struggle, also came in for criticism. 'Class enemies' and 'bourgeois tendencies' were said to be at large within its ranks.<sup>29</sup>

A full explanation of this decline in army-party relations must take into account the general increase in the quantity and intensity of anti-revisionist class struggle throughout all sectors of Chinese society since 1963-4. In this respect, the army has fared no worse in the class struggle, and if anything, the tone of party criticism against it is relatively mild, as compared with that of criticism against 'poisonous weeds of revisionism' in literature and art. Indeed, the use of the official army newspaper as the leading vehicle for attacks against literary revisionism suggests a continuing degree of confidence in the army itself. The charges of military revisionism are also much milder than the similar accusations of 'deviations' which were levelled against the army in 1956-9.

The causes of continuing army-party tension arise out of the nature of the relationship itself, as well as out of specific disagreements over policy. First, there is a built-in instability factor in the continual struggle by the party to maintain control over the army. We have seen that this struggle produces a series of oscillations, with relatively rare periods of equilibrium. The equilibrium was temporarily reached by the movement of 1960-4 for intensive political control and education, but this movement contained in itself the seeds of disequilibrium. First, because it restored the

<sup>27</sup> The military rank system was abolished by decision of the State Council as from 1 June 1965. See *Liberation Army Daily*, 25 May 1965, editorial, 'An important measure for promoting further the revolutionization of our army', NCNA (Peking), 24 May 1965. Distinguishing insignia, uniforms and epaulettes were also abolished.

<sup>28</sup> Hsiao Hua, director of Gen. Political Dept, report of Jan 1966 to PLA political conference, NCNA, 24 Jan 1966, trans. in BBC, *Summary of World Broadcasts*, pt 3, no. 2071.

<sup>29</sup> Hsu Li-ch'ing, deputy director of Gen. Political Dept, quoted in *New York Times*, 13 Apr 1966.

army's self-confidence to a point, symbolized by the 'Learn from the Army' campaign of 1964, where such self-confidence could easily degenerate into over-confidence and impatience with party interference. Significantly, it is since the 'Learn from the Army' campaign that criticism of the army has been revived, and the first charge which was levelled against it was one of arrogance and complacency in the wake of the campaign. Thus the army Chief of Staff complained that 'acclamations from the outside have promoted self-assurance, complacency and stagnancy among some of our comrades'.<sup>30</sup> Secondly, the very intensity of the political-control and education campaigns tends in time to produce an unfavourable reaction, if carried to excess, leading to the attitude criticized in January 1966 by the army's Political Department Director, that 'military affairs and politics should be given first place in turn'.<sup>31</sup> There are some indications that the innumerable emulation campaigns and movements to study Mao's writings which have been launched in the army during 1965-6 have become counter-productive.

We are now in a position to look back at the three distinctive features of the revolutionary army which were referred to earlier, namely the army-people, officer-men, and army-party relations, and to see how far they have survived since Liberation.

#### (a) ARMY-PEOPLE RELATIONS

Of the three relations, this has probably been the most harmonious since Liberation. The PLA enjoyed considerable prestige at the time of victory, which was soon enhanced by its performance in the Korean war. Some local difficulties arose during this period, when the Korean front was of paramount importance, over compulsory requisition of land, army monopoly of transport, and other such privileges. These were later solved during the 1957-8 'rectification' movement, and probably never reached serious proportions. Army help in production work may have been at times more of a hindrance than a help, but it was well-intentioned and met with popular approval. Of more fundamental importance was the simple fact that China was unified and that her army was well paid and fed, and under central control. At one stroke the

<sup>30</sup> Quoted on Peking radio, 31 Dec 1964 (BBC, *Summary of World Broadcasts*, pt 3, no. 1778).

<sup>31</sup> As n. 28.

basic cause of popular fear and hostility towards the military was thus removed. Observers in China report that admiration for the PLA is genuine, and that it is regarded as a great honour to have a son or relation serving in its ranks. There is no reason to doubt that the army is free of the stigma attached to it in pre-communist China.

(b) OFFICER-MEN RELATIONS

No serious breakdown appears to have occurred in this relationship either. During the Korean war and period of modernization, discipline and rank differentials followed conventional Western (and Soviet) lines. During the subsequent period of 'rectification', it was alleged that this had led to 'warlordism' and other high-handed behaviour on the part of officers towards men. While there was clearly some truth in these charges, one must remember that they are made from a standpoint based upon the revolutionary principles of 'military democracy', and that what was regarded as 'warlordism' in the PLA might pass for common practice in a western army. Since that time, officer privileges have been reduced and democratic machinery re-established throughout the PLA. This may not be to the liking of all officers, but it is presumably popular among the rank and file. There is certainly no indication of major difficulties in this relationship.

(c) ARMY-PARTY RELATIONS

Until 1949 the majority of leading PLA officers had served at one time or another both as political cadres and as military commanders. Since the very nature of the war fought by the PLA and the tactics which it employed were semi-political, the dividing line between the military and political functions was in any case often blurred. After 1949 the development of specialized military training in the new academies, and the growth of the new technical service arms—navy, air force, engineers, artillery, air defence, &c.—as well as the increasing complexity of staff headquarters, led to the birth of a new generation of essentially specialist officers. In addition, many leading officers who before had combined military and political functions, as well as frequently holding office in the local civil administration, now developed specialized interests. Thus it is not surprising that in the mid-1950s there was a certain amount of bipolarization in the PLA's officer corps between the

'professional' or 'modernizing' element and the 'political' or 'guerrilla-type' element.

These at any rate are the labels used by some Western analysts who have discussed the resultant tension and clash of interest between these two groups in some detail.<sup>22</sup> Yet three important provisos have to be made if the distinction between these two groups is not to be exaggerated. First, that there was never at any time a 'split' between the two groups of the kind which Pekingologists and Kremlinologists are prone to infer too readily when examining a closed system like that of communist China from afar; secondly, that at no stage did the party lose control of the army, nor was there an overt challenge to party leadership; thirdly, that it is very difficult to identify individuals as belonging to one or other group, and that many individual officers themselves probably subscribed to both 'modernizing' and 'political' arguments. In other words, the increasing technical complexity and professionalization of the PLA's role did not so much create divisions between individuals as divided loyalties within individuals; and the contradictions created by such divided loyalties reflect the basic contradiction inherent in the PLA's role since 1949, i.e. between its political role as the servant and military arm of the party, and its strategic role as the defender and guarantor of China's national security.

We know of only two instances since 1949 where a particular faction associated with the PLA opposed party policy to the point of open dissent and rupture. The first was the Kao-Jao conspiracy in 1953, when Kao Kang, the chairman of the North-east People's Government and concurrently commander of the North-east Military Region, together with Jao Shu-shih, Political Commissar of the East China Military Region, were said to have organized an 'anti-party alliance' against the leadership in Peking. Even this incident is a doubtful candidate for inclusion as a case of military dissension. Although Kao Kang was accused of having 'tried' to enlist army support, there is no evidence that he was successful. All the evidence suggests that three basic issues were involved in the Kao-Jao affair; an attempt by Kao to defend regional authority

<sup>22</sup> For a successful attempt to distinguish different strands of thought in the PLA, see Ellis Joffe, *Party and Army: Professionalism and Political Control in the Chinese Officer Corps, 1949-64* (Camb., Mass., 1965). A less happy attempt to distinguish by name between differing factions is made in Alice Langley Hsieh, *Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1962).



in the north-east against the centralizing policies of the government in Peking, a fundamental dispute over economic policy, and personal rivalry between Kao and Liu Shao-ch'i. None of these issues directly concerned the PLA.<sup>33</sup>

The second apparent challenge within the PLA leadership to the party occurred in 1959, when the then Minister of Defence, P'eng Teh-huai, was dismissed along with five or six of his colleagues. Here again the evidence clearly indicates that P'eng was not opposed to the party as such; indeed both he and those dismissed with him were loyal party members of many decades standing. They objected specifically to certain trends in the Great Leap Forward, such as the expansion of the People's Militia and the campaign for PLA participation in production, which they felt were at variance with their other responsibilities. What was more significant, P'eng had been responsible for the abortive negotiations with the Soviet Union which took place in 1958-9 over the possibility of Soviet nuclear aid to China, and his dismissal may well have been partly designed to make him the scapegoat for the failure of these negotiations. Other than these two incidents of Kao Kang and P'eng Teh-huai, our knowledge of the command structure in the upper echelons of the PLA—which is admittedly somewhat defective—does not suggest that there have been any purges, splits, divisions, or other dramatic conflicts of the kind so beloved by Peking—and Kremlinologists.

On the contrary, the Chinese PLA leadership is distinguished by the way in which the great majority of its members have held responsible office without interruption since 1949, in many cases without even moving from their original assignment. Most of the leading officers of all the specialized service arms and of most of the thirteen military regions display the same lack of mobility in their careers since 1949. If it had not been for the unsettling effect of the Korean war, when entire PLA armies and their commands were transferred to Korea, the degree of mobility among the PLA leadership might have been even less. Furthermore, there is no particular attempt to ensure that officers do not serve in the provinces of their origin, nor apparently is there any objection to

<sup>33</sup> On the Kao Kang case see further Harold C. Hinton, *The 'Unprincipled Dispute' within the Chinese Communist Top Leadership* (US Information Agency, July 1955); Peter S. H. Tang, 'Power Struggle in the Chinese Communist Party; the Kao-Jao Purge', *Problems of Communism*, Nov-Dec 1955.

provincial military staffs remaining at their posts for years on end without being reshuffled or re-posted, although one would have thought that a fear of provincial cliques would have led to more frequent leadership transfers. Even more remarkable is the ease with which civilian government was established in the five years after Liberation in 1949-54. In 1950 two out of the six regions into which China was then divided (north-west and south-west) were almost entirely under PLA control, operating through the regional and provincial 'Military and Administrative Committees', and two more (central-south and east) were partially under military control. Only in north and north-east China, where communist control was well established, was the PLA not dominant. Yet by 1954, when the first National People's Council was held and the constitution proclaimed, local government had been transferred without apparent difficulty from military to civilian hands. Once again the Kao Kang case was the only possible exception.

There are three explanations for the relative ease with which the Chinese party ensured the continued loyalty of the upper echelons of army leadership. First was the way in which China's intervention in the Korean war and the subsequent modernization of the PLA almost monopolized the army leadership's attention for the first seven or eight years after Liberation. Second was the system of party control through the party committee and political department. Third and most important was the fact that at least 80 per cent of the top 100 or so military leaders of the PLA are 'revolutionary veterans', whose service dates back to the Kiangsi Soviet period in the early 1930s or earlier, comrades-in-arms of Mao Tse-tung and indeed of almost all the present civilian and party leaders. It has been this element of continuity with the revolutionary traditions of the past which, more than anything else, has so far prevented the emergence of a 'military faction' in the top leadership, in spite of the essential contradiction between socio-political and military priorities in the PLA today. On the other hand, the existence of this contradiction does appear to have led to divided loyalties among those officers in executive positions on the PLA General Headquarters in Peking who have to reconcile the conflicting demands of their party loyalties and their military functions. Significantly, most of the leading officers who have fallen from favour in the PLA come from precisely this sector of military leadership—the Chief of Staff and the directors of PLA

General Headquarters, who have at one and the same time to keep the army in fighting trim, and to implement the party's policies on economy, participation in production, and other such campaigns.<sup>34</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

It would therefore appear that the CPR has achieved at least a qualified success in the handling of its armed forces. The proof of this is mainly negative; there has been no overt challenge to the party by the PLA; the PLA has not incurred popular hostility, nor has there been any marked degree of intra-army discord.

This success is based upon the translation of the revolutionary model, after some trial and error (notably during the Great Leap Forward) to modern conditions. Those elements of the model—intensive participation in production &c.—which are no longer so relevant have been discreetly played down since 1960. Meanwhile the essence of the model, the political and education structure, has been increasingly emphasized. But it is also clear that this success has been achieved at a certain price.

First, the constant emphasis upon political control and education, if carried to excess, may bring about a reaction against itself. This occurred in 1958-9, at the height of the army's rectification campaign. A similar process could begin to be detected at the time of writing in 1966. This counter-productive tendency is a feature of all mass campaigns, and not solely of those directed towards the army, but its implications may be more serious within the army than in civilian life.

Secondly, success has been achieved at the price of what may in retrospect be seen to have been an excessive reliance upon the senior revolutionary generation. Even among this generation, signs of a conflict of loyalty between political and military functions can be detected, especially at the executive level of leadership. This conflict may become much more pronounced when a more junior generation of officers comes to assume control. It would be a mistake to regard this second generation as a potential movement of 'Young Turks'. Yet the fact remains that they have less in common with the original revolutionary model, and that

<sup>34</sup> The Chief of Staff and the directors of the Political, Training, and Rear Services Depts (Huang K'o-ch'eng, T'an Cheng, Hsiao K'o, Hung Hsueh-chih), were all dismissed around the time of P'eng Teh-huai's removal from the Ministry of Defence.

as a class they have apparently been so far excluded from holding the most crucial category of office.

Finally, the party has to some extent maintained its grip on the PLA at the expense of purely military efficiency. It would be absurd to claim that the army is not an efficient fighting machine for normal defensive purposes, or that its position is in any sense analogous to that of the Manchu Banners or Green Standards. Yet in creating the kind of army which is responsive to political control, the party has in effect placed definite limitations on the uses to which that army can be put.

In terms of its capability and training, the PLA is essentially a defensive force. This is not to underestimate its capacity to mount limited operations beyond the Chinese frontier very successfully. But its capacity for sustained hostile action abroad is not very large. It lacks sufficient transport to move its troops outside China, it has an exiguous offensive bomber force in the air, nor has any attempt been made to construct a navy capable of deep-sea operations. The whole content of Chinese military strategy since 1949 has been consistently a defensive one. This is reflected in both the PLA's equipment and training, and in the way in which it is motivated. It is told by the party that its role is to defend Chinese soil against imperialist aggression, and told in some detail the form which such aggression will take—a nuclear attack by the United States followed up by conventional invasion. That is its first task. Its second task is to maintain law and order at home and to co-operate with the civilian authorities. Finally, it is told that the means it must employ in the case of defence against imperialist aggression are essentially those which were employed during China's revolutionary struggle. There is no evidence at all—even in the secret documents recently published by the United States<sup>35</sup>—that the PLA is educated to regard offensive military action of its own as on the agenda.

An army whose role is defined in these defensive terms is more likely to be receptive to central control than one which is encouraged to believe that it has a special role to play in China's destiny by expansion overseas. If the Chinese leadership had decided to build up an army which was not simply modernized for defence but also modernized in a way capable of major offensive action, it

<sup>35</sup> The *Kung-tso Tung-hsun* (PLA Political Work Bulletins) available for first half of 1961 from the Library of Congress.

is doubtful whether such a military force would remain effectively under political control. By encouraging an aggressive ethos in the PLA, the party would also encourage it to defy its own authority.

This is not to say that the Chinese leadership is only deterred from pursuing a policy of military expansion by fear that its armed forces would assume too much power and independence. On the contrary, the defensive nature of Chinese military strategy is entirely credible in itself as a deliberate policy based upon considerations of national interest and security. But the converse may be true: that a weakening of political control would lead to demands from within the PLA for a more powerful offensive capability. There have in the past been signs of PLA resentment at the relatively low proportion of the national budget assigned to military expenditure. The expansion of the militia—to some extent at the expense of the regular army—and the wholesale rejection of Soviet techniques, was also questioned by some quarters in the PLA. The time may again be coming when the PLA will claim a greater share of the budget. In particular, it may demand more expenditure upon the development of a modernized offensive capability, and correspondingly less upon the current programme of nuclear defence.

Paradoxically, therefore, the revolutionary model of the present Chinese leadership, as far as military policy is concerned, results in a PLA which is orientated mainly towards defence. A 'revisionist' approach might result in a more outward-looking and potentially dangerous military policy, in which the voice of the PLA was more influential. In a certain sense it is as much in the interests of the outside world as of China herself that politics should remain in command of the PLA.

#### THE PLA AND THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

The Cultural Revolution has placed the PLA in a more difficult situation, and has submitted its loyalty and cohesion to greater strain, than any previous event in its history. Signs of serious disension have appeared within the PLA leadership, and there is even some evidence of incipient military regionalism in the more remote Chinese provinces, notably in Tibet, Sinkiang, Inner Mongolia, and Szechwan. Although in the earlier stages of the Cultural Revolution the PLA appeared to be united behind Mao, there came a time when this could no longer be taken for granted.

These developments do not invalidate the conclusion reached in the previous pages that party policy towards the PLA in recent years has been generally successful. They point rather to the way in which the Cultural Revolution has undermined the basis for, and upset the pattern of, the harmonious adjustment of conflicting interests in Chinese society, including the relationship between party and military authorities. When in the early months of 1967 the PLA was called upon to intervene physically in the Cultural Revolution, and when the Revolution was extended to its own ranks, it became clear that verbal loyalty to the thought of Mao Tse-tung could not automatically be translated into action. Indecision and perplexity rather than either outright commitment or opposition has marked much of the behaviour of the PLA, and the precarious balance between military and political priorities has been seriously upset.

Throughout 1966, as long as the PLA was not required to take action, its verbal support for Mao could be relied upon. This was guaranteed by the leading role of Lin Piao as Mao's 'close comrade-in-arms', and at lower levels by the pro-Maoist indoctrination which had been so intensively carried out in previous years. PLA support for Mao was further assured by the prestige and respect paid to it during the Cultural Revolution, and by its exemption from the actual process of Cultural Revolution within its own ranks. After the dismissal of the Chief of Staff Lo Jui-ch'ing (whose name was linked with the disgraced Peking First Secretary P'eng Chen) there was no suggestion that further revisionist elements awaited exposure within the PLA leadership.

The crucial turning-point came in January 1967, when almost simultaneously the PLA was called upon to intervene on behalf of the 'revolutionary rebels' in the Cultural Revolution, and to accept the control of the Maoist Cultural Revolution Group in hunting out deviationists within its own ranks. Meanwhile in some provinces and regions, anti-Mao opposition from party leaders appeared to find allies among local military leaders. There is no evidence of a concerted challenge to Mao's authority on the part of the PLA, but rather of isolated resistance, or more commonly of confusion and of reluctance to prosecute the revolution to the extreme and disruptive limits favoured by the Maoist faction.

It is possible that Lin Piao himself was unhappy about Mao's

decision to order the PLA to intervene. Certainly, local PLA leaders showed no great anxiety to do so, and PLA intervention, usually of only a symbolic nature, was reported in less than half of the Chinese provinces. Nor was it always entirely clear on whose side the PLA was intervening, although it always professed to be pro-Mao.

The PLA, like the rest of the Chinese nation, has suffered from the Cultural Revolution's shattering revelation that support for the party is not synonymous with support for Chairman Mao. The effect of this revelation is possibly more damaging for the PLA than for other sections of society, since it strikes at the very roots of the entire system of political control and education. This system operated on the assumption that there existed a centralized party hierarchy operating through a vertical pattern of command on a united and nation-wide basis. The thought of Mao Tse-tung was the official party doctrine, not a separate source of authority. Loyalty to the actual party authorities in deed was as important as loyalty to the principles of Maoism in thought. In the last analysis, the army was controlled by the party committees at the regional, provincial, and lower levels, and this control had in fact been intensified in recent years.

The Cultural Revolution converted the party's greatest asset—its all-pervasive and decentralized (although obedient to central authority) control of Chinese society, including the PLA—into a major liability. Factions in the party leadership were duplicated at lower levels, and as the Cultural Revolution developed it increasingly assumed the form of a struggle between Mao and the party itself. Thus when the PLA was called upon to intervene, there was a considerable doubt as to which side should be favoured. Loyalty to Mao, the fountain-head of the PLA's inspirational doctrine, conflicted with obedience to local party authorities, often under attack by the 'revolutionary rebels' as anti-Maoists, who in many cases held concurrent posts in the military party committees.

Another casualty of the PLA's intervention in the Cultural Revolution was the concept of 'army-people' unity. Hitherto the sanction of PLA force had been held in reserve by the authorities as far as possible. Even during the hard years after the Great Leap Forward, when there was fairly widespread social unrest, it appears that the PLA had been used sparingly and with deliberate

caution. The task of maintaining law and order usually fell upon the police and the militia rather than upon the regular army. The PLA's intervention in the Cultural Revolution appears to have aroused considerable popular resentment, which was being officially acknowledged by April 1967. It was admitted that the PLA had in some instances given support 'incorrectly' and that it must observe 'modesty' in its behaviour. On more than one occasion PLA units were required to make a public self-criticism of the mistakes they had made during the process of intervention.

Until recently, as has been shown, the PLA had been exempted from the more 'revolutionary' measures which had earlier been imposed upon it during the Great Leap Forward. As the Cultural Revolution grew in intensity, however, demands for such measures were revived, although it seems unlikely that they were actually satisfied to any great degree. These demands included massive participation in agriculture, wholesale expansion of the militia, an accelerated officers-to-the-ranks programme, even stiffer doses of 'Mao-study', and finally the carrying-out of a genuine 'Cultural Revolution' within the PLA's own ranks. These demands, especially the last, appear to have led to a split within the PLA's own Cultural Revolution Group, which was reorganized in January 1967, and in the highest military leadership. The veteran Marshal Ho Lung, and possibly other members of the party Military Affairs Committee, as well as Chu Teh himself, have been denounced as anti-Maoist. It should be added that these demands have so far apparently been successfully resisted, perhaps because it is realized that to press them too hard would cause major disaffection.

This picture of growing disunity and confusion within the PLA is to some extent offset by the added prestige and authority which it has acquired during the Cultural Revolution. The three-way alliances (between the PLA, revolutionary rebels, and cadres) have given the PLA a decisive say in a number of local administrations. In other places the PLA may, by the mere threat of intervention, be able to arbitrate with authority between rival factions. There is no indication, however, that the PLA is particularly anxious to accept the implication of its enhanced political power. In view of the social and political confusion in China today, one might have expected the PLA to yield to temptation, and to intervene on its own account to impose a decisive solution. In the

great majority of other countries in the world, the army would have done so long ago. It is not impossible that if the Cultural Revolution continues, the temptation will prove too strong to resist, but so far there is no sign of it.

The Cultural Revolution has undoubtedly loosened, even if it has not yet destroyed, the bonds of political obedience which have made the PLA such a successful and docile instrument of policy over past decades. The fact that the PLA, contrary to many predictions in the West, has not yet 'taken over', testifies to the continuing strength of the tradition of loyalty to the party leadership and to Mao. But unless the gap between the party and Mao can be bridged very soon, the pressures upon the PLA may prove too strong to be contained by tradition. A third possibility is that the PLA's irresoluteness and divided loyalties will impose a stalemate in large areas of the country, since neither side will be able to count on its unqualified support. This would be a temporary solution to the Cultural Revolution, but not necessarily one with which the Maoist faction would be content. It would also tend to weaken central military and political authority, a development which would threaten the country's future stability, especially in the event of Mao's death. Much will now depend upon whether Mao is prepared to moderate the pace of the Cultural Revolution, and if so whether it is not too late for divided loyalties to be repaired. The Cultural Revolution has had no lack of success in creating or revealing contradictions, in the PLA as elsewhere. The question remains whether they can be resolved.

*July 1967*

# The Role of the Armaments Complex in Soviet Society (Is there a Soviet Military Industrial Complex?)<sup>1</sup>

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'The policy of peaceful coexistence and the securing of military superiority are two sides of a single Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactic.' (Fiedler et al. 1974, p. 6)

### 1. Introduction

The politics of international détente have been increasingly accompanied, in recent years, by a scientific and journalistic critique of those social forces which seek to keep alive the politics of the cold war and the arms race. In both bourgeois and Soviet-Marxist research, it is the concept of the 'military-industrial complex' (MIC) which, since the end of the 'sixties, has come into prominence; occasionally, this concept is transferred to the East European—non-capitalist—countries, especially the Soviet Union.

In this essay I raise the question whether or not the MIC concept can be fruitfully applied to explain the Soviet armament program, and which alternatives can be developed for understanding the armaments complex in Soviet society. Does the armaments complex — i.e., in particular the leaders of the military apparatus and the armaments industry — differentiate itself from other social groups in Soviet society? Does the armaments complex, or a portion of it, pursue an independent policy? Is there perhaps even a Soviet militarism? How does the role of the armaments complex in Soviet society differ from that of the armaments industry and the military in bourgeois society?

Let us begin with a discussion of an explanatory model of the armaments dynamics which is widely disseminated in the West.

### 2. Development and function of the MIC critique in bourgeois society

The evident popularity enjoyed by the MIC

concept in the social sciences expresses the split between proponents and antagonists of détente in capitalist countries; more specifically, it derives from the crisis — in foreign policy and domestic affairs — which afflicted the bourgeois society of the United States in the last phase of the Indochina War. The search to find the persons responsible for a policy whose consequences even more flagrantly contradicted the self-image and ideals of a bourgeois democracy and which inflicted defeats in foreign policy, national humiliation, and sharpening of social conflicts at home did not, however, lead to a fundamental critique of bourgeois society but to finding a scapegoat. The scapegoat chosen by the bourgeoisie for its act of self-criticism, corresponding to a certain depersonalizing and sociologizing of the historical understanding of bourgeois liberals, was not, as in former times, individuals, but a small group of persons who because of their profession openly and, to an extent, tangibly profited from the war: the professional military and the defense contractors, as well as their mouthpieces in the government, the administration and the national parties. According to a familiar liberal way of thinking, the national and social crisis was seen as resulting from a violation of the public good or interest by the encroachment of a particular group interest. Especially at the high point of the protest against the Vietnam War, at a time when the world currency crisis, the increase in the rate of inflation, and unemployment could not be

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whistled away — in the years 1968 to 1970 — the MIC critique reached its acme in the USA. (cf. Farrell 1972, p. 30; Meier 1972, p. 323). Two to three years passed by until this political and scientific critique was received in Europe; Ulrich Albrecht noted the first MIC critique in the GDR in 1969, and in the FRG in 1971. (Albrecht 1974, p. 155).

The 'merchants of death' critique has its predecessors. Robert Farrell points out that a critique of the armaments industry comparable to the MIC concept was popular in the 'thirties, when the legitimacy and economic benefits of American participation in the First World War were questioned (Farrell 1972, pp. 30-33). With the decline of the economic crisis and the preparation for the Second World War, interest in the scientific and journalistic critique of armaments profiteering and the political influence of the military equally diminished. The MIC conception is a variant of the liberal interest-group theory and especially of its elite-theory version, which — in opposition to undiluted pluralism — accords a place of importance to specific small groups in the process of social valorization (*Wertrealisierung*). The analysis of the close ties, both personal and in matters of common interest, between the military, economic and political elite has its forerunners in such classical radical works as those of Charles Beard (1934) or C. Wright Mills (1956); what is new is only the terminological emphasis upon the connection between the (armaments) industry and the military, formulated in the phrase 'Military-Industrial Complex', with its strongly critical and polemic connotations. The word 'complex' has obviously two senses here: 1, the close connection, but 2, also the non-monolithic, differentiated character of the relation between both groups — the (armaments) industry and the military. 'Complex,' that is a comprehensive (not only partial and occasional) and over-determined (not monocausal) fusion of two groups. The notion 'complex' implies a more flexible and ramified union of the elements

constituting it than one would find in a fully integrated 'group.'

### 2.1 Different MIC concepts

Before we turn to attempts to transfer the MIC notion to the Soviet Union, we must concern ourselves with the expansion of the idea in different scientific and political directions. In the interim, several authors have variously altered the MIC concept, so that Robert L. Hoffman can assert that: 'Originally denoting a powerful bloc of the armed forces and the industries supplying them, the term is now used more loosely. Apparently it can refer to as much or as little as the user wishes to condemn of the institutions and people connected with military affairs'. (Hoffman 1972, p. 89). In the same way, William T. Lee speaks of a 'politico-military-industrial complex', (Lee 1972, p. 73), Dieter Senghaas of an 'administrative-military-industrial-scientific complex', (Senghaas 1972a, p. 80) or of a 'political-ideological-military-scientific-technological-industrial complex', (Senghaas 1972b, p. 14) and Fred Schmidt of a 'military-industry-feudal-clerical complex' (Schmidt 1972, p. 169). Klaus Engelhardt and Karl-Heinz Heise would include under the 'military-industrial power syndicate' 'not only the combination of the power apparatus, but equally power in the sense of intellectual and material class domination of human beings' (Engelhardt & Heise 1970, p. 1101). Additional, more or less well-founded — or simply asserted — 'complexes,' designated by an accumulation of modifiers, can be found without difficulty.

The way in which the modifiers are strung together reflects certain political shadings of the MIC concept, suggesting different counter-strategies against the preponderating influence of the complex. The MIC concept in the strict sense, as used by Dwight D. Eisenhower (cf. Schiller & Phillips 1970, pp. 29-31) assumes that in theory civilian politicians act independently of particular economic, military and other interests, pledged only to the public good, and

that their policies are legitimated by the parliamentary-democratic voting procedure. The MIC critique intended to signal what it saw as a dangerous departure from the democratic tenet of an equality of interests. Fundamentally, it had no objections to the existence and further development of the military and of the arms industry, and certainly none to the bourgeois social system generally.

The political aims of the MIC critique can be summarized under the four following goals:

- a) elimination of corruption and 'excessive' profits, favored by military security regulations;
- b) elimination of the plundering of natural and human resources for the sake of militarily useless weapons-systems;
- c) dismantling of the 'superfluous' defense sector — 'unnecessary' for national security and employed for the suppression of other peoples in the interest of certain private parties — and the return to an earlier (pre-1939), minimal defense program;
- d) weakening of the 'power,' of the influence of the MIC on the society as a whole in favor of more peaceable, conciliating forces.

The purpose of the MIC critique which aims at eliminating corruption and abuse can be either: to more effectively utilize, from a military point of view, the defense state (more firepower for less money) or to free those resources — exceeding the requirements of a 'healthy' military apparatus and hitherto exploited by unscrupulous 'power makers' — for social and other civilian purposes.

The MIC critique does not usually explain how its goal of reducing armaments to those needed 'simply for defense' is to be implemented. The majority of authors limit their conclusions to the demand for restoring the power of the congress for mobilizing public opinion and exerting pressure from below on the national parties and the administration. The occasional demand for nationalisation of the armaments industry — based

upon the notion that private individuals should not profit from representing the national interest — must be viewed as an extreme position (Galbraith 1970, p. 8).

Those authors who conceptually incorporate the entire political elite, not merely individual corrupt politicians, in the complex dispense with the original MIC concept. The most far-reaching critique of this sort still derives from C. Wright Mills, who held responsible the whole American 'power elite' — consisting of the political, economic and military elite, with increasing predominance of the latter — for the sinister militarization of society and for an armaments policy which would probably culminate in World War III (Mills 1956, 1963).<sup>2</sup> This radical elite critique, approaching a comprehensive analysis of society, has been weakened in later elite-theoretical investigations of the relation between the military, industry and the political establishment, since they view more optimistically — on the basis of the difference between the power elite (of the security political establishment) united in the MIC, and 'segments of the ruling elite... in civilian areas' — the possibility of public control of security measures (Senghaas 1972a, p. 81) and leave open the possibility of an anti-militaristic reform policy. Nevertheless, the question remains unanswered whether a return from 'over-kill' to 'normal' or 'single-kill' capacities is held to be possible and would suffice to bring about peace, or whether one is to deduce from the analysis that the politics of peace must strive for full-scale disarmament — i.e., the elimination of the military and the interests associated with it. This problem could not arise for the traditional MIC critique, since its aim was not the dissolution of the MIC, but a stronger control over it, that 'uncontrolled power network of economy and science, the military and politics, which today preprograms society, in a long-range and dangerous fashion, without the public taking notice' (Grossner 1971, p. 128). The idea is echoed by John K. Galbraith: 'The goal is not to

make the military power more efficient or more righteously honest. It is to get it under control.' (1970, p. 75).

The MIC discussion has been conducted, as it were, in rather perfect isolation from the analysis of socio-economic relations. Fritz Vilmar alone connects his idea of reformist antimilitarism with a conception of radical social-democratic social reform (Möller & Vilmar 1972).

### 3. International actions and reactions or autism?

The MIC critique corresponds to the need felt in peace research to overcome traditional, demonstrably unfruitful research into the causes of war and means of preventing it, which — unmediated by social changes — emphasized international agreements for disarmament and the peaceful settling of conflicts as well as improving popular understanding by eliminating national prejudices. Attention should be directed to the social interests in individual countries which condition armament politics and oppose implementation of the most enlightened peace programs or models. From this point of view, the armaments dynamics is not to be interpreted as resulting from international, hostile actions and reactions — of a military, political, weapons technological, economic or ideological nature — but from its function in the realization of particular social interests. According to this notion, one must combat the armaments dynamics first of all in one's own country, i.e. at first to curb it and later to convert it — one could perhaps say — into a disarmament and peace dynamics.

In recent years, in opposition to the action-reaction interpretation of the armament dynamics the autism-thesis has been developed, in particular by Dieter Senghaas (Senghaas 1971, pp. 105 ff.; 1972b, p. 50 ff.), according to which the armament dynamics, after having originated in real international conflicts, has made itself independent and is now promoted by the military-industrial complex — social aggregates of arms in-

dustrialists, military men, a large part of the scientific community, of politicians and trade union leaders — to a large extent without regard to what happens on the other side. In the meantime, each military-industrial complex leads, to a degree, autistically into an arms race with itself. Fantasied enemies and imagined threats are, according to this thesis, not a cause but instruments deliberately produced in the ideological workshops of the MIC for justifying their actions to the taxpayers and themselves. This process is thought to be accompanied by a constant loss of politically and militarily rational purpose and choice of means. This sophisticated translation of Parkinson's thesis of the self-sustaining dynamics of bureaucratic apparatus to the national armament complex (cf. Senghaas' comments on the 'Schumpeter-Effekt', 1972b, pp. 47 ff.) contents itself, nevertheless, with a critique of the forms in which the international armament dynamics manifests itself.

The autism thesis starts from the valid observation that qualitative and quantitative weapon escalations do not necessarily coincide with hostile international actions and reactions. The action-reaction thesis, which is frequently used to justify military policy in East and West, is — apart from the inter-governmental ruling function of the military and a part of the armament sector — still incorrect, since the time required for the planning, development and production of modern weapons systems extends over many years; arms economics and military potential, as a whole, are not so flexible over a short period of time that they only need to be activated in political crises. Military strategy in East and West correctly assumes that in a future nuclear war not the entire military potential will decide the issue but only the immediately mobilizable military, economic and psychological forces (Sokolowski 1969, pp. 248 ff.; cf. also K. Knorr 1956, pp. 19 ff.). Because of the long period of seven or more years required for the gestation of a modern weapons system from its conception to its attack capability, it is self-

evident that the military planners already begin to develop the counter-weapons to the ones they have conceived, before the latter has been in fact produced and before the probable antagonist possesses them or has planned them (Senghaas 1973, p. 50). These observations testify, as the autism conception emphasizes, against the customary notion of defense ideology that armaments are determined by political actions and reactions, thus by political confrontations.

One can empirically ascertain, to a certain degree of reliability and detail, at least as far as the U.S.A. is concerned, the diverse long and short range alliances of professional groups, different branches of the armed services, military schools, and their affiliates in the armaments sector. Further evidence would be paranoid conceptions of reality and fantasied threats, propagated by small group interests, as well as weapons biographies which reveal the influence of individual administrative, industrial and military interests. In principle, similar influences of individual military offices, different ministries and economic administrators as well as factory managers certainly exist in Soviet society, and can occasionally be more or less clearly demonstrated, as during the period of the change from conventional to nuclear strategy in the fifties to the sixties (Wolfe 1967, p. 104 ff.). Methodologically speaking, it is nevertheless, decisive that the proof that this and not that weapons system was given preferential construction because of the influence of particular persons and groups — although it was not necessary for national security — tells us very little about the comprehensive social function and the direction of development of the military and the arms sector. Such investigations also tell us nothing about the foreign political aims and goals which are served thereby.

### 3. The conjectural Soviet MIC

When the question is asked whether there is an MIC in the Soviet Union, that is, if the MIC is only peculiar to capitalism or also exists in Soviet society, one must at least

discuss the connection between socio-economic order and MIC in the MIC conception. If one eliminates the system-characteristic aspect from the MIC analysis, and holds property relations to be irrelevant from the beginning, the question of the existence of a Soviet MIC becomes mere rhetoric.

In the vested interest group or elite-theoretical methodology, which derives behaviour from forces ('interests') internal to the group, the question remains unanswered why certain groups are able to extend their sway over the entire society and others not — if one is unwilling to satisfy oneself with the social darwinistic pseudo-explanation of the victory of the strongest in a battle of each vested interest group against the other. Even the Soviet marxist MIC critique remains close to the bourgeois elite critique when it limits itself to explaining armaments by the alliance of armaments monopolists, the military and chauvinistic political forces (cf., for example, Schmid 1972, p. 17), or hardly affirms the instrumental function of the arms complex for the entire ruling class (Engelhardt & Heise 1970, p. 1111 ff.).

A further peculiarity of the vested interest group and elite approach, and thus of the MIC conception, is its disregard for the historical dimension. The elite theories assume that in each society there exist one or more elites (cf. Keller 1968, pp. 26-29; Deutsch 1971, pp. 92-98) and do not include the historical possibility of an eliteless society. In any case, the composition and function of the elites can, according to their theory, alter in the course of history. So, one cannot conclude from Mills' analysis, for example, whether he holds a society without a power elite to be historically possible. It is also because of the ahistorical character of the vested interest group and elite theory, that the question of the existence of a Soviet MIC is positively decided before one makes the effort of even spending a few minutes in analyzing Soviet society.

If one examines the scientific literature it is glaringly obvious that the transfer of the MIC conception to the Soviet Union fre-

quently is employed — and, to a certain extent, in a more or less *circumspect* form only in parentheses — by authors who have exclusively concerned themselves with the analysis of bourgeois society. Some examples here:

The collaborators of the 'Weizsäcker-Studie' write: 'An important stimulus of arms competition lies in the connection of private economic interest with the armament sector. Even bureaucrats are exposed to analogous, structurally conditioned temptations. It would be astounding if there did not exist on the Soviet side a parallel to the military-industrial complex, which only, according to the political system, remains hidden from the eyes of the public.' (Auffeldt et al. 1972, p. 37 ff.)

John K. Galbraith believes: 'There is no political future in unilateral disarmament. And the case must not be compromised by wishful assumptions about the Soviets which the Soviets can then destroy... it is wise to assume that within their industrial system, as within ours, there is a military-industrial bureaucracy committed to its own perpetuation and growth. This governs the more precise objectives of control.' (1970, p. 76)

Dieter Senghaas asserts: 'today one speaks a good deal of the military-industrial complex whose existence in highly industrialized capitalist and socialist societies, especially in the United States and the Soviet Union, one can hardly doubt.' (1971, p. 80; 1972c, p. 65 ff.)

Beyond such assumptions or assertions of a Soviet MIC or a Soviet power elite (in particular, Vilmar 1967, pp. 11, 16, 323; also Senghaas 1969, p. 133) one finds, strikingly, almost no detailed analysis of the Soviet MIC. This situation seems to be explained by the fact that bourgeois analysts of the Soviet society are politically far more conservative than the majority of bourgeois social scientists, especially of liberal MIC critics, and still significantly incline to the totalitarianism conception (Wolfe 1968, p. 113), although recently the vested interest conception (V.V. Aspaturian, G. Skilling,

F. Griffiths) appears to prevail (cf. Kanel 1973, pp. 241-261). For the liberals, the interspersed assertion, in their analysis of western industrial societies, that there also exists an eastern MIC, may have a double function. On the one hand, the assertion of a Soviet MIC once again certifies that the MIC in capitalism is not necessitated by the system — Dieter Senghaas expressly calls it 'system neutral', although modified by social systemic peculiarities (Senghaas 1972a, p. 84) — and that its influence can be reduced or eliminated by reforms immanent to capitalism. On the other hand, the assertion of a Soviet MIC serves as protection against conservative bourgeois assailants, who gladly reproach the MIC critics for their supposed communist sympathies.

The only detailed discussion of the Soviet MIC up to now derives from Vernon V. Aspaturian, if one disregards essayistic reflections (Armstrong 1969, pp. 84-90, 122-126), or studies in which, practically speaking, an MIC is only mentioned in the title (Krylov 1971, pp. 88-97). Aspaturian's study is also an interesting example of attempts to comprehend affirmatively the MIC concept, i.e., to reject it — if limited — critical 'polemic' function and to affirm its analytical value (Aspaturian 1972, p. 1).

Vernon V. Aspaturian responds to the question of the existence of a Soviet military industrial complex in a relative sense, with reference to the different MIC concepts. In a larger sense there probably exists an MIC in every country with an established military and an industrial sector, since the professional military, industry and leading politicians 'intentionally and symbolically' pursue their common interest against other groups. To the contrary, there exists neither in the Soviet Union nor in the U.S.A. not in any other country an MIC in the narrower sense, as an interlocked and mutually dependent interest structure, uniting the military, industry and political representatives, which enables or compels them to jointly behave as an isolated political actor, divorced from its individual components. Be-

tween the stricter and broader concepts, there exists, according to Aspaturian, a conceptual continuum, 'somewhere' on which the Soviet MIC is to be placed (1972, p. 1). Aspaturian attributes to 'the military', 'industry' and 'the politician' to a certain extent the character of an actor, although not to the MIC. Aspaturian does not explain why the military should have a common interest but the MIC none. Here one sees the fundamental difficulty of the vested interest approach, which is unable to develop theoretically founded criteria for differentiating groups and subgroups. Aspaturian sees no essential difference between the American and the Soviet MIC, only notes certain specific subordinate traits.

Aspaturian alludes to the prevalent thesis in the Soviet Union that there is certainly an MIC in the U.S.A. but none in the USSR. He finds it unusual that Soviet authors admit the existence of the military, the industrial sector, even the armaments industry sector, but not their union in a complex (1972, p. 2.). The Soviet Marxist thesis, however, rejects not only the notion of a Soviet MIC with its own particular interest as bourgeois 'falsification,' but condemns any conception of vested interest groups with particular interests, standing in opposition to one another, for the analysis of Soviet society, as Aspaturian himself later explains. Soviet science and public relations continue to assert a fundamental harmony of interest of all social classes, levels and in groups in Soviet society. A comparable ideology dominated, moreover, also in bourgeois society in its post-revolutionary period (cf. Jahn 1973, p. 144.).

One must characterize as misleading the attempt to deduce from this self-admitted evidence, which denies the existence of fundamental conflicts of interest, that Soviet authors conceive the Soviet system as a whole, and not only a part of it, as a military industrial complex (Aspaturian 1972, p. 2.). Similarly, another American author believes that in the Soviet Union there exists no MIC — the country is an MIC (Arm-

strong 1969, p. 87.). If it also appears to us correct not to attribute the militarization of states in our own historical period to the peculiarities of individual elites, but rather to understand it as an historical process which tendentially penetrates the entire society and includes all previously separated areas of life (cf. Senghaas 1969, p. 5 ff.), one can in no way infer, from the ideologically unexamined peculiarities of the Soviet self-interpretation, that the militarization of Soviet society has preceded further than that of American. Aspaturian himself 'naturally' holds the annulment of vested interest groups to be untenable, without discussing the problem of transferring the vested interest group approach, which expresses the liberal self-comprehension of bourgeois society, to the Soviet Union. Instead he discusses, in the sequel, the Soviet armaments policy from the viewpoint of bonds of interests outside of institutional and functional limits on the basis of problem areas (issues), and especially of resource allocation. For this purpose Aspaturian classifies the Soviet interest groups into six special 'distinctive demand sectors,' without giving the criteria for this classification. The six distinctive demand sectors are: 1. The ideological sector (the ideologues and conservatives of the party apparatus); 2. The security sector (police, the armed forces, the defence industry); 3. The producer sector (heavy industry, construction, and transportation); 4. The consumer sector (light industry, consumer goods industry, trade and housing); 5. The agricultural sector and 6. The public services and welfare sector. The arbitrariness of these conceptual combinations and divisions is quite evident since Aspaturian himself earlier preferred another division of Soviet society (1966, pp. 212-287.). We find as little justification for later changes as we do for the original division. Methodologically there is an indifferent combination of professions with professional groups, as is also the case in the power elite conception, in which one nowhere finds a reason why 'the economy,' 'industry' or 'the arms indus-

try' are to be conceived as actors. Certain authors explicitly include the interests of workers and trade unionists in the interests of armaments industry (Lee 1972, p. 79.), others have in mind only armaments capitalists or armaments managers, when they speak of the armament industry. Aspaturian apparently means the elite, although he — like nearly the majority of other elite theoreticians — adduces no criteria for membership in the elite (an exception is to a certain extent K. W. Deutsch 1971, p. 92 fl.).

Corresponding to the distinctive demand sectors, Aspaturian also sees the Communist Party divided into fractions. He sees Kosygin as an exponent of the consumers, Breshnev as one of the producers, without offering us a shred of evidence for such ties of interest of either Soviet politician (1972, p. 5.). In a further analytical step, Aspaturian observes a polarization of three of the distinctive demand sectors — those of the security, production and ideology groupings — on the one side and those of the consumer, agricultural and public service groupings on the other side. Since he conceives both foreign and domestic policies in the first place as an answer to internal demands, Aspaturian believes that evaluation of the international situation in the Soviet Union is not homogenous but depends upon one's membership in either of these groups. The security — producer — ideology groupings he identifies with the Soviet MIC (1972, p. 6; cf. 1966, pp. 256 following.) and asserts to be oriented to escalation, while the other is interested in detente (p. 3; cf. 1966, pp. 277 fl.). This attempt to connect political orientation with socio-economic groupings must be designated at present as mere speculation, which can support itself on nothing other than common sense argument. It stands in opposition to the results of quantitative text analyses, according to which the military — at least on the basis of published evidence — represent no other policy than that of the professional politicians (Marks & Griffin 1972, p. 541.). For the time being we do not even have reliable information as to the ex-

istence of two so sharply opposed political currents, one oriented to escalation and the other to detente, in the Soviet Union (cf. Arons et al. 1973, p. 4.). To an even lesser degree can one vouch for a relationship between observable political differences of opinion and socio-economic groupings in the Soviet Union. Aspaturian must therefore frequently satisfy himself with mere assertions, for example, that in recent years the military and the arms industry have expanded their influence on the shaping of Soviet policy (1972 p. 5), that the defence industry is a 'economy in the economy', that the military is an 'imperium in imperio' (1972, p. 18.), that the present day Soviet foreign policy rests upon a compromise with the Soviet MIC, which has demanded, for concessions on disarmament and arms control negotiation, the acceptance of its perception of the international situation (1972, p. 28.)

#### 4. MIC critique or militarism critique

Many times there is no difference made between a militarism critique and a critique of the military industrial complex. In current bourgeois discussions militarism designates an 'excessive' influence of the military and other groups, professionally in close connection with the military, directly interested in armaments, in short; the primacy of the 'military' over the 'political' (Vagts 1967, p. 14 fl.; Ritter 1970, p. 13; cf. Jahn 1974, p. 123 fl.). According to this explanation, militarism consists of an open military dictatorship and exists in countries having a military administration; in addition, it also exists in all countries in which the military and armaments industries covertly determine policy. In a larger sense, one does not understand by militarism the 'excessive' influence of the military and associated groups (thus of the MIC), but the penetration of the entire society by military thinking and military forms of behaviour (Senghaas 1972b, p. 13 following). The counterpart of militarism is the total 'subordination' of the military and military consideration to politics,

especially under the democratic control of the legislature and/or the public (Medick 1973, p. 502 following), and the total instrumentalization of the military for (democratic) political aims.

The question whether — according to this explanation — in a given case militarism exists, is thus largely independent of the extent of the military and of armaments expenditures and even of the economic and social order. The socialist social order is as little immune in this case as the capitalist. In any case, dictatorial political systems rate rather as militaristic than as parliamentary — democratic. Ordinarily, in bourgeois science one avoids the dichotomizing qualification: militarism or non-militarism, in presenting the social relations of a given country. One prefers to speak of more or less distinct military 'elements' and of 'tendencies' to militarization, or — still more weakly — of the 'danger' of militarization. Apart from considerations of political opportunism, this relativizing use of language makes it difficult, under the circumstances, to imagine a 'pure' civilian policy abstracted from all military considerations and interests. This is especially the case when one pursues further the bourgeois militarism concept, which not only emphasizes the perceptible influence of narrowly defined groups of persons (professional military, arms managers, etc.), but also introduces the military thinking and behavior of civilians. Since Eisenhower's famous warning in the year 1960, the MIC critique only essentially differentiates itself from the older bourgeois militarism critique in that it takes cognizance of the closer interrelation and communication between the military, the arms managers and the civilian administration — which has become necessary owing to the technological advances of military activity and the rapid qualitative development of weapons systems.

Marxist-Leninist theory employs a completely different concept of militarism. Each class society is, according to this theory, by definition militaristic. On principle, there

cannot be a non-militaristic bourgeois society; there can, however, exist different forms of militarism, for example, the bourgeois democratic or the open, fascist one. Bourgeois militarism can be evaluated as more or less aggressive (Skopin 1957; Engelhardt & Heise 1974, p. 35 fl.); for this reason, writers in Eastern Europe hesitate to qualify small, especially neutral states as militaristic; but on principle, according to this theory, militarism also plays a dominant role in Sweden, Austria, Luxemburg and Liechtenstein. Paralleling this reciprocity of militarism and the socio-economic order, there exists, so asserts Marxist-Leninist theory, no militarism in any socialist country; there can be none, not even the danger of militarization — an assertion which is based on the proposition that militarism is only peculiar to class society and the socialist society is not a (antagonistic) class society (Skopin 1957; Fiedler et al. 1974, pp. 19 fl.). A 'socialist' militarism is a logical impossibility. When a speaker in the Soviet Union refers to a 'military-bureaucratic elite' in China, he implies the qualification of non- or anti-socialist, generally directly expressed (Konstantinow et al. 1973, p. 350).

In the same fundamental reasoning, which is certainly not based upon empirical investigation of the armaments complex in Eastern European countries, the existence and even the possibility of a 'military industrial complex' is *a priori* denied (see Aspaturian 1972, p. 2). According to the Marxist-Leninist explanation, no social group can, in the Soviet Union — which is free from class antagonism — find itself basically in opposition to other social groups, thus to no military arms-industry bosses. It is certainly admitted that today, as previously, there exist specific interests of social classes, groups and professional groups; but they do not stand in basic opposition to one another, rather they are linked with one another through the Communist Party. One of the leading Marxist-Leninist philosophers, J. G. Gleserman, writes about the role of specific interests: 'Each question of political eco-

mony touches upon a multiplicity of specific interests and must be solved by taking into account these interests. Let us take, for example, the distribution of investments among the individual economic branches. The securing of a more rapid development of the most progressive economic branch corresponds to the interests of the people as a whole. Nevertheless, the redistribution of investment means in favor of newer branches can be momentarily detrimental to the interest of the 'old' branches and be accompanied by contradiction... Behind the index figures of the rate of development of the different economic branches stand persons, who are not only materially interested in the growth of the economy as a whole, but also in the development of the particular branch in which they are employed.' (1973, p. 140). Such a statement must certainly equally apply to the armaments industry.

Since, *a priori*, a conciliation of the diverse specific interests does not exist, but must take place through the party in the state, there certainly exists in the Soviet Union a priority debate about the distribution of resources, in which not only different opinions play a role, but in which different interests express themselves. Nevertheless, this priority debate in the Soviet Union does not take place in public. There is only the most meager information available about the decision making process and the different and opposing positions taken up in laying economic plans. Generally speaking, they must be inferred from indirect references. Even such a profound student of the problem as David Holloway does not get far beyond illuminating institutional interrelationships in analysing the armaments complex (1974). Holloway is unable to say whether decisive, independent political and planning impulses standing in opposition to civilian political notion, emanate from the institution of the military and the arms industries.

A third position in the militarism debate orient itself to classical Marxism. It does not concern itself so much with empirically

provable influences of certain persons (military, armaments industry bosses) on others (civil employees, politicians) or with individual measures in the decision-making process of the leading institutions and informal groups. It is interested in the constellation of social class interests in international society as a whole. Before 1917 this international society was essentially identical with bourgeois society. Conflicts between states were thus essentially conflicts within bourgeois society, thus not 'between' different bourgeois societies. 'There are not so many bourgeois societies, so many capitalisms, as there are modern states and nations, but only one international society, one capitalism...' (Luxemburg 1971, pp. 292 following.)

This unity of international society was not eliminated by the October Revolution, even if a second system of property relations arose within and next to the capitalist world system. Competition between nations determined then, as previously, social relationships in all parts of the world. This competition necessitated a comprehensive and rapid preparation for war and the arming of the Soviet Union. Armament is, however, impossible without weapons production, and this cannot take place without a highly developed industry. Industrialization and militarization were forced upon the Soviet Union by international competition, by threats — and wars — of intervention. It was no abstract spirit of economic competition, no emulation of capitalist notions of performance and models of accumulation which originated the famous formula; to 'catch up with and overtake' the capitalist economy, but military necessity: 'war is unremitting, it poses with brutal sharpness the question: either to go under or to catch up with and overtake the advanced nations also economically' (i.e.: not only in the development of the political system, E.J.) (Lenin 1972, p. 375).

According to the classical Marxist explanation, the military, in alliance with the armament industry and the cooperating ad-

ministration, is not so much a special social-historical actor, but much more an agent of the ruling social classes. This explanation emphasizes much more the instrumental character of the military and its close associates. The so-called 'military-industrial complex', is, thus, in the first place not an independently acting subject — as in critical bourgeois theory — but rather a tool of the ruling classes. This tool serves, on the one hand, to maintain class domination, thus, to police the suppressed classes; on the other hand, it serves as a political *ultima ratio* for economic competition between the national fractions of capital. Nevertheless, the relationship between bourgeoisie and military apparatus should not be misunderstood as one of one-dimensional domination and subordination. Marxist analysts of militarism and state power have always emphasized that between the ruling classes and the bureaucratic civilian and military apparatus conflicts and contradictions emerge — that, in fact, momentarily in periods of stalemate between classes and class fractions the military can directly seize political power, that it is not only a political class tool. The classic historical example here is that of the 'Bonapartism' of Napoleon III (Deutscher 1969), in whose time the political battle slogan 'militarism' also originated. According to this theory, this role of the military and of the state apparatus as a whole does not result from an inner drive, an insatiable lust for power, but results from momentarily shifting class relationships.

The empirically demonstrable conflict between individual divisions of the ruling classes, between these and the armament complex and between individual branches of the services is not overlooked by the classical marxist theory; still, these contradictions and conflicts appear as secondary in relationship to the total social opposition of class interests and confrontation, in which the armaments complex has an essential instrumental function. The militarism critique is, according to this theory, inseparable from a critique of capitalism; class domination

appears as unthinkable without militarism.

So, Karl Liebknecht observes, for example, that the military and arms industry are not 'pure' instruments of class domination without any interest of their own and without their own political will: 'Capitalism and its powerful overseer militarism have no love for each other, but rather fear and hate each other, and they have truly many reasons for this behaviour; they mutually observe one another — since this overseer has made himself independent — only as necessary evils and have every cause for acting this way' (1958, p. 309). Liebknecht discerned that long before World War I there was the close interlocking between the military and the arms industry, which putatively first existed after World War II (Engelhardt 1972): 'Both groups, which have a special interest in war, i.e., an interest in wars, in the leading of a war itself — an adventurist interest, in the case of the officers, and one completely independent of the war's success, in that of the army suppliers — flock together, to use a popular expression, like birds of a feather. They are allied with the highest state officials and possess great influence in those areas which must formally decide over war and peace' (Liebknecht 1958, p. 359).

##### 5. The function of the armaments complex in bureaucratic society

Although Marxism has developed as a method for analyzing capitalist society, its fundamental methodological inquiries and procedures appear applicable to the analysis of non-capitalistic Soviet society — without here going into the question in what regard the altered social realities require altered scientific tools. We find numerous symptoms of a class society in the 'socialist world system'. Today as before, daily and even bloody conflicts between the producers and the ruling social groups in Eastern Europe, the bureaucracy, result from deeply rooted opposing social interests; today as before, the armament of 'socialist' states directs itself against other states, and certainly also

against non-capitalist ones. The first war between 'socialist' states was stopped in 1968 by well-timed capitulation on one side; at the Chinese-Soviet border 'socialist' mass armies belligerently confront one another.

Neither the social conflicts within the non-capitalist countries nor the confrontations between these states can be sufficiently explained by conspiracy theory, which attempts to derive these conflicts from the effects of survivals of capitalism and from subversive, imperialist activities. Though one cannot disregard these influences from the past and from the environment, the necessity still remains of studying the internal contradictions of the noncapitalist, non-socialist mode of production, which many times has been called 'statist' (see Jahn 1974, p. 90 ff.).

Among the symptoms of the existence of socially antagonistic interests in the Soviet Union can be numbered the presence of a professional army; workers were already disarmed during the thirties in the Soviet Union. According to the classical marxist theory, militarism can first be counted as overcome when socially conflicting interests have been eliminated and a general arming of the populace has taken place. The universal arming guarantees against the use of armed force against the producers, against the majority of the people in their own country, as well as against aggression from other people in other countries.

The (Soviet) institutional Marxism-Leninism today holds these conditions for a non-militaristic military to have been realized within the 'socialist community'. The professional army it sees as being legitimized through the will, the interest and the control of the working class. This explanation relies not so much upon empirically supported arguments, but is, in the last instance, derived from a single proposition: After the October Revolution the means of production have been in the Soviet Union (and later also in certain other countries) socialized, have become the property of the working class and the working salaried populace as a whole. All central assertions about social relation-

ships derive from this official fundamental axiom of Soviet society — thus also assertions about the political system including the military, the arms administration and the state apparatus as a whole. The overwhelming majority of Soviet literature concerns itself only with fundamental deductions and principles; empirical-historical material about the armaments complex is only sparsely available for limited periods of history.

This official Soviet argument can be shaken by investigations such as that of David Holloway (1974). But even the fulfilment of his demand for more case studies of the Soviet armaments complex (1974, p. 273) fails to touch upon the central point of the problem: what is the social function of the Soviet armaments complex? The (Soviet) institutional Marxism-Leninism does not need to deny that there is a special professional military and a special armaments industry under the leadership of eight or more ministries in the Soviet Union. Obviously there are also existing in the Soviet Union close connections and arrangements between, on the one hand, these social sectors with one another and, on the other hand, between those persons professionally occupied with arms and the (civilian) political decision committees. Evidently in Soviet society the majority of initiatives for expanding the military stem from representatives of the individual branches of the services, from the leadership of the defense industry, from military research institutes and from ministries which guide the production of arms, and not from writers, nurses and gardeners. Even when these initiatives could be concretely proved by 'case studies', such stimuli for expanded arms production would, by themselves, not tell us whether they had occurred in the interest, and with the assent of civil politicians and the people or not. To answer this question, one would need to carry out the demand which Holloway poses at the end of his study: 'The structural position of the armaments complex within the social system must be examined.' (1974, p. 273).

Even if further case studies could support

Holloway's conclusion that 'political dominance over (armaments, E.J.) technology (is) assured', one must further ask 'to what end political control is exercised and how political decisions are reached' (ibid.). In his study Holloway does not concern himself with this question. He only leads us to understand that he holds the distinction between capitalist and Soviet society to be relevant: 'The Soviet armaments complex should be seen not as a military-industrial complex in the sense of an alignment between military and industrial interests, but rather as part of a bureaucratic complex in which various groups, coalitions and departments interact and form alliances in the pursuit of particular policies. This is not to deny that cleavages exist but to suggest that the armaments complex should be viewed as a bureaucracy rather than as a field for interest group activity.' (1974, p. 273).

I can agree with this comment. Nevertheless, the 'bureaucratic complex' of Holloway seems to be a *deus ex machina*. And what is the substantial difference between 'groups, coalitions and departments' within the bureaucracy in Soviet society, on the one hand, and vested interest groups of bourgeois society on the other?

I can, at the end of this study, only allude to certain results from studies of this problem which I have published elsewhere (Jahn 1974, especially pp. 81 ff.; 1975). In Soviet society the separation between 'economics' and 'politics', between socio-economic classes and state apparatus (officials and military), which so characterizes bourgeois society, seems by and large eliminated. The Soviet 'statist' bureaucracy fundamentally distinguishes itself from the traditional bureaucracy of the feudal and bourgeois state. In Soviet society the bureaucracy unites both the classic (civilian) political functions with military functions (i.e. political in the largest sense) as well as these 'extra-economic' functions with those of a ruling social and economic class. The Soviet bureaucracy is simultaneously something of a 'class' (has at its disposal the surplus prod-

uct, if not in the form of private property) and the governmental instrument itself. In Soviet society master and overseer have become one.

If this is correct, then there cannot exist in Soviet society the same conflict between the military and public officials on the one side and the ruling class, as Liebknecht briefly described it and as it can be, again and again, empirically verified in analyses of the 'military-industrial complex' in capitalist countries. The putative attempts to empirically demonstrate a Soviet MIC — we have seen how these proofs are replaced by speculation — is then not just the result of restrictive Soviet policies regarding information and a fetish for secrecy. The conflicts *cannot* be at hand when there is not a separate ruling 'class' and a directing 'state apparatus' in the bourgeois sense.

The ever repeated Soviet assertions of the fundamental military superiority of the 'socialist' military establishment are not incredible. They emphasize that central planning permits effective military and military-economic organization of society as a whole, the quick change-over from peace to war economy cf. Fiedler et al. 1974, p. 70, 82), while in capitalism profit interests can conflict with military demands (Fiedler et al. 1974, p. 46), even under the conditions of fascist central war planning (ibid., p. 152; Sokolowski 1969, p. 91); and that individual vested interest groups and pacifistic organizations can oppose the needs of national defence. In Soviet society, to the contrary, the total participation of all citizens in national defense has been (at least in theory) carried into effect (cf. Korobejnikow et al. 1972).<sup>2</sup>

If the analysis of statist production relations demonstrates that there exists a fundamental antagonism of interest between the bureaucracy and producers in Soviet society — which we could name, after its dominant social group, bureaucratic society; if this antagonism of interest has historically manifested itself in repeated attacks of troops against revolting workers (on the say-so of the ruling bureaucracy) and has also



expressed itself in military actions and threats against other 'socialist' states, then we must speak, according to the criteria of classical marxism, of a Soviet militarism.

If the military penetration of Soviet bureaucratic society is more far-reaching than that of American bourgeois society, there also exist other characteristic differences between capitalist and statist militarism. Apparently, the internal economic contradictions of Soviet society do not aim at expanding the overseas 'market' for overproduced domestic goods, not unconditionally at the exploitation of sources of raw material and labor power in other countries. If this is correct, then there is no Soviet imperialism; at the same time, however, there is lacking the socio-economic basis for an aggressive Soviet foreign policy and militarism. Certainly one must relativize this assertion, if one takes into account that Soviet foreign trade is no Santa Claus, a give-away scheme which appears on the world market, but has the task of realizing national economic interests.

Doubtless, Soviet foreign trade still seem to be far more politically instrumentalized than does capitalist. On the basis of these fundamental considerations as well as from numerous historical experiences, one must regard bureaucratic militarism as essentially *defensive* in distinction to the aggressivity of capitalist militarism. Doing so does not contradict the actual expansion of Soviet territory and the Soviet sphere of interest since 1917. However, this expansion resulted not so much from the internal social and economic dynamics of Soviet society, but rather, essentially, from the construction of defensive positions, owing to German fascist aggression and the hardening of American-Soviet relations in the cold war. With this statement one needs neither to assert that Soviet expansion, direct and indirect, corresponds to the interest and will of the peoples concerned, nor even to the interest of the majority of the Soviet people. But no one up to now has been able to prove that Soviet expansion resulted from internal con-

tradiction of the statist mode of production, that it thus bore an imperialistic character (in a classic sense). In summary, one could say that the militarization of Soviet society is more comprehensive and far-reaching than in any previous social formation; at the same time, Soviet militarism is nevertheless, defensive, interested in maintaining the status quo and in preventing war. The policy of peaceful coexistence corresponds to these needs.

If no special arms complex with an independent policy of its own, thus no MIC, can be ascertained in Soviet society, this proposition says nothing against the existence of Soviet militarism. One can look at things — in the sense of Soviet military strategy — from the inverse point of view: in Soviet society no particular civilian bureaucratic complex can grow up and pursue an independent policy with respect to the ruling arms and military policy. Still, the gladly, officially proclaimed monolithic character of Soviet society and its ruling social groups is not completely credible. For good reasons Holloway guesses — and the comments of J.G. Gleserman support his guess — that the Soviet bureaucracy is divided among itself. How deep these differences and divisions actually are, what role the contradictions between the individual bureaucratic sectors play alongside the central contradiction between the interest of the bureaucracy as a whole and the interests of the producers — to answer this question would require, outside of the empirical studies demanded by Holloway, still harder theoretical work on the regularities of the statist mode of production, would require a fundamental 'critique of the political economy of (actually existing) socialism'.

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## NOTES

1. This paper is a highly expanded version of a study which originated in the context of the

research group 'Socialist Countries', of the Hessische Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung (with René Arons, Udo Freier, Uwe Stich and Stephan Tiedtke) and was entitled, 'Is There a Military-Industrial Complex in the Soviet Union?' Cf. HSEK — Forschungsberichte 6/1973.

2. Galbraith also assumes a predominance of the military in the MIC, cf. 1970, pp. 8, 18 ff.

3. That in practice individual and group interests evoke frictions in close company and condition the spending of resources, can be seen from such indirect hints: 'Whoever disregards the inseparable interrelation between the consumption of social resources and the uses to which it is put, falls easily prey to the belief that the goal of his activity has been reached when the necessary means and time have been spent on it. A military superior must constantly ask himself the central question whether, with the available hours of training, the prescribed period of work and the financial means, the required battle power, the required defense capability has been reached or even bypassed. He has an obligation to show the utility he has attained in consuming defense funds consumption 'as such.' (Fiedler et al. 1974, p. 142).

## SUMMARY

This article discusses the usefulness of the notion of a 'military industrial complex' as applied to the Soviet Union; it reaches the conclusion that this notion reflects the self-image of liberals in bourgeois society and is not applicable to a society with a different mode of production. The author takes up the Marxian concept of militarism, which conceives the military and the state bureaucracy not as actors but as agents of social class interests; on the basis of traits peculiar to militarism we find that there also exists a militarism in the U.S.S.R., but one quite different from the traditional militarism of capitalist society.

## Militarization, Arms Transfer and Arms Production in Peripheral Countries

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## A. Introduction

In spite of SALT and M(B)FR, military expenditures are increasing on a world wide scale.<sup>1</sup> Over the last decade the share of peripheral countries of the total world military expenditure has increased over-proportionately. This has led to an even increased level of arms transfers to peripheral countries. The dimensions of this expansion are the volume, the number of recipient countries, as well as a tendency to include advanced complex weapon systems. Additionally an intensified process of proliferation of arms-production facilities is to be mentioned as an outstanding new trend in the periphery of the capitalist world market. The present expansion of the armaments dynamics into the periphery is quite astonishing since the American military aid policy has changed dramatically in recent years. Contrary to earlier periods, most of the arms transfers are now of a purely commercial nature, and only a very reduced number of peripheral countries continue to receive considerable military aid and grants.

The expansion of the arms race can be subdivided into two dimensions.

1. The continued increase of existing destructive potentials by means of technological innovation can be named the *vertical*<sup>2</sup> dimension of armaments dynamics. Thinking of this category, gen-

erally only missiles and rockets come to mind, but equally important are the extensive improvements of destructive capacities in the field of 'conventional' and small arms, described by Julian Robinson as 'quantum jumps'.

2. The continued and intensified proliferation of modern armaments into a still increasing number of countries can be named horizontal dimension: In addition to the continued transfer process, the installation of production lines even for modern and complex weapon systems is being initiated in a number of countries where earlier only the production of small arms took place.

Both dimensions are closely interrelated. The nature of relationship can differ widely, as can be indicated by citing a few examples: Development and testing of new weapons, continuation of indigenous arms production on a broad scale by means of securing the necessary economics of scale,<sup>3</sup> or a different aspect, the temporary emigration of German r & d capacities to foreign countries after both world wars in order to circumvent rearmament restrictions being imposed upon Germany.<sup>4</sup>

Already before World War I quite a few, at the time peripheral countries, served as a testing ground for newly developed weapons and war material.<sup>5</sup> The experiences of the Arab-Israeli war of last year are being studied in almost every military journal; the lessons of the war impose changes in military planning in a number of countries and begin

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## 7 Guerrilla Warfare

This entry on the scene was inseparable from armed struggle: from what is often, and often misleadingly, called 'guerrilla warfare'; and I put in the quotation marks because this kind of warfare, as we shall see, is not always what it may seem to be, at least when conducted so as to be able to succeed. To begin with, in any case, one should note that armed struggle in itself cannot offer any guarantee of success, no matter how courageously endured and fought. As many Latin American cases have revealed, armed struggle can just as well become a guarantee of failure.

Courage is not enough; and violence has no inherent virtue even when it is not, as it mostly is, an unmitigated evil. If violence must sometimes become the midwife of a new society it still requires that the infant is ready to be born and that its parents are well prepared to rear it. This may appear terribly obvious in the second half of the 1970s, with so many disastrous 'graspings of the guerrilla rifle' in the history of the last twenty years. But just because of those disasters, and their contrast with the great successes, the point may still be worth some emphasis.

Its truth can be seen from another angle: from that of the actual techniques of guerrilla warfare. There may no longer be any need to enlarge upon the success with which the Africans of the Portuguese territories mastered these techniques. Yet this success could only be a secondary reason, if a weighty one, for their defeat of the dictatorship. For they invented nothing new in the practice of such warfare. They adapted the experience of others, even of others who had ended in defeat. If mere success in 'guerrilla battles' were the real test of success, then the Boer commandos of 1899 and after - to offer a remote example - would have prevailed over the British Army of that time. If the

Greeks who fought the Nazi army of occupation during the Second World War had been able to profit from their military successes - to adduce a more recent example - then they would have governed Greece after the war was over. Without the right political strategies, no quantity of skill and courage can make much difference to the outcome. Short-term guerrilla gains will still end in defeat. And this is what emerged, time and again, from the 'Portuguese African' scene.

The leaders of these movements have had rather little to say about their military techniques and tactics. Understandably. First, because this was the relatively 'easy part' of their struggle: easy, that is, in the sense that what had to be attempted was always pretty clear. Secondly, because security advised silence. Generally, though, it can be said that they followed a pattern familiar from other and well-documented wars of liberation since the late 1920s, whether in one part of the world or another.

This pattern falls into a succession of military phases, and these, by all the evidence, seem scarcely open to anything save local variation for scale and circumstance. All these phases call for courage but also for cunning; determination but also for a cool head. They are messed up by individualist acts of bravado, but they rely greatly on individual heroism.

After due political work among the people so as to explain what they are up to, and why, a few men and women begin the struggle. For that they need a little military training, though not much, and at least a small supply of elementary firearms. They launch the first minor attacks, and the element of surprise masks their initial weakness. They prove 'it can be done': invariably, as it appears, to populations which greatly doubt if it can. Osvaldo Vieira has described the first action of the PAIGC in northern Guinea-Bissau: 'We had three weapons. There were ten of us. We ambushed three of their vehicles and killed seven of them. We captured eight weapons ...' It takes a lot of qualities to do as much. But 'before that the peasants did not believe us. After, it was different.'

Those qualities are wasted unless the necessary political preparation is complete. Such actions are useful only if they lead the way from mass support to participation, and thus to

other and bigger actions. But when that happens the initial few gather volunteers, lead slightly larger units, make more attacks.

This is the beginning of the 'guerrilla phase' proper; this is partisan warfare. It has a dual objective. One part is to raise morale by hitting relatively small and easy targets, such as police posts or isolated army trucks, and to exploit these small successes so as to increase the number of fighters. The other part is to establish the first small outlines of a liberated area: of an area which the liberation fighters will eventually control.

With time, effort, and unflinching courage, the units multiply in number, though little in individual size. They reach the point where neighbouring units can combine in slightly larger actions. This is still guerrilla warfare: the warfare, largely, of part-time fighters who otherwise work in their villages and wait, beguiling the boredom of this kind of life, and likely to be wondering, as often as not, how it is all going to turn out.

Two great dangers besiege this phase. They cannot be avoided, and are overcome only by good leadership. The first of these dangers lies in the invariable counter-offensive by the army of occupation, the enemy's army, an offensive waged by men who are confident of success (their awakening comes later), and who possess superior weapon power. This first major period of enemy offensive must be countered by the ceaseless evasive action of guerrilla units, but also - and this is what is really difficult - by a determined effort to save from enemy reprisals at least a substantial part of the supporting civilian population. This protection will be only partial, and grim reprisals will be suffered by civilians. But only if the attempt is made, and is at least partly successful, will the guerrilla units survive with the sort of civilian backing that will continue to move, no matter what the cost, from support to participation.

The second danger comes into view with a further unfolding of this guerrilla phase. All the known examples display it. Guerrilla commanders are men of great daring and self-confidence; they could not otherwise survive this early phase. But they are also likely to be young and politically inexperienced. Success can go to their heads. They can become local heroes whose personal ambition and prestige set them at odds with the

movement's unity and progress. At best they may ignore the essentially political nature of their struggle, and develop a 'military commandism' which can turn them into petty dictators. At worst they may retreat into 'mountain-topism', and eventual sell-out to the enemy.

Criticising military weaknesses in the PAIGC during 1965, Cabral spoke of wastage, lack of initiative in attack, 'and even a certain demobilization which has not been fought and eliminated . . .'

And with all this, as a proof of insufficient political work among our armed forces, there has appeared a certain attitude (*mania*) of 'militarism' which has caused some fighters and even some leaders to forget the fact that we are *armed militants* and not *militarists* . . .<sup>1</sup>

But with these dangers sufficiently overcome - and it appears unlikely that they are ever entirely overcome - there then opens a new phase. This consists in the transformation of a certain number of volunteers from many purely local units into the core of a regular army. That is when guerrillas cease to be guerrillas, and become soldiers. Now they accept a stiff discipline, though still within a markedly democratic style of command. They go where they are ordered and fight when they are told. They acquire new military skills and better weapons. They embark on larger actions of assault and ambush.

The danger of military commandism remains, but is reduced now to a matter of political discipline at levels of well-integrated organization. That is why effective 'guerrilla-type' armies incorporate full-time political workers who are also soldiers; these are known as 'political commissars' or by some comparable label. They are there to ensure that the army remains a political army and puts political factors always first, whether in relation to the enemy, to the civilian population, or to attitudes and habits within its own ranks.

At this stage, better outside supplies of weapons and ammunition must be assured. There may be local conditions which enable some of the necessary supplies to come from inside the country; from the ranks of a demoralized local army supporting an army of occupation, as happened most notably in China

### *The Politics of Armed Struggle*

and in Yugoslavia. The armies of the liberation movements in 'Portuguese Africa' were also able to win a small supply in this manner, chiefly from peasant militias armed by the Portuguese during the late 1960s. But generally there is an absolute need, as in 'Portuguese Africa', for supply from outside the country, whether of strike weapons such as mortars (and thus of mortar ammunition) or, later, of still more sophisticated weapons such as missile launchers, missiles, and light artillery. None of these can be captured from the enemy except on the rarest of occasions. And of course there must be facilities, whether 'outside' or 'inside', for training men to handle and sight such weapons.

Without this kind of outside supply - and Cuba, insofar as it was an exception, only proves the rule - no movement of armed struggle can go on growing and developing. It will stagnate, and in stagnating will become demoralized, increasingly inactive, finally useless. Much nonsense was written in the early 1970s by commentators who praised the UNITA 'movement' in eastern Angola for being, as they claimed, independent of outside supply and yet capable of continued expansion. The upshot showed that no such expansion had occurred; nor, in the circumstances of Angola, could it have occurred. To suppose otherwise was to indulge in romanticism or political manoeuvre.

But if the problems of succeeding in this new phase are overcome, then the whole tactical position changes. The enemy now finds himself in the classical dilemma repeatedly produced by the liberation armies in 'Portuguese Africa':

In order to dominate a given zone, the enemy is obliged to disperse his forces. In dispersing his forces, he weakens himself and we can defeat him. Then in order to defend himself against us, he has to concentrate his forces. When he does that, we can occupy the zones that he leaves free and work in them politically so as to hinder his return there.<sup>2</sup>

The Portuguese commanders tried two ways of resolving this dilemma after it began to be acute for them in the mid-1960s. They multiplied their bombing raids. And they redoubled their efforts to corral rural populations inside the barbed wire of defended camps, precisely so as to prevent the liberation movements from taking advantage of zones left free of Portuguese army control.

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This corralling tactic, coupled with helicoptered 'search and destroy' raids by commando units, was borrowed from the Americans in South Vietnam, who had themselves developed it from British experiments in Malaya. It gave rise to pain and suffering for the populations thus driven from their homes and forced under Portuguese army control; but it failed. In Malaya it had succeeded because the guerrillas there were mostly Chinese who, for one reason or another lying outside the scope of this survey, had not been able to win the mass of Malayan peasants for their cause. It failed in South Vietnam for the contrary reason; the Viet Cong, like the Viet Minh, had won peasant support and had transformed this into peasant participation. Its failure in 'Portuguese Africa' was generally due to the same reason as in Vietnam. The peasants were in favour of the liberation movements. Their sufferings in the camps tended only to make them more so.

By 1970 it was evident in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique that PAIGC and FRELIMO had developed their phase of regular warfare, by highly mobile 'guerrilla' tactics, to the point where they had grasped a strategic initiative which the Portuguese could not regain. Thereafter it could only be a matter of time, and, as we shall see, the deployment of new weapons. The same was true for the MPLA in the eastern districts of Angola, but with the decisive difference that these districts were very thinly populated, and were geographically so wide and ecologically hostile as to make a sure progression towards the west, towards the main centres of population, too difficult. Thus held to the eastern districts, the MPLA was unable to exploit the strategic initiative which it had seized in them. There developed a certain stagnation. Stagnating movements of armed struggle are movements heading for internal trouble. Only in 1975, during a 'second war of liberation' against invading forces, could this stagnation begin to be fully overcome by the MPLA.

Such was the outline of these wars. The three territories all displayed many local variations, but all were variations on the same pattern. A few conclusions of general application may now be possible.

To begin with, as one may perhaps usefully insist again, a



successful war of liberation can never stem from military adventure, no matter how sincerely motivated, but only from the political exploitation of a general situation which is felt by the mass of people to be hatefully and obviously unjust. The 'big words' about freedom and independence will achieve nothing if the 'little words' about local grievance and oppression are not persuasive first.

Secondly, this political exploitation will fail unless it can also pass from the gathering of sympathy to the mobilization of active volunteers. It is one thing to want change. It is quite another to fight for it or work for it when all the odds still seem unfavourable. Yet without a steady stream of new volunteers, the most courageous band of pioneers will soon find itself in isolation and defeat.

Thirdly, this move from sympathy to action will not take place, again by all the evidence that we have, unless the right arguments are found. But the finding of these right arguments depends only in part on a right analysis of the *general* situation. Far more, it also depends on the most intimate knowledge of local habits, languages, hopes, fears, expectations, interests. There can be no question, as some have argued *in vacuo* (and disastrously), of 'extending the revolt' by mere optimism or exhortation. Peasants are not optimistic people. They will not be moved by exhortation. They will follow only leaders who prove that they closely understand and share the peasants' own lives: in the beginning, no doubt, they will follow only those who come from the peasants' own ranks.

Here one of the pioneers of the PAIGC is talking of the years of political mobilization which preceded the launching of armed struggle:

Our procedure was to speak in a village and then go out into the bush to spend the night. It was the only way we had of making ourselves and the party known. Little by little, party sympathizers among the village people would come out into the bush bringing us meals. Later on, we were able to call out the villagers - or at least some of them - and talk with them, explain the meaning of our struggle, and ask their help . . . Believe me, mobilization is a much, much harder thing than armed struggle itself . . .<sup>3</sup>

But this mobilization is also vital. 'Without it, nothing of lasting value can be done. This political preparation is the toughest, most daunting, but also most important aspect of the whole campaign of national liberation.'<sup>4</sup>

Fourthly, in line with the development of the *resultant* political and military struggle - the two aspects becoming inseparable - the organization of this type of movement has to be such that the fact and influence of *widening participation* becomes, and remains, a dominant and conscious process. Its promotion has to govern and develop further from every major act of policy.

In 1972, for instance, the PAIGC organized a general election by universal adult suffrage throughout its liberated areas. The aim was to elect regional assemblies which would in turn elect a national assembly such as could form the democratic foundation for an independent state, as well as providing for the beginning of a separation of powers between party and state. But the aim was also, and very consciously, to widen political participation in the governing structures of the future state: to take the populations of the liberated areas through another exercise in political education so as to show, once again, that *povo na manda na su cabeça*, that 'people have to do things for themselves'. So it was that weeks and even months were spent in holding meetings to explain the meaning of elections and assemblies; in drawing up an electoral register; in appointing those who would supervise the balloting; in discussing what factors had influenced the selection of candidates: factors of local balance between villages, of choice between men and women, of this or that other local matter.

Fifthly, and again following from all this, the development and further growth of participation must not be allowed to rob the revolutionary vanguard of its leading role, nor separate that vanguard either from its long-term objectives or from its organic posture of leading from the grass roots, albeit with an accepted authority. Otherwise the vanguard will move in one direction, or in several, while the people go off in another.

Each of the first four rules emphasises the primacy of the *politics* of armed struggle. The fifth rule does so too, but in ways that are especially hard to meet: only the most resolute



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practice of internal democracy can satisfy the crucial demands of this fifth rule. That is why the most successful advances of the 1960s and early 1970s were invariably preceded, among these movements, by internal campaigns of ardent discussion and detailed explanation, often in prolonged conferences where real or incipient conflicts, whether political or personal, could be brought into the open and decided by a visible majority. And it is also why periods of setback were those when internal discussion had lapsed or failed.<sup>5</sup>

Other such conclusions might be drawn from the record of the three movements, and tested against these movements' relative success, or against the failure of other movements conducted in a different way. Another implication of these 'rules', for example, is that the pace and progress of military action whether in terms of intensity, weaponry or type of objective, must not outstrip the capacity of mass participation to absorb and understand their point and purpose. Otherwise there will be 'overheating', just as surely as the reverse, military idleness, will lead to disbandment. A further implication is that the structure of the movement has to be constantly reviewed and overhauled so that the internal mediation of power remains a genuine interplay between those who give orders and those who carry them out. Much else might be said; but these five 'rules' and their implications are evidently of an iron necessity. They must be met substantially, or the end will be disaster.

But if they are met, as each of the three movements in 'Portuguese Africa' met them in the measure of its political and military success, then the struggle develops a meaning and momentum of its own. It acquires its own expanding dynamism. It leads towards original ways of solving what former attitudes and institutions, whether of a 'traditional' type or of a colonial type, cannot solve. There takes place a crucial and irreversible 'forced march on the road to cultural progress' by a mass of individuals who, developing together as they work or fight, come to form a new community, begin to shape a new society:

(For) consider these features inherent in an armed liberation struggle: the practice of democracy, of criticism and self-criticism, the increasing responsibility of populations for the direction of their own lives, liter-

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acy work, the creation of schools and health services, the training of cadres who come from peasant and worker backgrounds, and many other achievements.

When we consider these features, we see that the armed liberation struggle is not only a product of culture. It is also a *determinant of culture*. And this, beyond all doubt, is the prime compensation to the people for the effort and sacrifice that are the price of their war...<sup>6</sup>

Cabral was speaking here, one should note, in the specific terms that he invariably preferred. Other peoples might well be able to liberate themselves without armed struggle. Generally, the qualified leaders of these movements have been careful to make it clear that they do not regard armed struggle as the only instrument of liberation, but that each people, analysing its own situation, considering its own circumstances, must decide for itself what manner of liberating instrument it will use. The key will lie, in any case, in the successful arousing of a new political consciousness and the participation which this can achieve.

Armed struggle, in the Portuguese colonies, proved to be the only effective instrument when all efforts at peaceful pressure had yielded nothing save increased repression. It was an extremely difficult instrument to use. But once forced to accept this challenge of armed struggle, the peoples of 'Portuguese Africa' discovered how to turn their great initial weakness into a new and sufficient strength. The best way to see how this was done is to turn to the lessons of the liberated areas.

## 8 Practising What You Preach

Over the double gateway into the municipal gardens of the colonial capital of Bissau there was flown during August 1974 a banner with a strange device: strange, at any rate, while Portuguese troops were still on guard along the wall of that same park. 'Under the leadership of the PAIGC,' affirmed this banner, 'we are going to build a new society.'

An improbably large ambition, it might appear, in any circumstances. Here it could seem all the less realistic for its being proclaimed, on the whole, to a boulevard kept void of any audience by the dour and drenching rains of August. But the claim was made; and I mention this banner because I happened to see it there myself. Other such claims were being made by FRELIMO banners in Lourenço Marques and Beira, chief cities of Mozambique, or fluttered in the streets by African supporters of the MPLA in Luanda, the capital of Angola. Was this more than a gesture of demagoguery?

Demagoguery it may have seemed to many of the inhabitants of those cities and to similarly uninstructed foreigners chancing to be there. But in truth it rested on the central reality of the liberation wars. That is to say, it rested on the structures and institutions of a new society already in place throughout large areas sufficiently cleared of enemy control, and sufficiently guarded against raids by enemy troops. The task was no longer to fashion and launch those structures and institutions: the task of 1974 was to extend them to areas and towns now released by colonial withdrawal. The banner in the Bissau municipal gardens, flying even before the Portuguese army had departed, did not express a pious hope. It defined a practical programme whose early stages were complete.

There are two large questions here. In these circumstances,

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what does 'a new society' mean? And, again in these circumstances, what is a 'liberated area'?

The second is simple to answer. When guerrillas begin their armed struggle in rural areas,<sup>1</sup> form their first small groups, launch their early attacks, survive the ensuing military repression, and gradually expand their influence and effectiveness, they do not yet have a liberated area. What they have is a contested area. Neither side exercises any general control of security in this contested area: each side fights to obtain that. The occupying power will claim that its forces are in command there, and have only to meet occasional incursions by guerrilla bands from outside the area. On their side, the guerrillas may quite probably make the contrary claim. Both claims belong to the realm of propaganda.

But when guerrilla units move into the next large phase and produce a mobile force of full-time fighters; and when this force in any given area becomes strong enough to induce the enemy to disperse his own force among a number of fixed garrisons in defended camps; and when these camps are continuously and effectively besieged so that their garrisons can raid outside them only by fighting their way out of them, then the zone or area in question is rightly called a liberated area.

For it meets two conditions essential to the work of social and political renovation. First, the military situation of this contested area which has become a liberated area is such that the movement of liberation can generally defend it except against helicoptered ground-raids or aerial bombardment. Both of these are necessarily localized or, as to ground-raids, sporadic. They can be very destructive. But they do not materially change the military situation.<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, this situation is one that can be held over a long period of time, or even, in fortunate cases, until the war is won. And even if its control of security is temporarily lost to major military offensives by the occupying power, this can happen only after due warning, given by more or less obvious enemy preparations. The forces of the liberation movement can then protect the civilian population in large measure, either by fighting off attacks or by having time to move civilians from one

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area to another. When the enemy offensive peters out, the situation can be restored to what it was before.

Genuinely liberated areas are always surrounded by widening contested areas as the dynamics of guerrilla expansion push the armed struggle outward into new zones.

This pattern in Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, and Angola was demonstrated repeatedly during the 1960s and early 1970s. In the Mozambican districts of Cabo Delgado and Niassa, for example, the early units of FRELIMO established a number of contested areas after 1964; after about 1967, FRELIMO could rightly claim to have transformed these into liberated areas. The same sequence occurred in Tete district after 1968 and 1971; while further south the contested areas of Manica e Sofala were on their way towards becoming liberated areas when the Portuguese army decided to withdraw. If most of the eastern districts of Angola remained as contested areas after 1965, some of them had taken the next step by 1970, although the peculiarly hostile circumstances of that particular struggle made these liberated areas small and fragile and, as it turned out, of relatively brief duration. In Guinea-Bissau the establishment of genuinely liberated areas began as early as 1964, and the process continuously expanded from that date.

What happened in these liberated areas? They were the product of the move from support to participation, of the process of mutual acculturation between movement and masses. Because of this, these areas became notably different from the rest of the country. This was true in two senses, one negative and the other positive. Negatively, colonial power had been swept from the scene and, with it, the facts of colonial rule. All taxes were abolished there: a major change in the Portuguese context, since the Portuguese had taxed just about everything remotely taxable, even down to village wakes for the dead. All Portuguese traders had likewise vanished,<sup>3</sup> or, at least, all trade within a colonial framework. The forced cultivation of this or that cash-crop had likewise ceased; and so, of course, had forced labour.

But the interest lies in the positive factor. The colonial system being removed, what other system should replace it?

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All the qualified leaders of liberation from the Portuguese colonial system have stressed the validity of Africa's 'traditional cultures'. The term is a useful one, but is not intended to suggest that these cultures were somehow static, or, as it were, produced entire and rounded to completion from the lap of the gods and ancestors. When the colonial period began, these cultures were the product of 'tradition' but even more of historical development. They were the end-result of centuries of internal growth and evolution from foundations by then extremely old. What the liberation leaders were insisting on was that this development, broken off and stopped by colonial rule, must now be renewed and continued. The revolutions they had in mind were no kind of importation from outside, but, as Amílcar Cabral especially liked to say, the re-launching of the processes of Africa's own history.

This was not, he also said, in any major sense some kind of 'return to the source' of cultural origins. That return was a need felt only by a colonial petty-bourgeoisie which had become 'culturally uprooted, alienated or more or less assimilated', and which thereby sought an identity denied by its colonial situation. But 'the masses have no need to assert or reassert their identity, which they have never confused nor would have known how to confuse with that of the colonial power'. Once freed from the constricting shell of that power, they can selectively extend a culture they have preserved: they can 'make history'.<sup>4</sup>

But this development, this 'making of history', means what it implies: purposive change, selective transformation, cultural reconception. 'A lot of people think that to defend Africa's culture, to resist culturally in Africa, we have to defend the negative things in our culture. But this is not what we think . . .'<sup>5</sup> A system to replace the colonial system could not be a reversion to 'what existed before', even if that were possible. Far from it: 'our cultural resistance consists in the following: while we scrap colonial culture and the negative aspects of our own culture, whether in our character or in our environment, we have to create a new culture, also based on our own traditions but respecting everything that the world today has conquered for the service of mankind.'<sup>6</sup>

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The same thought was expressed in another way by Agostinho Neto, the Angolan leader. 'We are trying to free and modernize our people by a dual revolution: against their traditional structures which can no longer serve them, and against colonial rule.'<sup>7</sup> And the same basic idea was again reflected in the Mozambican Marcelino dos Santos's counter-posing of bourgeois nationalism, reformist nationalism, to what he defined as revolutionary nationalism.<sup>8</sup> Or consider how Samora Machel, president of FRELIMO after the loss of Mondlane in 1969 and afterwards president of Mozambique, put the same underlying thoughts:

When we took up arms to defeat the old order, we felt the obscure need to create a new society, strong, healthy and prosperous, in which all men free from all exploitation would co-operate for the progress of all.

In the course of the struggle, in the tough fight we have had to wage against reactionary elements, we came to understand our objectives more clearly. We felt especially that the struggle to create new structures would fall within the creation of a new mentality.

Creating an attitude of solidarity between people to enable them to carry out collective work presupposes the elimination of individualism. Developing a healthy and revolutionary mentality, which promotes the liberation of women and the creation of a new generation with a collective feeling of responsibility, requires the destruction of inherited corrupt ideas and tastes.

In order to lay the foundations of a prosperous and advanced economy, science has to overcome superstition. To unite all Mozambicans, transcending traditions and different languages, requires that the tribe must die in our consciousness so that the nation may be born.<sup>9</sup>

The task was thus altogether different from 'a mere Africanization of the existing colonial structures'<sup>10</sup> within which neither the tribe had died nor the nation had come to birth. It was as different from any such neo-colonial exercise, any such taking over of 'what existed', as it was different from a reversion to the structures of the pre-colonial period. The task was to *develop* indigenous structures (cultures, concepts, patterns of behaviour, and the rest), and thereby to modernize them: to transform them, that is, into the framework of a society 'capable of respecting everything that the world today has conquered for the

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service of mankind'. But this task, in the nature of the circumstances of the liberation struggle, in the nature of the absolutely over-riding need for *participation*, had to be carried out for the people of the liberated areas by those people themselves, individually and collectively. The revolutionary party should lead, must lead; but as an initiating influence, as a critic and commentator 'from within', as an attentive chairman of the great debate.

In this same perspective the revolutionary party had another duty and a very practical one. This was to ensure that the effort and sacrifice spent in winning and holding a liberated area should be seen and known to have its recompense, as soon and effectively as possible, in positive gains that everyone could share. These gains were the elementary schools, forest clinics, and other social services that were launched and staffed and supplied in the measure of the possible.

It may be easy to overlook the value of such gains to populations never given them by the colonial system, save in the scantiest measure. Nobody who spent any length of time in these liberated areas would be likely to make that mistake. One day in 1972, far into the southern liberated areas of Guinea-Bissau and across the coastal creeks of remote Como, I picked up the patients' register of a forest clinic of the PAIGC and counted up the names for the previous two months: they came to more than 600. No clinic had ever existed there before.

Yet these clinics and schools were more than mere additions to 'traditional culture' freed from colonial power. They were instruments of cultural progress. Their creation and their conduct invoked new responses, new attitudes. Village girls volunteered for training and became nurses. Village leaders volunteered for the responsibilities of running schools and clinics, supplying the teachers with food, ensuring that recalcitrant parents were persuaded to sacrifice the labour of their children so that the children could go to school. Village militias were involved in protecting these gains, sacrificing their time (and sometimes their lives) in doing so.

A dual process developed, projecting a model of its own. Rural populations were called on to govern themselves in new ways.



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Elective committees for individual villages or groups of hamlets took the place of 'rule by elders', or 'rule by chiefs', just as they also took the place of rule by the nearest Portuguese official and his police. These committees found themselves concerned with a whole range of social and cultural activities, such as those just mentioned but many more besides: the gathering of information about the enemy, the supply of food and other necessities by voluntary contribution to the fighting forces and its non-military services, the maintenance of canoe transport, the participation in a new trading system, and again much else. They were renewing their independence of pre-colonial times. But they were also modernizing it.

One may still object: yes, but how far was all this really different from 'the mere Africanization of the existing colonial structures'? How far was it more than an improvisation which, after independence, would revert to another form of neo-colonial dependence upon élites who, in their turn, would become dependent on dominating foreign partners?

No one can guarantee the future; and the finally convincing answers will become available, no doubt, only in the years ahead. For themselves, the liberation movements would probably reply now as they replied in 1974 on the eve of their triumph: that the problems they had set out to solve could not conceivably be solved by the mere coming of independence. All that this independence could offer was a wider opportunity to solve them. The process was launched; now it would be necessary to take it further. 'We are entering a new phase: less harsh, more difficult. Only if the peasants are able to transform themselves into people living thoroughly within the modern world, only if they modernize themselves, shall we have the guarantee of success.'<sup>11</sup>

What might be said at this stage was that the new structures of self-rule in liberated areas, together with their new institutions of social and cultural modernization, had begun to project a society which was already quite different from a neo-colonial one. These new structures existed and they worked: so much was discovered in 1974 even by the most disbelieving of observers. They were not just patterns of organization, much less socio-

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logical abstractions. In the measure that they existed and worked they were the product of a specific level of political understanding, in its time and circumstance a revolutionary understanding, among populations for whom the practical democratization of daily life now became a conscious experience. For this understanding was no kind of incidental factor in the situation, no mere accretion by way of 'political indoctrination': on the contrary, it was an integral maker of the triumphs registered in 1974.

Would this new society resist the 'natural' trend among leaders to revert to petit-bourgeois ideas and ambitions, and move off into corruption and decay? Formulating the question back in 1966, at a time when left-wing opinion up and down the world was still inclined to be patronisingly superior about 'African initiatives' (or, like right-wing opinion, merely ignorant of them), Cabral maintained to an international audience that the leaders of national liberation, being chiefly petit-bourgeois in origin, could follow two possible paths. 'These leaders could "betray the revolution, or they could commit suicide as a class": and this is 'the dilemma of the petty bourgeoisie in the general framework of the national liberation struggle'.<sup>12</sup> It was a formula that many of the orthodox disliked, for it was not 'in the books'. All the same, it went to the heart of the matter. Subsequent betrayals by individuals or groups would amply make that point.

On the other hand, the degree in which these leaderships of petit-bourgeois origin could and really did 'commit suicide as a class' in building their bridge to the masses, and in becoming united with the masses, was what could be seen and measured in the liberated areas of the 1960s and early 1970s. Naturally, the degree varied. But wherever liberated areas were made and held for long periods of internal reconstruction, one could even say that the 'suicide' became a matter of course: no real reconstruction was possible without it. For there arose, around the leaders of petit-bourgeois origin, a complex structure of new leadership which was petty-bourgeois neither in its origins nor in its development.

Embraced and pressured in this way, the challenge of 'petit-

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bourgeois suicide' became widely accepted. The exceptions proved this, for wherever they occurred the outcome was political dissension, strife, betrayal, or disaster. At the same time, this wider leadership of peasant origin was also in process of becoming a leadership imbued with the ideas and objectives of a society opposed to the servitudes of African 'tradition' as well as to those of colonial rule, and therefore to the servitudes that emerge in a neo-colonial situation.

A process, of course: it takes time for people to practise what they preach; a lot of time. Knowing this was one of the reasons why the leaders of these movements were in no particular hurry to complete their armed struggle during the 1960s. How many diligent cadres served the cause, but still kept their eye on future chances for personal career and privilege? How many valiant fighters spoke warmly of the equality of women, for example, but still held firmly to the exploitation of their own wife or wives? How many said one thing, but still thought another? How far, on the other side, had this rural population revolutionized itself?

In the end, with success in the phase of armed struggle, the answers would evidently turn upon the degree in which the fruits of liberation could be realized by new modes of production, above all of rural production: in the raising of a predominantly rural society to the level of a new economic system. This could only be a harvest of the future. None of the leaders of these movements, so far as I know, ever allowed himself or herself to suggest that they were, as yet, 'building socialism'. All were far too conscious of the real levels of productive force on which they stood. What they did allow themselves to claim, though prudently, was that the politics of armed struggle could and would carry their peoples to a point where new modes of production, a new economic system, non-capitalist and potentially socialist, became possible as well as desirable.

In the immediate present, meanwhile, the politics of armed struggle had carried these peoples to a point where they could enter on their independence with the sovereign gain of possessing, already, the foundations of a social and political system they had founded for themselves: and one, besides, which implied the further objective of a new economic system. At least in

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Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique during 1974, they had no need to take over any of the structures and institutions of colonial rule, and thereby assume, willingly or not, a neo-colonial heritage. On the contrary, it was their own society they could bring to independence, a society forged and tempered by long sacrifice and effort. Like others before them, they came with national flags and anthems. But, unlike others, they were also able to arrive with new and tried standards of practical democracy, equipped with the practical means of teaching and extending these even down to new textbooks for their schools, and armoured by the practical lessons they had had to learn. Whatever their problems in the future, it was already a large achievement. For colonized Africa, it was also a new achievement.



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*Noticias*, Lisbon, 28 June 1974). By July the extremist wing of the Luanda settlers were, for their part, openly in support of UNITA. In 1975, UNITA became the avowed ally of the S. African army.

In previous years, UNITA's propaganda in western Europe had specialized in 'revolutionary purity', and generally echoed a 'Maoist' line that received, for a while, a certain propaganda support in Peking foreign-language journals. What this 'purity' was really worth was suggested in a *Daily Telegraph* report from Luanda, published on 22 August 1974, that the UNITA leader, Jonas Savimbi, was being 'hailed as a future president by many of the Territory's Whites': by precisely those Whites, in fact, who were hoping for some kind of neo-colonial or settlers' régime. The UNITA collusion with the South African army's invasion of southern Angola in 1975 was logical enough.

4. For the history of the FNLA and its parent movement, UPA, see Marcum, op. cit.; and Davidson, *In the Eye of the Storm*.

5. For evidence of Mobutu's early promotion by the CIA, see Jules Chomé, *L'Ascension du Sergent Mobutu*, Maspero, Paris, 1974. See also V. Marchetti and J. D. Marks, *The G.I.A.*, Jonathan Cape, 1974, pp. 31 and 118, where it is explained that Mobutu's career owed much to the CIA's support. Other public sources of information about the CIA made the same point in US press disclosures during 1975. The same disclosures reported that in 1961 the CIA began paying Holden an annual \$10,000.

### *Chapter 7: Guerrilla Warfare*

1. Quoted in Davidson, *The Liberation of Guinea* (op. cit.), p. 112, Cabral's emphasis.

2. Amílcar Cabral, quoted in *Afrique-Asie*, 66, Paris, 1974, p. xxv.

3. Quoted by G. Chaliand, *Armed Struggle in Africa*, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1969, pp. 78-9.

4. Amílcar Cabral, quoted in Davidson, *The Liberation of Guinea* (op. cit.), p. 52.

5. As to successful advances, the place of discussion can be seen in the relation between the 1964 congress of the PAIGC and the PAIGC's move to new organizational structures and mobile warfare. Responsible commanders and political workers were called from every sector of the struggle and made their way, often with great difficulty, to a rendezvous in the southern forest. Their gathering together, days of meeting, and return to their posts 'set back our armed struggle by six months, for the Portuguese profited by reoccupying many areas. But we had to do it, we had to see who we all were, we had to see where

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we were going, we had to do all this together.' (A. Cabral and A. Pereira in an interview with the author, December 1972).

The same positive relation can be seen between the 1968 congress of FRELIMO (some delegates to the Niassa rendezvous had to be weeks on the way there, and more weeks on the way back) with subsequent discussion campaigns, and the firm unfolding of FRELIMO's successes in the early 1970s.

Or a contrary example may be seen in the relation between reduced internal discussion within the MPLA, after 1969, and the dissensions that appeared in 1973. Here, hostile geography played a crucial part.

6. Cabral, *National Liberation and Culture* (op. cit.).

### *Chapter 8: Practising What You Preach*

1. As they did in Portuguese Africa, having found by harsh experience that urban struggle would not answer. The parallel here is with China of the late 1920s and early 1930s, or of Yugoslavia in the 1940s, although there is nothing to suggest (or, come to that, to deny) that these Africans were aware of following either.

2. Any detailed analysis of successful 'guerrilla warfare' would lay the strongest emphasis on the need to fight for the lives of villagers threatened by enemy offensives. Only those movements which have faced this need with self-sacrificing courage, while somehow conserving their own capacity to survive, have been able to succeed. The most impressive record known to me of what such a need can impose, whether in terms of courage or of suffering, is that of my old friend Todor Vujasinović: *Osvetski Partizanski Ored*, Vojnoistorijski Institut, Belgrade, 1962, a book which much deserves translation.

3. There were exceptions to this in cases where the attitude of local Portuguese traders made their continued presence useful to the liberation movements which, for their part, campaigned against any racist objection to Portuguese or other Whites.

4. A. Cabral, *Identity and Dignity in the Context of the National Liberation Struggle*, UNESCO, 1972. Its critique of 'Négritude' and other such 'black returns to the source', whether on one side of the Atlantic or the other, is another aspect of this paper that will remain of permanent interest.

5. A. Cabral, *Resistência Cultural*, seminar paper at PAIGC Conference of Cadres, 19-24 November 1969.

6. *ibid.*

7. Quoted in Davidson, *In the Eye of the Storm: Angola's People* (op. cit.), p. 279.

8. See interview and discussion in J. Slovo, 'Southern Africa:

### *The Politics of Armed Struggle*

Problems of Armed Struggle', *The Socialist Register*, 1973, Merlin Press, 1974; p. 319.

9. Samora Machel, *Mozambique: Sowing the Seeds of Revolution*, CFMAG, 12 Little Newport Street, London, 1974, p. 39.

10. A point well argued by John Saul, 'Neo-Colonialism vs Liberation Struggle', seminar paper of 1973; see also John Saul, 'FRELIMO and the Mozambique Revolution', in G. Arrighi and J. Saul, *Essays on the Political Economy of Africa*, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1973.

11. Luis Cabral, President of Guinea-Bissau and Deputy Secretary-General of the PAIGC, in August 1974 (interview with the author).

12. Havana, 1966: reprinted in Cabral, *Revolution in Guinea: Selected Texts by Amílcar Cabral* (op. cit.), p. 89.

### *Chapter 9: The End of the Beginning*

1. In November 1970. A sufficient number of raiders were captured in Conakry to reveal the general machinery and authorship of the operation. All this was confirmed in 1974.

2. *Daily Telegraph*, 15 November 1970.

3. Emphasis in original. Spínola's views are quoted from Al. J. Venter, *Report on Portugal's War in Guiné-Bissau*, Munger Africana Library Notes, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, April 1973, pp. 189-91. Venter's interview with Spínola was in April 1971.

4. A scenario in whose elaboration it will no doubt emerge, when the necessary records become available, that Portugal's allies had a leading hand.

5. 'Speech to the Nation' broadcast on 29 July, declaring the right of every people to its independence and announcing that a transfer of power to the peoples of Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique would begin forthwith.

6. America's interest in (Angola's) wealth needs no emphasis. So great was it that in February 1970, when Angola was still firmly under Portugal's thumb, the United States Government began a subtle shift in its policies towards southern Africa. Henry Kissinger prepared for President Nixon a typically 'realistic' set of secret policy options designed to foster American interests... Kissinger's chief assumption was that white rule would continue for the foreseeable future. It was a classic miscalculation... The April *coup* severely undermined the Portuguese section of this strategy. Kissinger's report had stated that 'the biggest U.S. interest in the area is Angola'...

*Sunday Times*, 20 October 1974. All this was again confirmed during 1975 by greatly enlarged US aid to the enemies of the MPLA.

### *Notes*

7. The Mbunda are a cimbunda-speaking people to be distinguished from the Mbundu (plural: Ovimbundu) of the central districts.

### *Chapter 10: A New Situation*

1. Marcelino dos Santos, vice-president of FRELIMO, in 1973: 'If our organization maintains a true revolutionary leadership, the special circumstances of the process of our liberation open up real possibilities for an advance from liberation to revolution.' Quoted in Slovo, op. cit., p. 336.

2. In Guinea-Bissau, for instance, the medical services of the PAIGC discovered (and even they were surprised by the discovery) that the total number of civilian doctors in the capital of Bissau, and all other towns held by the Portuguese until then, was exactly four; and one of these was too ill to work.

3. A large bibliography. For recent discussion and references see Basil Davidson, *Can Africa Survive?*, Heinemann, 1974. And in relation to Somalia, Basil Davidson, 'In Somalia Now', *Race and Class*, July 1975.

4. Perspectives sketched by Guinea-Bissau's Commissioner for Economics and Finance, Vasco Cabral, in September 1974. He pointed out that the colonial economy of Guinea-Bissau had rested on the maximization of ground-nut exports:

This led to a disastrous consequence: the destruction of local growing of foodstuffs, without this being in any way compensated by a coherent industrialization...

We have to start from this concrete situation that we inherit and, for the time being, found our whole economy on agriculture, so as to raise agriculture to a level that can serve as a basis for the future development of industry. That is our conviction. And that explains the measures we have already taken in our liberated areas.

First of all, in order to break out of the colonial ground-nut system—a system which exhausted the soil by continually expanding ground-nut cultivation, reducing fallow, and ignoring rotation of crops—we have relaunched the cultivation of foodstuffs and tried to diversify it... (For) not only did the Portuguese fail to develop cultivation apart from ground-nuts: it's also the case that certain crops disappeared—cotton, for example... They even had to import rice, the staple food of our people...

In *Afrique-Asie*, Paris, 23 September 1974.

5. 'My own view is that there are no real conflicts between the peoples of Africa. There are only conflicts between their élites. When the people take power into their own hands, as they will do with the march of events in this continent, there will remain no great obstacles to

**REVOLUTION in the  
THIRD WORLD**  
foreword by Immanuel Wallerstein  
**Gérard Chaliand**  
MYTHS AND PROSPECTS

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**1. Guerrilla Inflation: The Foco Theory as  
a Theory for Failure**

While some conservatives (in France, for example, during the Algerian war, and the United States during the Vietnam war) have insisted that any revolutionary war can be defeated (thus successfully mixing up the political issue with military questions), a considerable fraction of the Far Left has simultaneously spread and elaborated the myth of the invincibility of guerrilla warfare. Examples were available to support either of the two theses. Among theoreticians and upholders of counterinsurgency, much was naturally made of how the Greek resistance was wiped out just after World War II, or the Huks in the Philippines as

well as the British Army's patient destruction of guerrilla movement in Malaya. Supporters of guerrilla warfare—or of people's war—for their part cited the example of the Chinese revolution, the first Indochina war which ended with Dien Bien Phu, the success of Castro's guerrillas; and last but not least, wasn't the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam holding its own against the most formidable military power in the world? The failures in Greece, the Philippines, and Malaya were far away, in space or in time. So the myth was able to spread—thanks largely to the diffusion of Mao Tse-tung's military writings, the easy victory of the Castroists in Cuba, the stir caused by Frantz Fanon's work, first in Latin America and then in Africa just after Algerian independence (although the victory of the Algerian Front for National Liberation was political and not at all military). All too rarely was the distinction made—a decisive distinction—between wars of national liberation waged against a foreign, colonizing or aggressor element, and class struggles in the proper sense of the term within a given society. This is not to deny that the two elements might not be combined in some cases. Nevertheless, within the last decade, the number of failures, the number of times that meager guerrilla forces in underpopulated areas were stamped out, the many retreats and reversals in one place after another, did not go unnoticed.

A few further general remarks are necessary. In Latin America the echo, if one may call it that, of most guerrilla wars was far greater than the actual scope of the operations. Verbal inflation was the characteristic of "revolutions" which for the most part were made up of a few dozen combatants without much in the way of support, at the most a few hundred men. In the past fifteen years, only a few guerrilla movements in Latin America have in either scope or durability amounted to more than minor uprisings (Colombia, Venezuela, Guatemala, Uruguay). That the echo could be amplified so many times no doubt has something to do with Western ethnocentrism: the revolutionaries were white, "one of us," closer on the cultural level (the Mexican revolution of 1910 is in varying ways an integral part of the Western sensi-

bility). And last but not least, the personality and physical appearance of Che Guevara, that "twentieth-century condottiere," as he called himself in his letters, gave young people an idol with whom identification was both more direct and more appealing than with Ho Chi Minh, for instance.

The Cuban revolution did not spread to the Latin American continent, despite appearances which might have led one to believe that something of the sort was about to happen. In fact, even though there is a tradition of violence in Latin America, social revolutions, even limited, have been rare: Mexico (1910), Bolivia (1952), Cuba (1960) and, a short time ago, Chile (1970). These are rather few, considering that between about 1930 and 1970 one hundred twenty heads of state were replaced by other than constitutional methods. The failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion induced the Cubans, along with all Latin Americans anxious to promote revolution, to underestimate not only the difficulty of mobilizing people by and for guerrilla warfare, but also the determination of the United States, a determination later shown during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, in the intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965, and, with greater discretion, in the antiguerrilla campaign and the Chilean counterrevolution. With the passage of time, it has become obvious that it was virtually impossible to coordinate revolutionary forces on a continental scale in Latin America; that, in fact, there was no revolutionary Third World able to make itself felt in an organized way on the global chessboard, nor any "socialist camp" anxious to aid some hypothetical revolution on a continental scale, nor even some revolutionary state somewhere as attentive to the development of the revolution in Latin America as to its own national interests.

Castro's easy victory (what other recent guerrilla force can pride itself on coming to power after only two and a half years of fighting?) had originally given rise to the underestimation of incumbent governments and their repressive organs—backed up in case of need by specialized American forces—and to an overestimation of the people's readiness for revolution. Yet on the face

of it, conditions looked favorable; most Latin American governments were inefficient and unstable, and some were heavily oppressive; none seemed designed to promote economic development or the modernization of political and social structures. The Alliance for Progress was a flop. What with the deterioration in terms of trade, Latin America's share in world trade had fallen in less than fifteen years to 5 percent. Income distribution was among the least egalitarian in the world, while the need for agrarian reform was unmistakable. So it was that among certain revolutionaries, encouraged by the Cuban success, hopes were high that by launching guerrilla operations, conditions could be created for radical change.

How was this guerrilla war to be waged? Revolutionary warfare in its modern form is not easy to summarize, but roughly speaking it includes three distinct phases. The *first*, a defensive phase, during which the revolutionary organization takes root among the people, is usually long and requires essentially political preparatory work. When the underground organization and its infrastructure have become strong, the *second* phase begins: now it becomes a matter of weakening the adversary little by little, to season one's fighting units while continuing steadily to extend control over the population. When a point of balance has been reached, the *third* phase consists in developing offensive operations with bigger and bigger units. Schematically, this is what happened in China, then in Indochina, and was in the process of happening in 1965 in South Vietnam when American troops intervened massively to save the Saigon regime.

The general lessons to be drawn from the experience of all the revolutionary wars that have enjoyed any degree of success, can be summed up in two basic points: 1. The objective and subjective conditions must be as ripe as possible, the most favorable situation being one of foreign domination or aggression, enabling the revolution to mobilize the broadest segments of society toward a goal that is both national and social; and 2. The organization of the guerrilla force—and, above all, its clandestine political structure, linked to the population—must be such that it

will eventually allow the military guerrilla force to recruit, develop, and endure. These characteristics have essentially been lacking in Latin American guerrilla efforts—even in Colombia, which was the scene of the most widespread violence since the Mexican revolution. But another major reason for the failures of Latin American guerrillas just after the Cuban revolution lies in their attempt to put into practice the *foco*<sup>1</sup> theory, first formulated by Guevara and systematized by Régis Debray. Based on what seemed to him to be the lessons to be drawn from the Cuban revolution, Guevara, in his book *Guerrilla Warfare*, in 1960, argued that guerrilla fighters can defeat a regular army; the basic terrain of guerrilla war in Latin America should be in the countryside; and especially (and here lies his originality) revolutionaries need not and must not wait until all the objective conditions are right to launch their struggle, since the *foco*, the mobile focal point of insurrection, is able by its very existence to create them. In other words, Guevara called for imitation of the Cuban example and attached no basic importance to what made it special.

But if guerrilla warfare brought to power the group of survivors who came ashore in the *Granma*, the point is that there was no question *then*, in 1956, of setting up a socialist regime in Cuba that depended on many other factors.

Aside from the neutrality of the United States from 1956 to 1959, there were the varying degrees of participation in or benevolent neutrality toward the Castroist guerrilla effort—especially in Cuba's cities—on the part of people from diverse social backgrounds quite happy to see the end of the Batista tyranny but who did not wish or foresee the direction Castro took in 1960–61. It was only well after his conquest of power, in fact, that the radicalization became perceptible which was to lead to changes in Cuba's social and economic structures. The element of surprise, not to say misunderstanding, which allowed the revo-

<sup>1</sup> E. Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1963).

lutionary Cuban leadership to make their revolution more and more radical, could not happen again.

Nonetheless the Cuban example gave rise throughout Latin America to both a revolutionary enthusiasm in some sectors of the urban middle classes and an ultravoluntarist strategy, which was inoperative if not downright suicidal. It is, at any rate, true that the activities of the Latin American Communist parties (few of which had much of a following anyway) had scant prospects to offer. Between 1962 and 1965 a few of them, in order not to be found lagging behind (in Venezuela, Colombia, Guatemala), took part in armed struggle, while they went on trying to arrange for the possibility of being accepted on the national chessboard as a legal political force. Simultaneously, it became obvious that the Soviet Union had no desire whatever to be stuck with supporting yet another Cuba.

The weakness of the foco theory, according to which one headed straight into armed struggle without any serious mobilization of the population, was precisely that it cut off the guerrilla fighters from popular support. This was amply demonstrated time and again: in the failures in Paraguay (Movement of 14 May 1959); Colombia (Workers-Students-Peasants Movement, MOEC, in 1961); Ecuador (Revolutionary Union of Ecuadorean Youth in 1962); the Dominican Republic (Revolutionary movement of May 14, in 1963); Argentina (1963, 1964, especially in the Tucuman region); Peru (the 1965 guerrilla efforts of the MIR and the ELN, which briefly tried to take root in the population); Brazil (repeated attempts throughout the decade); Honduras; Mexico; and finally Bolivia, with Guevara—not counting the many groups that came apart before even managing to get to the mountains. Even the groups that did (or still do) amount to something, whether rural (Venezuela, Guatemala) or urban (Brazil 1969–71, Uruguay), were on the whole cut off from the masses. Out of some fifteen countries where serious guerrilla activity broke out at least thirty times, only a few guerrilla centers are still remaining in a half-dozen countries. Among the most long-standing are: in Venezuela, the National Liberation Armed Forces (FALN), led by Douglas Bravo; in Guatemala, the Revo-

lutionary Armed Forces (FAR) of Cesar Montes; in Colombia, the National Liberation Army (ELN) of Fabio Vasquez, as well as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), more or less connected to the Communist party; in Nicaragua, the Sandinist National Liberation Front (FSLN) of Carlos Fonseca Amador; the Tupamaros in Uruguay; and the armed Trotskyist groups in Argentina. Mention can be made in passing of recent organizations in Brazil (heavily decimated) and Mexico (only in the most remote states, such as Sonora and Guerrero, where the Emiliano Zapata Armed Front of National Liberation and the Revolutionary National Civil Action operate, among others.)

Guevara's death in October 1967 provided a spectacular symbol of the failure of Cuban-style guerrilla activity inspired by the foco theory; but in reality the inadequacy of that theory had already been proved, even before its strategy was worked out systematically by Régis Debray in his book *Revolution in the Revolution*. Debray's work—which caused a considerable stir, what with the prestige of the Cuban revolution, Che's personality, and the theoretical weakness of guerrilla leadership in Latin America—analyzed four forms of action and organization: "armed self-defense"; armed propaganda; guerrilla bases; and the classic vanguard party. The initial weakness of the foco<sup>2</sup> is that it is without popular support for a more or less considerable length of time. It has only itself to rely on. But it is important to have a clear idea in advance of the social lay of the land before trying to take root. The point is to figure out ahead of time, by first-hand knowledge of local situations, which are the sectors within the peasantry that can be aroused and mobilized; it is best to know about the obstacles before running into them. Otherwise, guerrillas are doomed to survive only through their mobility in virtually uninhabited areas—like a lonely eagle on a mountain

<sup>2</sup> Sections of the following passage appeared in my review of *Revolution in the Revolution*, published in *Esprit* (Paris), November 1967. This review was considered too critical and consequently was turned down by several left-wing and Far-Left publications in France. And my criticisms seemed irrelevant to high Cuban officials in the euphoria of the conference of the Organization of Latin America Solidarity (OLAS, Havana, August 1967), where I was invited as an observer. But Debray has since published an autocriticism of the thesis of his entire book.



peak. And communication between a guerrilla group of urban origin and the rural peasant population is no simple matter. In Peru, where the guerrilla movement was crushed, it had no middle-level political organizers who came from the country or who were otherwise familiar with the peasants' day-to-day problems and able to talk with them in a language that touched them directly. Few could speak Quechua, and few had a thorough knowledge of the Indian problem.

Nor did Debray make any mention of another major problem: that of the cities and how to win them over politically. If coordination is not worked out between guerrilla activities and urban political struggle, the guerrillas are doomed forever to mark time in the countryside. It is certainly possible to start with a numerically weak foco, but it is still necessary to end up with mass organizations and careful political work, notably among workers and students.

Debray concluded that "guerrilla warfare is the crucible from which the party will be forged" and that "the people's army will be the nucleus of the party, not the other way round"—a conclusion influenced by the fact that for most Latin American Communist parties, survival of the party apparatus had long since become the supreme goal at the expense of the revolution itself. But it is important not to let one dogmatism be replaced by another.

If the Leninist conception of a vanguard party made up of professional revolutionaries suggests a certain voluntarism, the Cuban conception of a vanguard cut off at the start from the population it intends to involve and lead into the struggle is going as far in the voluntarist direction as it is possible to go. And it is for this reason that any number of focos have not begun to worry about setting up a future party, for they have ceased to exist before reaching the stage of grappling with that problem.

Even the urban guerrillas of Latin America did not prove immune to focoism, despite their desire to avoid it. However, it was the Tupamaros of Uruguay who, contrary to the Cuban model and with all due respect for local factors, managed to set up the best-structured revolutionary organization on the continent. None-

theless, a decade of guerrilla activities led only to a right-wing military reaction in Uruguay and a strengthening of the extreme Right in Guatemala. (In 1973, the Tupamaros undertook a general revision of their strategy, recognizing that the weakness of their links to the population had been the cause of their setbacks the year before.) In Venezuela, various constitutional governments little by little pushed the several guerrilla fronts there on the defensive. And the current crisis in Colombia can be explained more by the inability of the National Front to carry out reforms than by successful pressure brought by the various guerrilla groups.

Even putting aside international conditions, Latin American guerrillas lacked a strategy or a clear view of their national problems. Guevara noted in his diary two months before his death, "Not one peasant has yet joined the guerrilla group." Most of the time, the fighting groups knew little of the social milieu they intended to mobilize and almost always lacked middle-level organizers suited to do so. That lack of understanding extended to national factors as a whole. In this respect, the revolutionary myth of Latin America continentalism is rather similar to the myth of Arab nationalism. In both cases one can point to a common language, history, and cultural substratum, but in both cases there also exist significant disparities in the level of economic and cultural development which produce centrifugal influences. Continentalism may well be an exalting idea for parts of the intelligentsia, but for the peasant masses it is all the more abstract, in that integration on the national level is still so far from realized.

And lastly, in at least four countries where guerrilla action has taken place (Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Guatemala), the Indian question is of prime importance and requires special attention.

No large-scale rural guerrilla action is possible without the adherence of at least part of the Indian masses. Only Hugo Blanco,<sup>3</sup> in Peru, succeeded in mobilizing Indians, which he did in the early 1960s in the Valley of la Convencion. But then, he

<sup>3</sup> See his *Land or Death, the Peasant Struggle in Peru* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1972). So far, only Blanco has raised the Indian question.

spoke Quechua at least enough to get along. In the Indian world, so violently crushed by physical poverty and so profoundly de-structured, the Spanish of the white man only awakens distrust.

Compared to these major factors influencing political development in Latin America, the (usually indirect) intervention of the United States in counterinsurgency operations is of minor importance. True, the United States training center in Panama has turned out more than 20,000 specialists in counterinsurgency who are sent throughout Latin America. In Venezuela and Colombia, local armies have made successful use of these specialized corps. But success is due primarily to the weakness of the guerrillas' support structure and the flimsiness of their links with the population.

Considering the basic political strategy of revolutionary war—in which factors of time, space, and costs are of vital importance—it is impossible to disregard the scant taste exhibited in Latin America for patience, for the sense of the long haul on which revolutionary war depends. The space of revolutionary action, whether geographical or social, is almost always very limited, with so few sectors of society involved that the state and its machinery are never short of reliable allies. And high-level leaders, whose knowledge and prestige are needed to keep the struggle going, feel obliged both by the thinness of the ranks and by social pressure, by machismo, to risk their lives in combats which should not require their presence. Guevara, Camillo Torres, Luis de la Puente, Guillermo Lobaton, Fabricio Ojeda, Carlos Marighello, Yon Sosa, Inti Peredo, to mention only the best known—these grave losses are themselves a sign of the fragility of Latin American guerrilla movements. (By comparison, in a dozen years of war, only one of the fifty members of the central committee of the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front fell into the hands of the enemy.)

A certain number of other sociological traits common to most Latin American societies also need to be mentioned. While these would be secondary in a major war, with the revolution held together by a central revolutionary ideology, these traits weigh

against successful action in other circumstances: verbal inflation, accompanied by slight ability to keep secrets; lack of group cohesiveness, worsened by an obsession with authority (what Latin American in charge of a dozen others resists proclaiming himself *comandante*?); machismo and fascination with death (largely products of the Hispanic tradition). The only group which seems to a large extent free of these traits is the Tupamaros, which developed out of a modern urban society with an industrial sense of relationship to time.

In short, the basic weakness up to now of guerrilla movements in Latin America has been their political inability to give rise to a disciplined organizational apparatus connected to a nationwide support structure. Nowhere in Latin America is there any sign that such an apparatus is being developed. In fact, the guerrillas' only serious outside support, Cuba, after Guevara's death gave up the idea of the imminent apocalypse of continental revolution and reduced its aid—at the same time agreeing to respect the positive aspects of regimes like that in Peru, whose reformism it would not have failed to criticize only a short time before. This change is no doubt due to Cuba's domestic economic and political problems, but is also due to the scant success of the guerrilla movements which, fifteen years after Sierra Maestra, have mostly proved to be ephemeral.

But if the guerrilla movements have not directly brought decisive changes in the continent, the Alliance for Progress has also failed; so have the Communist parties. Indirectly, the focos have brought many transformations. Nationalist feeling, as always directed against the United States, and kept alive in the cities mostly by the petty bourgeoisie, grew stronger in the decade following the Cuban revolution. This trend influenced, among others, a large number of junior military officers, who awakened to the idea that the ruling classes were corrupt and ineffective, ineffective in modernizing and developing the country and ineffectual in preserving national dignity. In this sense, the modernization experiments of the Peruvian military regime since 1968 are the result of the guerrilla movements of 1965.

Still, in the past ten years only three or four Latin American countries have undergone any noticeable economic or social changes. Elsewhere the problems that once gave rise to guerrilla movements are still there, the same as ever—indeed, worsened by the population explosion (the projected population of Latin America will be 380 million in 1980 and more than 600 million at the end of the century).

Yet at least for the foreseeable future, it is likely that contrary to the famous slogan of only a few years ago, there will not be a Vietnam in Latin America. The conditions are lacking, not for the launching, but for the successful conclusion of armed struggle. In the last analysis, the historic opportunity for Latin American revolutionaries to start with an organization and build up a broad support structure in the masses has never really existed. In reality, revolutionary wars were a phenomenon that came out of the context of World War II, with the considerable weakening of Western domination and with the experience of Japanese military occupation. It was that world crisis which made possible not the creation of an organization and a certain support structure, which already existed, but the victorious emergence of the Chinese revolution. From that crisis the long battle of the Vietnamese people drew its initial strength.

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## Militarism: Force, Class and International Conflict

Robin Luckham

### Introduction

In the first article on this subject (*IDS Bulletin*, Volume 8 No. 3) it was argued that militarism in the Third World is closely associated with the expansion of capital in the world economy. Let us now look at the violence and armed struggle which has accompanied this expansion. It is a grim picture. For the past 30 years the major world powers have been locked in nuclear stalemate, restrained only by their fear of a holocaust made increasingly terrifying by the incessant arms race. The struggles between them have often been diverted to the periphery where violent upheavals—coups, revolutions, strikes, communal rioting, civil wars and wars between rival states—are commonplace. This is a matter for concern if only because human beings in their thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands and millions have been slaughtered in the process: whether by their own compatriots or ruling classes, as in Uganda, Argentina, Indonesia or Cambodia; or by the direct intervention of imperial powers as in Vietnam. The social and economic costs of violence, social disruption, warfare and movements of population on the scale they have occurred in the Third World over the past three decades are almost incalculable.

Peace is a realistic programme only if it is sought through an understanding of the political and economic forces which create struggles for domination. The military is a crucial instrument in such struggles: both as an agent of internal repression and international domination; and (on the whole less frequently) of radical social change and national liberation.

There are two ways of approaching the problems of peacekeeping. The first is more cautious and incremental: how, given *existing* forms of force, of class conflict, of state and international organisation, can conflict be averted, arms races be kept under control and the human and material costs of international conflict be minimised? The second looks at things more comprehensively: what transformations in class structure, military, state and international organisation would be required to assure conditions of lasting peace, both nationally and internationally?

The arguments of this paper suggest that the patterns of accumulation which prevail in the world economy, the existing forms of force and the present

organisation of the international system of nation states, severely limit the scope for international agreement on arms control and conflict resolution of the first (incremental) kind. In addition, the present international system is based on a distribution of economic resources and of political and military power that systematically disadvantages the Third World and which the people of the latter will not for long be able to accept.

These limits and conflicts are described below. It is a much more difficult task to suggest alternatives. What forms of force and of popular mobilisation can negate the power to coerce professional military organisations? How can the nexus between armaments and international capital accumulation be broken? How can existing international institutions and the prevailing international distribution of power be changed without precipitating a nuclear holocaust? This paper does not pretend to give ready answers.

### Military professionalism, class and uneven development

Class struggle is endemic in development. But the form and direction it takes is deflected by the major fractures within and between social formations created by uneven development. The expansion of capital from the capitalist core to the periphery disrupted the entire social fabric of the latter. Not only did it destroy old modes of production and replace them by new international forms of exploitation, but also it triggered off a series of political upheavals: war, colonial conquest, nationalism, inter-communal conflict and revolution.

At a national level these conflicts encompass the struggles between class and class but extend well beyond them. At international level conflict is inherent in the existence side by side of states dominated by different classes and modes of production, though as the Sino-Soviet split reminds us this is not the only way international differences arise. Nationalism is a phenomenon one ignores at one's peril. Yet it is profoundly contradictory in its nature. On the one hand it was itself internationalised by the expansion of the core capitalist countries into the periphery, providing the ideological charter of the nation-state, the political form of bourgeois society *par excellence*. Nevertheless, nations also demark major fractures in the international system. Nationalism was the rallying cry for the dismantling of colonial empires. In most Third World countries it

symbolises the revolt of the periphery against the international centre. It is sustained by an international stratification between nations in terms of the power, status and economic resources they command. And the major revolutions which have taken place in the Third World—China, Vietnam, Cuba, Mozambique etc.—were not only social but also national, this being a major ingredient in their success.

The military has a particular role in all this because of the functions of organised force in carrying out (and repressing) internal conflict, in international stratification and in international war and peace-making. Its institutional format reflects the contradictions inherent in the international system. On the one hand it is the most international of professions. The similarities between military elites, the brotherhood of arms, the multiple inter-connections between them created by training and service abroad might seem to suggest that they are an important element in a new international class structure. Yet armies are the instruments of individual states, have national rather than international command structures and often develop strong nationalist ideologies. Their interstitial position between the nation State and the international system is critical in reproducing both.

The existing literature on the military in the Third World fails almost completely, however, to establish the connections between the military's position in the class structure, its institutional characteristics and its international dimensions. Insofar as it deals with the subject of class at all it does so in terms of the alleged consequences of the recruitment and social origins of the officer corps. Officers are either said to be conservative because they originate from the upper levels of the class structure—an argument that was popular in the past with radical critics of the military—or they are said to be part of the 'new middle class', which brings about modernisation.

A sophisticated attempt by Huntington (1968, chapter 4) to synthesise these arguments in terms of different stages in modernisation postulates that when middle-class groups begin to challenge traditional landed oligarchies, the military plays a progressive role in dislodging the latter; but when lower class groups begin to organise, the military increasingly plays a repressive role in defence of established class interests. The military supports bourgeois revolutions but opposes socialist ones, although one could not expect a conservative American academic to say so in so many words.

No really convincing explanation, however, is given why the military should be located at some fixed 'middle point' in the class structure. Empirical

studies of the class origins of army officers in the Third World on the whole confirm that officers are neither recruited from the ruling or upper classes—even in countries like Brazil where the class structure is relatively well developed—nor are many of them sons of peasants and workers. Few of these studies demonstrate, however, that class origins have a significant effect on political behaviour. The important differences between the military juntas of Brazil and of Peru, would for example, be impossible to predict from their class origins, which are strikingly similar (Stepan, 1973, chapter 2).

Something akin to a process of class formation occurs in military organisations themselves and is visible in their tendency to fissure along the gradations of the military hierarchy. Coups are often the product of particular officer peer groups with similar rank, training, career experience and sources of grievance, such as the Free Officers who brought the military into power in Egypt; the Eighth Graduating Class prominent in the Korean coup of 1961; the Majors and Captains and Lieutenants who staged coup and countercoup in Nigeria in 1966; the Lieutenants who belonged to the *Tenentismo* movement in Brazil in the 1920s and 1930s; and the Captains and Majors who organised the Portuguese and Ethiopian military revolutions of 1974. Such fissures tend to occur precisely because military organisations are at the same time hierarchies in which rank and career create shared interest and experience between officers of similar rank; and power structures in which the tension between upper and lower levels of command is difficult to contain.

Most armies reproduce the two class division of capitalist societies in the cleavage between officers and the men over whom they exercise command. Again there are numerous examples of military revolts from the ranks, some with momentous political consequences: the sergeants' revolt and naval mutiny which precipitated the assumption of power by the officer corps in Brazil in 1964; the East African mutinies of 1964 which almost (but for British intervention) destroyed the newly independent regimes in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda and contributed directly to the rise to power in Uganda of Amin; the coup of July 1966 in Nigeria which was as much a revolt of NCOs against the military command as it was a coup of Northerners against Ibo control of army and State; the revolt by ordinary soldiers in Sierra Leone who in 1968 locked up their entire officer corps and handed power back to civilians; and the Portuguese and Ethiopian military revolutions of 1974 the organisers of which acted under strong pressure from their own rank and file (in Ethiopia ordinary soldiers even put their officers under guard until they agreed to act on their behalf).

Military structures, in sum, generate cleavages that resemble class conflict in that they are generated in a systematic way through the social relations of force;<sup>1</sup> by the way men are fitted together in large-scale organisations around a weapons system designed to produce a certain 'output' of violence.

Such cleavages make it impossible to assume that the military is a monolithic institution or that its role is always conservative. Groups of middle-level and junior officers have sometimes developed radical political programmes: (the *Tenentismo* movement in Brazil in the 1920s, the Free Officers in Egypt in the 1950s, the Armed Forces Movement in Portugal and the Derg in Ethiopia in the 1970s).

Revolts from the ranks can be still more revolutionary in their potential than peer group interventions. The turning point in the Russian Revolution of 1917 was when the ordinary soldiers refused to turn their guns on the striking workers and joined them. The movements initiated by the Derg in Ethiopia and the Armed Forces Movement in Portugal would probably have been less sweeping without the active pressure and participation of the military rank and file.

Yet military revolts also tend to provoke reaction by the hierarchy. Both Nigerian coups of 1966 though initiated from below, were taken over in the one case by the military Supreme Commander and in the other by the most senior Northern officers. Among the reasons for the Brazilian coup of 1964 was the officers' alarm that the government had failed to deal firmly with mutinies which could have threatened the military institution itself. And what above all persuaded the army officers finally to divert Portugal from its revolutionary course in late 1975 was fear of the consequences of growing indiscipline among the rank and file. As the then Chief of Staff of the Portuguese armed forces, General Fabiao, put it in October 1975, when commenting on the rank and file organisation, Soldiers United Will Win (SUV), "the SUV has a certain strength. But I have reservations, because it is a horizontal organisation and in the army we have a vertical organisation". (*Economist*, 1975).

Although the social relations of violence themselves thus generate impetus both for military radicalism and for military reaction they are by no means a sufficient condition of either. The Russian Revolution was a revolution because soldiers joined the workers and peasants they were brought out to suppress and not the other way round. In some circumstances army revolt may amount to little more than narrow trades

unionism: being easily suppressed because of the absence of wide social support or, like the East African Mutinies of 1964, as a result of external intervention; bought off by better pay and conditions of service; or (if successful) turning the army into a machine for the extortion of tribute by the new lumpen-militariat as in Amin's Uganda or Batista's Cuba. For soldiers and officers who rebel against the hierarchy always have the option of expropriating the latter for their own benefit rather than seeking to transform society. They are unlikely to choose (or indeed think of) the latter unless external class forces also impel them to do so.

Just as the military is not, because of its institutional distinctiveness, purely and simply the mailed fist of the ruling class; so on the other hand military upheavals cannot by themselves bring about class transformation unless they are associated with mass struggle outside the narrow confines of the military bureaucracy itself. Military revolutions are often little more than revolutions from above, enhancing the role of the State rather than transforming society. The natural heirs of the *Tenentismo* movement, for example, are the Brazilian generals of the 1970s. In Egypt the social transformation achieved under Nasser was in the final analysis rather limited and is now being reversed under his successor.

Up to this point I have left out the conflicts of community, tribe, religion, culture, language and nation (or sub-nation) which are often also associated with military upheavals. These are in part the residue of pre-capitalist social formations. But in their present form they are as much the product of the uneven development of capitalism and of the State, which characteristically incorporates some groups more fully than others and sets in motion struggles for scarce state-allocated resources—be they jobs, power, development expenditures or military recruitment and promotions.

Nowhere—because of the lack of fit between imposed state superstructures and pre-capitalist formations—are such conflicts more evident than in sub-Saharan Africa. Yet in few parts of the Third World can they be completely ignored. Religion—Christian versus Moslem as in the Lebanon, Ethiopia and the Philippines, different Moslem sects as in Syria or the Sudan—race or tribe—for example, military recruitment as a basis of Malay hegemony in Malaysia, Tutsi repression in Burundi or Bedouin dominance in Jordan—and region—as in the conflict between sierra and coast in Ecuador or the regional balancing of power in the Brazilian army—have all been major factors in military struggles.

Such cleavages do not obliterate military and class relations, but interact with them. In my own case study of *The Nigerian Military* (Luckham; 1971a), I

<sup>1</sup> Though they do not, strictly speaking, arise from the exploitation of soldiers as a workforce from which surplus value is extracted; but from their domination in a hierarchy of power relationships controlled by their superiors.

took one of the most extreme examples of ethnic and regional fragmentation of the military and demonstrated that this could also be accounted for in terms of the army's organisational cleavages, the social relations of force. The distribution of power in the military hierarchy overlapped with regional and ethnic differences in such a way that ethnicity became a symbolic master key that unlocked the contradictions of both army and society at the same time in the two coups which took place in 1966. Depending on the recruitment base of the military, the demographic structure and geo-politics of the country and the nature of uneven development, several other variations might be theoretically possible.

The military is also riven by the contradictions between those forces which hold together the national class structure and those which link classes together internationally. Armies are kept in operation by the international arms trade. Yet the surpluses with which arms are purchased are appropriated nationally. Soldiers fight external wars or at the very least keep themselves in a state of preparation for them. Yet they are also the agents of internal repression; indeed in some countries that is virtually their only function. Professionalism is an international ideology disseminated by the military assistance programmes of the advanced countries. Yet army officers play out their careers in national military establishments and are not as internationally mobile as the managers of multinational corporations.

Military training makes army officers peculiarly susceptible to international influences. They often attend courses abroad at some stage in their military career: Latin American officers for the most part in the USA or in US-sponsored institutes such as the inter-American counter-insurgency school in Panama; English speaking African officers in Britain and other countries of the Commonwealth like Canada, Australia, India or Pakistan, but also in the USA; French speaking Africans in France. Military academies and training schools are often modelled on the metropolis, sometimes indirectly as in Nigeria, where the Military Academy was set up with Indian advice and technical assistance, thus passing on British professional values and modes of military organisation at second remove. The socialist countries have likewise recognised the importance of military training for transmitting their international influence; not only in countries where it supports an ongoing transition to socialism (Chinese assistance in the reorganisation of the Tanzanian military or Cuban training missions in Angola) but also in countries where such a transition is more remote (Russian assistance to Uganda and Chinese to the Angolan FNL).

The implications of military training and assistance programmes for external dependence are easy to see. They train soldiers in the use of the technologies of the donor countries. They give sustenance to the social relations of force around which the professional armies of both metropolis and periphery are organised. They create networks of professional contacts both with metropolitan military institutions and among course-mates in different peripheral countries. And they are often explicitly intended, like US counterinsurgency courses, (or indeed Chinese guerrilla instruction) to promote the political philosophy and interests of the country which provides the training.

They also transmit into the Third World elements of the major class contradictions of the advanced capitalist societies. On the one hand military professionalism means mastery of a range of skills—of management, of using, maintaining and controlling weapons, of technology, communication and transport—developed in parallel with the expansion of capitalism. At the same time these technical and managerial elements of professionalism are in tension with its heroic elements. The latter are a residue of feudalism, but continue to play a critical role in modern armies because they legitimise the military hierarchy.<sup>2</sup> Thus even these feudal elements are transmitted into the Third World. Pomp and circumstance and the notion that 'officers are gentlemen' seem to be universal aspects of military culture be it in Thailand, Zambia or El Salvador.

The officer and gentlemen ethic is often used to create a special niche for the military in the national class structure. In Nigeria, for example, (Luckham 1971a chapter 4) it is used to assert a distinctive military sphere of values in which social status is not allocated in accordance with the criterion of educational achievement which prevails among other elites (and according to which army officers measure up poorly). The officer corps is thus set apart from the class structure as a whole, yet articulated with it, corresponding with the military's interstitial position both as the mailed fist of the dominant class or classes and as that part of the state superstructure which holds a national society together in periods of class conflict or international crisis.

The effects of international military links can sometimes, however, be quite the opposite of that intended by their sponsors. For example, in the counterinsurgency training organised by Western powers military intellectuals read and transmit to their colleagues the doctrine of the 'enemy'—Mao, Guevara, Giap or Fanon. When the military role is

<sup>2</sup> For the perceptive analysis of this contradiction within the mainstream of bourgeois military thought see Janowitz (1960).

redefined in the direction of domestic repression rather than external security the contradictions to which these authors call attention begin to emerge. Doctrines of 'revolutionary war' politicise officers both in the direction of the radical right and of the radical left.

Putting down strikes, demonstrations and guerrilla uprisings acquaints army officers with the grim realities of poverty and strife in their own country's rural areas and urban slums. These are not perceived, however, in the abstract but from a particular vantage point in the military hierarchy and class structure, creating a deep ambivalence. On the one hand it is feared that the disorder will get out of hand, and suspected that it is manipulated by international Communist subversion; and tough-minded new doctrines of 'national security' develop. On the other, radicalisation of some sectors of the officer corps occurs, based on the feeling that domestic repression is not the job of the army and threatens to destroy it by bringing it into contact with class conflict: The Majors who staged the January 1966 coup in Nigeria and the officers of the Derg in Ethiopia were alienated by their experience in putting down strikes; the Peruvian military leaders espoused a programme of reform in order to deal with the real social problems they saw as responsible for guerrilla uprisings and to keep the military institution free of the taint of domestic repression.

The contradiction between the two variants of professionalism—that of conventional warfare and that of counterinsurgency—corresponds to an important tension in the class structure of a dependent social formation. On the one hand the techniques and organisational blueprints of advanced countries are transferred to the Third World, interlinked with arms sales and industrialisation. On the other the armies and class structures of peripheral countries do not just become those of the advanced countries writ small, as they have been profoundly distorted by their contact with the latter.

Domination at the periphery requires different relations of force from those in use in the metropolis. Yet this sometimes conflicts with the vested interests of professional soldiers in more conventional military functions. Thus the Peruvian junta which took power in 1968 at the same time that it increased national control over the economy also reasserted the military's role in external defence by buying foreign military hardware of a kind which the civilian regime (under US government pressure) had denied the soldiers.

One may, in conclusion, see two contrapuntal themes in military professionalism in the Third World: on the one hand, military nationalism directed towards the creation of an internationally effective nation-

state supported by a well developed conventional army, increasingly linked through its arms purchases to the international economy; on the other, international pressure for political 'stability' at the periphery, requiring an internally powerful state machinery and enlisting military commitment to doctrines of 'national security' legitimising its role in internal repression. These themes are interlinked and contradictory. Both are present in military ideology and tend to be associated with conflict between opposed groups of army officers.

**Military hierarchy, repression and international cleavage**

Power grows out of the barrel of the gun  
the gun on the tank  
the warhead on the missile  
but also out of the shout of the sergeant-major  
the *pronunciamento* of the junta  
the whisper in the Pentagon

Weapons are mute unless organised in a framework of social relations which determine how they are used and against whom, social relations which can be analysed at at least three levels: the system of command established within military organisations themselves; the system of domination established through the state apparatus; and the struggle for international power and spheres of influence between nation-states.

Neither their own arms nor their diplomacy are enough to assure the nation-states of the Third World of protection from foreign interference or from the mass destruction of their citizens. They live in a world in which the techniques of force are internationalised to such an extent that they pose a common threat to the entire human race, yet are by no means under effective international control. This much the developing countries share in common with the remainder of the world. But they are further disadvantaged by the fact that the precarious balance of power through which some semblance of international peace is maintained is one which on the whole reproduces the dominance of the large industrial powers over the Third World.

In the Third World both army and state were in a real sense created or restructured by the expansion of the central capitalist powers. Their military hierarchies are based on imposed organisational blueprints. The state machinery as a whole is weak, narrowly based and as much the artefact of international as of national domination. And to shore up its fragile structure the military function is inverted: the armed forces being more often used to repress internal dissent than to maintain international security.



There is no more eloquent testimony to the internationalisation of the relations of domination than the uniformity of certain characteristics of professional armies: the hierarchy of ranks, the exclusiveness of the *military brotherhood*, the emphasis on rituals and emblems of rank, the codes of honour, the class distinctions between officers and other ranks. Part of this can be accounted for by the fact that a small number of models—basically British, French, German and American—have been consciously transplanted in the Third World. But where other transplants like the ill-fated 'Westminster model' of parliamentary democracy did not take root, military organisations flourished. Organised force is essential for the reproduction of modern nation-states, voting is not.

Nevertheless armies are seldom monolithic institutions on which members of ruling classes can always rely. The use of military force to repress opponents of the regime or to settle struggles for political power often moves the conflict into the armed forces themselves, accentuating their internal contradictions and precipitating coups, mutinies and power struggles.

Military violence itself tends to become a major problem. The memory of the My Lai massacre by American troops in Vietnam—and other massacres like it which surely took place but went unrecorded—of French torture in Algeria, of Russian military repression in Eastern Europe and the present realities of British military occupation in Northern Ireland remind one that this problem is by no means confined to the armies of the developing countries.

The boundary between legitimate military force and illegitimate violence is always difficult to draw and is sometimes deliberately obscured both by military leaders and by members of the ruling classes with whom they are associated. However strongly denied internationally, for example, it is clear that there was military participation (by, among others, the RPKAD—the Army Para-commandos) (Caldwell: 14) in the massacre of PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) members and sympathisers in 1965-66; in the massacres of Ibo civilians in Northern Nigeria in 1966; in the kidnapping and murder of 'subversive elements' by *grupos militares* in Argentina, not to mention similar groups which have at various times operated in Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Guatemala, Uganda, Burundi and no doubt one or two other countries where they have been less well publicised. At the very least the military commanders and governments involved have condoned violence by failing to take action against it; often they have tacitly encouraged it not actively ordered it. Conversely, however, military violence has sometimes been turned against authority: engulfing the

army command, the government (even if it is a military government), the ruling class and even in some extreme instances (Nigeria in 1966-67, or Zaire in 1960) the entire structure of the State itself.

The majority of the countries of Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America are under military rule. Still more of them have experienced military intervention or periods of military rule at some point or other during the past 30 years. And if one adopts broader criteria there are scarcely any where organised military force has *not* been used to keep in office or to change the regime or ruling class during the past three decades.

Against this background most of the things social scientists have to say seem exceedingly banal. Much of the existing literature takes as its starting point the problem of assuring 'civilian control' over the military establishment: which can be looked at over a whole continuum of military participation in politics, ranging from gentlemanly bargaining over strategy or appropriations, outright blackmail of the regime, participation in the reshuffling of ruling elites right through to direct military control of all the major political institutions of a society (Finer 1962).

The absence of civilian control is only a 'problem', however, when contrasted with an idealised view of the relationship between soldiers and governments in the advanced bourgeois democracies. It is not an especially useful way of looking at the political institutions of Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America, where military participation rather than civilian control might be viewed as the 'normal' state of affairs. Nor does the idea of a continuum from civilian to military take us very far. To be sure, the difference between a military establishment which intervenes as a 'moderating power' to resolve conflicts between civilian factions as in Brazil before 1964 and one which attempts permanently to substitute itself for parts of the state superstructure, to become the State as it were, as in the same country after 1967, is important. Yet to view this as just a change from less to more military participation in political life is superficial, for the military's formal participation in politics is less important than the question of how far the state superstructure is or is not held together by organised coercion. To what extent do those who control that superstructure rely on repressive rather than ideological mechanisms to establish their hegemony?

The distinction between civilian and military regimes may well be less important than the similarities in the way they govern. Take a country like the Philippines where, under a civilian regime civil liberties have been curtailed, the media browbeaten, trade unions deprived of the right to strike, opponents of the

regime repressed. There is intensive surveillance by the police and military intelligence networks, internal warfare is waged against a dissident minority group, the military is frequently consulted about major government decisions, martial law is in operation and political offences are tried before military rather than civilian tribunals. The extent of repression and its methods differ only in detail from that practised in other Third World countries such as South Korea, Indonesia, Taiwan, Sri Lanka or Pakistan; Brazil, Argentina, Peru or Uruguay; Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Syria or Jordan; Senegal, Ghana, Zaire or Ethiopia; be they formally under civilian governments or under the military and whether the regime is of a conservative or progressive political tendency.

Coups and military regimes are, to be sure, the prevailing trend in the Third World, and this is hardly surprising. For when organised coercion is the main basis of state power, coups are to be expected merely because more 'democratic' methods of transferring power between different fractions of the ruling classes cease to operate. But struggles to gain or to remain in power can also be waged by assassination, mob violence, surveillance and terror by the secret police, bribery and the skilful dispensation of political patronage. Frequent coups may betoken instability in the framework of the State—but not necessarily more so than votes of no confidence, reshufflings of cabinets and frequent elections in bourgeois democracies. Like the latter they speed the circulation of elites and the realignment of fractions of the ruling classes more often than they bring about fundamental change in the organisation of state power and its allocation between (rather than within) social classes.

The coup, then, is to some extent a bogus problem. Rather than improvising explanations of its occurrence it is better to give attention to different questions. To what extent do those who control the state machinery rely on repressive mechanisms—including army rule—to secure their domination? Is the increase in coups and military regimes part of a more general restructuring of power in the periphery in the direction of greater authoritarianism and less reliance on ideological controls and popular participation? If so, what are the reasons for the change? Which institutions and social classes does authoritarian government benefit, both nationally and internationalisation? How far is it precipitated by the internationalisation of the capital, power and military influence of the core capitalist countries? Does it make things more (or less) difficult for those who wish to implement reforms like the redistribution of wealth and productive resources or disarmament? Does it create the conditions under which such changes can only be effected by revolutionary change, the smashing of the entire

repressive apparatus of the State? What contradictions exist within that apparatus and how can best use be made of them against state (and military) repression?

In Karl Marx's classic analysis of Bonapartism it was recognised that in periods of acute crisis or of historical transition between modes of production members of the ruling class would often be prepared to accept authoritarian government by a state machine over which it had relatively little direct control: the bourgeoisie would sometimes sacrifice its own class rule in order to secure the political stability on which the smooth functioning of a capitalist economy and its own class interests depend.

Bonapartism however is not a magical category into which the analysis of the military can be hammered. The historical circumstances of the present-day Third World bring together a different combination of elements from that which prevailed in nineteenth century France. The crisis of hegemony suffered by ruling classes is permanent and endemic rather than temporary and exceptional. Uneven development superimposes all the contradictions between centre and periphery, capitalist and pre-capitalist social formations, class and tribe, region, religion and nation; and makes it all the more difficult for any single ruling class or fraction thereof to establish its ideological claims to rule.

Add to this the effects of a colonial situation in which an alien ruling class had to rely on state repression to secure its domination. And a process of decolonisation from which there emerged a disjuncture between the national ruling class on the one hand and the economically dominant class with its commanding heights in the boardrooms of international firms on the other. This gives the crisis of hegemony a peculiar neocolonial twist. For it has retarded the formation of home-grown bourgeoisies and made it more difficult for the latter to function as effective ruling classes able through their policies to exert control over the national economy. But at the same time it creates a problem for the representatives of international capital who have to find ways of influencing policy and the political structure in peripheral countries, despite their inability to act directly as a fraction of the ruling class.

On the face of it the military seems to meet the political requirements of international capital under these troubled circumstances almost better than any other institution. A powerful, relatively autonomous state apparatus—buttressed by military coercion—provides a framework of stability and predictability within which it is relatively easier for multinational capital to operate. Further, the fact that the military usually depends for its weapons purchases on international purchasing power earned in the world

market and appropriated through the State tends to cement the alliance with international capital. In the same measure that external penetration weakens the class structure, it increases—through arms supplies, military assistance, and political support—the military establishment's size, claims on productive resources and autonomy relative to other fractions of the ruling class.

Yet to postulate in these general terms that the military appears to fit the political requirements of international capital—stability and a solution to the problems created by international capital's inability to act directly as a ruling class—does not mean that in any given country it will in fact carry out these functions; or do so in a uniform way from one country to another. To begin with, the military and military regimes are hardly ever in a simple sense the political servants of international capital or of great power governments. It would be quite grotesque to label Colonel Gaddafi of Libya, Lt. Colonel Haile Meriam of Ethiopia, the members of the Peruvian junta or indeed General Idi Amin as the agents of imperialism. Even the most reactionary Latin American regimes have a degree of autonomy: witness for example the edifying spectacle of the governments of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador and Uruguay threatening to turn elsewhere for arms and military assistance if President Carter continues to cut back aid to countries with a record of violation of human rights.

Indeed, the military's *own* institutional and material interests lie in the direction of a strong nation-state with control over the surpluses generated in the national economy. This determines the *class project* carried out by the military in two main ways. First, through the compact established between the State and international capital in which the military has a direct interest as a state institution and an indirect interest through its linkages with the international arms economy. Second, through the role of organised force in resolving—or rather in repressing the symptoms of—the crises generated under different conditions of dependent capitalist development.

Accordingly, in Table 1, I attempt to show how different patterns of incorporation in the world economy shape the varying class projects of the military establishment. The first two patterns set forth in the Table arise in economies which are based on the production of raw materials for the world market, though it makes a considerable difference whether these are produced (like many agricultural commodities) by numerous indigenous petty producers; or are extracted (like most minerals) through large investments of foreign capital. The third and fourth patterns are determined by the nature of a country's process of industrialisation—whether by

import-substitution or by the export of cheap manufactures produced by low-cost labour.

Armies and military regimes are seldom *directly* subservient to foreign capital. Even in countries whose economies are based on primary products extracted and sold abroad by foreign corporations, they often take up natural resource ideologies (Fortin); and favour state expropriation of foreign capital to the extent this can be achieved (as by the oil producers) without serious damage to the economy's international earning power. In industrialising countries the same factors incline the military towards state investment and regulation of the economy. Such regulation need not interfere with the compact established with international capital and may indeed create a new, more organic symbiosis between the State and multinational corporations. Even when the major means of production are no longer in foreign hands militarism and state capitalism together may still reinforce the integration of the national economy and its class structure in the circuits of the international economy: because foreign exchange still has to be earned to pay for armaments, technology and the expansion of the state and military bureaucracy.

Few countries fit fair and square into any one of the categories in the Table. Indeed, the military often plays a critical role in the transition from one pattern to another. The crisis which led first to the rise to power of the Allende regime in Chile and then to its overthrow by the soldiers in 1974 was, for example, brought on by the exhaustion of the process of import-substitution and the international forces set in motion by the government's expropriation of the foreign copper monopolies. In response to these external forces the military government has adopted economic policies—economic liberalisation, sale of state enterprises, the curtailment of import-substitution, withdrawal from the Andean Pact—which virtually amount to a reassertion of its traditional position in the international division of labour as a raw material producer.

Further, it is not necessary to assume that the class project the military finally takes up is necessarily agreed in advance or even understood by the officer corps, still less their men, nor that it will be stable. Periods of crisis bring major shifts in the way the military interposes itself in class conflict, which are usually accompanied by violent internal struggles. The social origins of the soldiers who win such struggles, their civilian allies and their original intentions will have some influence on the class project the military undertakes, but may be distorted by the circumstances with which they have to cope once they take power. Examples are not difficult to find: the Nigerian army intervened to establish

national unity in 1966 but broke up into tribal and regional factions six months later; the Chilean military seized power with the active support of the national bourgeoisie in order to halt what was perceived as a process of national disintegration, and ended up restoring the dominance of foreign monopoly capital; the soldiers who took power in Brazil in 1964 quickly dropped their programme of economic and political liberalisation in favour of state-sponsored industrialisation under an authoritarian regime.

Although the crises of dependent capitalist development provoke military repression, this repression does not necessarily establish political order. Sometimes the military's weapons have simply turned conflict into more bloody conflict: witness, for example, the effects of military violence in Uruguay, in Bangladesh just before its war of liberation from Pakistan or indeed in Northern Ireland. Or the military itself has become deeply divided—as in Nigeria and the Lebanon before and during their respective civil wars—and thus unable to stand above the conflict. Nevertheless the fact that military force settles things in the last resort is critical, particularly in societies in permanent crisis, where the last resort is always close at hand.

Not can one automatically assume that the military will intervene in these crises as the compliant ally of the dominant classes. Its internal fissures, as we have already seen, may create radical as well as reactionary tendencies both in the officer corps and among ordinary soldiers. On a number of occasions the military establishment has sided with the periphery against the centre—as in some African states where the recruitment base of the army has traditionally been in the less developed parts of the country—or with labour in its struggles with capital—as in the alliance between sections of the army and organised labour in Peronist Argentina in the 1940s.

Yet although particular fractions of the military elite may intervene on behalf of peripheral or excluded classes and groups in times of crisis, the military establishment *as a whole* has a vested interest in what military ideologists call 'national security' and what its opponents call state and class domination. The natural response of professional soldiers is to suppress class struggle when it appears because it divides the nation, undermines the international economic standing of the economy—causing flights of foreign capital—and imposes certain real costs—casualties, disruption of routine, threats to its structure and its monopoly of organised force—upon the military establishment itself.

Let us turn, therefore to the interrelation between the international system and armed force. This can be analysed at a number of levels. In the first place a

world in which conflict is endemic and force governs the relations between nation states enhances the influence of military organisations. More than 30 years ago Harold Lasswell (1941) suggested that growing international conflict would increasingly turn the world powers into "garrison states" in which the influence of military managers of violence would predominate: though he omitted to say that this conflict can sometimes itself be the consequence of the influence of these military managers in whose interests it is to exaggerate threats to security.

International insecurity contributes equally much to military influence at the periphery. The armed forces are large and influential in most countries at the edge of the cold war, like Greece, Turkey, Iran, Thailand and South Korea; and also in countries at the nodes of regional conflict as in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. Military coups have frequently swept aside civilian governments which have failed (in the soldiers' view) to provide adequately for their country's security: for example the overthrow of the Egyptian monarchy by the Free Officers after humiliating defeats suffered at the hands of Israel; or the 1969 coup in Somalia which swept aside a civilian government which had pursued the border conflict with Ethiopia with less enthusiasm than the soldiers desired. Soldiers are also quick to react to the international aspects of internal struggles. For example the contagion effects between military coups, such as those which swept through west and central Africa in 1965-66. Or the spread of military garrison states in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s; responding on the one hand to the establishment of socialism in Cuba and the spread of revolutionary movements across national boundaries; and on the other to the transnationalisation of American counterinsurgency training and doctrine.

As with military intervention in the internal politics of a country, so too there is a whole continuum of external intervention: from diplomatic pressure, economic aid and military assistance programmes; various forms of blackmail such as threats to withdraw economic and military assistance; covert subversion and the destabilisation of regimes in the style of the CIA or KGB; reassurances of recognition and support to coup-makers if successful; actual material support for a coup, or alternatively support in putting one down; military assistance and advice in counter-revolutionary operations; taking direct part in such operations (the US in the early stages of the Vietnam conflict); direct participation in a revolutionary war (the Chinese in Korea or the Cubans in Angola); through to actual invasion by troops of the intervening power (the US in the Dominican Republic and in Vietnam, or France and Britain in the Suez Crisis).

TABLE 1: Variations in Military's Class Projects in Dependent Capitalist Countries

| Structure of Economy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Nature of State Project                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Nature of Crises                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Nature of Military Project                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| <p><b>1. Petty capitalist commodity production</b></p> <p>Agricultural and natural resource based commodities produced for export and/or local sale by indigenous producers under petty capitalist or pre-capitalist relations of production.</p> <p>Examples: most countries of sub-Saharan Africa, Bangladesh.</p>                                                                              | <p>1. Minimum conditions of law and order.</p> <p>2. Mediation between petty producers and world market, either (i) via foreign merchant capital, or (ii) directly via state marketing monopolies.</p> <p>3. Extraction of surplus from export-import trade and conversion into (i) increases in size, power and military spending of state apparatus or (ii) industrialisation programmes.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>1. Political crises brought on by reinvigoration of pre-capitalist formations and loyalties (tribe, religion, language, region etc.) in response to competition for state power, jobs, economic resources and benefits.</p> <p>2. Instability induced by fluctuations in commodity prices in world market, undermining regimes and their long-term economic plans.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>1. (a) Holding fragile nation-state together and/or (b) using state machinery to establish hegemony of the particular tribal, religious, linguistic or regional groups who happen to control the military hierarchy.</p> <p>2. Intervention to secure changes of regime in response to externally-induced economic and political crises.</p> <p>3. Reinforcement (through arms purchases) of pressure to earn foreign exchange in world market or to save it by engaging in import-substituting industrialisation.</p>                                                                                                                                      |
| <p><b>2. Enclave commodity production</b></p> <p>Agricultural commodities produced or natural resources extracted on large-scale (a) by international capital or (b) by state capital incorporated in circuits of international capital through export of commodities and imports of technology.</p> <p>Examples: most oil-producing (OPEC) countries and copper-producing (CIPEC) countries.</p> | <p>1. Minimum conditions of law and order.</p> <p>2. Mediation between capital and labour in enclave enterprises; ensuring stability and quiescence of labour, in the last resort by physical repression.</p> <p>3. Either (a) State is directly coopted by foreign capital and serves its interests (e.g. Gabon, Central American banana republics) Or (b) State expropriates foreign capital. The latter reorganises itself and appropriates its share of mineral rents by sales of technology, management agreements, military sales etc.</p> <p>4. (Where State not mouthpiece of foreign capital) promotion of natural resource ideologies; maximisation of mineral rents and of state's share therein; conversion of these surpluses into expansion of state apparatus and/or industrialisation.</p> | <p>1. Conflicts between central regions / groups / towns sharing the benefits of economic activity and employment created by enclave and peripheral regions / groups / rural areas.</p> <p>2. Conflicts between capital and labour in enclave.</p> <p>3. (a) Instability induced by fluctuations in commodity prices in world market, undermining regimes and their long-term plans, precipitating conflict between states and foreign capitalists except (b) when associations of producers (especially OPEC) exercise monopoly control in world market, minimising direct effect of externally induced crises on state machinery.</p>            | <p>1. Establishment of physical control by centre over peripheral regions.</p> <p>2. Intervention in conflicts between foreign or state capital and labour.</p> <p>3. (a) Direct physical repression on behalf of foreign capital, particularly in times of economic and political crisis (e.g. Chile) or (b) Intervention against foreign capital on behalf of nationalist projects to assure state control over natural resources (or support for such interventions by other groups or governments).</p> <p>4. Reinforcement (through arms purchases) of pressures to maximise natural resource rents and to participate in international arms economy.</p> |
| <p><b>3. Import-substituting industrialisation</b></p> <p>Development of industrial base through either (a) foreign investment or (b) state investment or both, replacing goods previously imported.</p> <p>Examples: Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Philippines and (combined with 2. above) Indonesia, Iran, Venezuela, Chile and Nigeria.</p>                                                      | <p>1. Maintenance of political stability to assure smooth process of industrialisation and to prevent flight of foreign capital.</p> <p>2. Mediation between capital and labour; repression of latter to subsidise investment by the former.</p> <p>3. State promotion of industrialisation, bringing about symbiosis of state, local and international capital. Variations in extent of penetration by international capital, in the mechanisms (e.g. direct investment versus sales of technology) by which it is achieved and in extent of state control over the process.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>1. Conflicts between industrial / urban centres and rural / agricultural peripheries, intensified to extent that the latter subsidise process of industrialisation.</p> <p>2. Conflicts between capital and labour in industrial sector, intensified to the extent that profits and investment subsidised by low wages.</p> <p>3. Marginalisation, creation of 'reserve army of unemployed' by industrialisation/urbanisation processes.</p> <p>4. Crises created by exhaustion of process of import-substitution. Cycle of foreign exchange shortages, inflation, unrest, repression, military spending and more shortages, inflation etc.</p> | <p>1. Establishment of physical control by centre over periphery. Repression of peasant movements, rural guerrillas etc.</p> <p>2. Intervention in conflict between foreign or state capital and labour, usually to repress the latter on behalf of the former, but not always (e.g. the Peronist alliance between the military and unions in Argentina).</p> <p>3. Establishment of physical 'security' in restive urban areas. Repression of crime, squatters, demonstrations, urban guerrillas etc.</p> <p>4. Reinforcement (through arms purchases and sometimes arms manufacture) of import-substitution and of the crises induced by it.</p>             |
| <p><b>4. Export-promoting industrialisation</b></p> <p>Examples: South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and (combined with 3. above) Philippines.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>As above except foreign capital (a) more footloose because not tied to domestic resources or markets (b) tends to an even greater extent to be vertically integrated with production and markets in central countries. For these reasons (a) political stability (and organised physical repression) are even more vital, and (b) the bargaining power of the State is weaker relative to that of international capital.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>As above except (a) low wages often essential to attract foreign capital and hence greater repression of labour force (b) vulnerability to crises in international markets for manufactures rather than to constraints of narrowness of domestic market.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <p>As above, except military involved to an even greater extent in establishment of physical security (particularly in urban centres), repression and counter-revolution.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

Yet one cannot measure the effect of external pressures on the military, the class structure or the political system as a whole solely by the level to which overt foreign interference has *actually* been pushed. In some countries, like Chile, intervention may have taken place precisely because the contradictions are sharper than elsewhere and the hegemony of imperialist powers less secure. In others the class structure and internal political forces may be self-sustaining and direct intervention unnecessary. The arms trade and discreet military assistance programmes are often all that is required to keep the professional military establishment in operation and the stability of the political system within tolerable limits. And in others again, like Iran, Indonesia or Zaire external penetration may be massive but multifaceted, so that to take one aspect alone such as support for a coup, covert CIA activities, foreign aid and investment, military assistance, or diplomatic pressure, may give an incomplete picture of foreign influence because all are important together.

Conversely, however, direct intervention has sometimes created more contradictions than those it represses. The Suez crisis, the American intervention in Vietnam and the South African invasion of Angola are perhaps the most glaring examples, but there are several others. Failure to examine abortive as well as successful interventions might lead one to underestimate the *limits* imperialism faces, the contradictions it creates for itself and the strength of the forces opposed to it on the periphery. These limits arise at a number of different levels.

First, the strength and disposition of anti-imperialist forces themselves: in Vietnam for example, the military effectiveness of the liberation armies and the presence of the Russian nuclear deterrent to discourage escalation of the conflict by the Americans; in Angola the extremely prompt and effective assistance provided by the Cubans and Russians and the reluctance of the USA to risk a diplomatic showdown in Africa by openly intervening.

Second, differences among the major Western powers, as during the Suez crisis, when the disapproval of the Americans and their refusal to support British borrowing from the IMF to halt the run on the pound caused by the crisis, brought the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt to a grinding halt.

Third the internal contradictions by which imperialist powers are sometimes weakened: the bitter opposition to the Suez invasion by the Labour Party; or the economic burden of arms spending by the US government in Vietnam and the gathering strength of the anti-war movement. There are strong pressures impelling the major capitalist powers to intervene in their interests at the periphery. But it

would be a mistake to regard them as monolithic and to underestimate the constraints according to which they operate.

Intervention, furthermore, is not exclusive to capitalist powers but has also been an integral part of the struggle against them. External support has been a crucial element in most contemporary revolutions: Russian support (however grudging) for the Chinese revolution; Russian and Chinese assistance in Vietnam; Arab and communist bloc help to the Algerians in their war of national liberation from France; the assistance of the Russians and Chinese and of neighbouring African countries to the armed struggle in Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique.

Nevertheless such assistance is not without its own contradictions. External aid cannot overcome unfavourable objective conditions; witness for example the failure of Che Guevara to bring revolution to Bolivia. It all too easily triggers off nationalist responses and accusations of 'social imperialism' against the donor: visible already, for instance, in the ambivalence of the Angolans about the continued presence in their country of their Cuban and Russian liberators. Recipients of socialist assistance—however worthy according to revolutionary criteria—are vulnerable to changes in the interests of the donors. The revolutions in Laos and Cambodia were delayed because the Vietnamese gave and withdrew assistance in accordance with the progress of their own struggle. Socialist rivalries—for example Chinese support for the FNLA and Cuban and Soviet for the MPLA in Angola—have sometimes helped to create divisions in liberation movements.

In a very real sense the intervention of socialist countries is also limited and shaped by the constraints of balance of power politics. In several Latin American countries the Moscow-controlled communist parties have been ambivalent toward armed struggle; fluctuating between support for insurrection and for more 'legitimate' activity in accord with the turns and swings of international politics. The support of socialist countries for the revolutions in former Portuguese Africa was covert and limited in quantity until the international political conjuncture became favourable to larger-scale involvement after the invasion of Angola by South Africa.

Despite the expansion of capital on a world scale there is little semblance of an international superstructure, comparable to the national state. There are instead only *partial* international superstructures; some based on region (the EEC, ASEAN etc); some constituting military alliances between states (NATO, the Warsaw Pact and the moribund SEATO and CENTO) and some with

specialised functions (the UN agencies, IMF, World Bank etc.). These do relatively little to bind the world system together. Indeed military alliances and regional pacts on the whole deepen the main fractures between blocs.

Rather than superstructure it might be more apposite to talk of a 'superstruggle': but for the integrating mechanisms of both of the international economy, which incorporates enterprises and states alike in the circuits of capital, and of balance of power politics which (at least for the time being) prevents the war of all against all.

Although most statesmen and military leaders subscribe to the concept of a balance of power—and thus make it take on the character of self-fulfilling prophecy—it is thoroughly ambiguous. The nature of the nuclear means of mass destruction on which the balance between the central world powers is based is such that balances computed merely in terms of the numbers of missiles, aircraft and nuclear warheads available to each side make little sense. Further, the very ability to participate depends on a very advanced technology and industrial base. The balance thus expresses the competing interests of the ruling classes of advanced industrial countries and the clientage of those of the Third World.

And, further, a balance between societies with diverse modes of production is by no means a balance of equivalents. For its equilibrium is constantly disturbed by the contradictory pressures of capitalist and of socialist expansion towards the periphery. The Russians and Cubans, for example, have made it clear that detente does not in principle exclude assistance to wars of national liberation. Western governments too consider that interventions on behalf of capital are permissible, however much they may protest against socialist interventions. The main constraint is what each side thinks it can get away with—in terms both of international power politics and of domestic support for its policies from one period to another.

Such an international system does not even succeed in providing a political basis for the orderly expansion of capital on an international level; the tools of international economic management having proved woefully inadequate to deal with the current international economic crisis. Still less does it provide a reasonable prospect of peace and of a more just distribution of resources internationally. All the available evidence suggests that arms races will continue, even though in some measure limited by SALT and other such agreements.

Balance of power politics, furthermore, provides only temporary and largely inadequate solutions to the international crises which beset the Third World.

Typically, it is devoted to stabilising the *existing* situation without getting to grips with the substantive issues, the very real contradictions which underlie conflicts such as the Middle East crisis or the wars of national liberation in Southern Africa.

From a revolutionary point of view struggles for class and national liberation take precedence over international stability for its own sake. Would Vietnam have been liberated by international negotiation? Does it make sense to negotiate over majority rule in Rhodesia, still less in South Africa without a credible threat of revolutionary violence to speed the negotiations along? Can the Middle East conflict be resolved without a just solution for the problem of the Palestine? And do the Palestinians have any way of securing international attention except by hijacking, bombing and raiding?

The very severity of the present international crisis in some ways, however, provides favourable opportunities for the modification or destruction of existing relations of international domination: a nuclear stalemate in which great powers can be played off against each other; internal dissent within the large capitalist powers which makes it more difficult for their governments to pursue expansionist foreign policies; economic crisis which fuels this discontent inside capitalist countries, and, further, makes it difficult for them to finance external military ventures or to subsidise arms sales in order to gain political influence. The same crisis also brings things to a head in the periphery, concentrating economic grievances and mobilising popular forces (but also increasing the repression by dominant classes).

Yet these opportunities involve very grave dangers both for those who take advantage of them and for the international community as a whole. Would a major escalation of the conflict in Southern Africa with heavy Cuban and Soviet support for the revolutionary forces be worth the risk of a major international conflagration? What is the risk of the Arabs and Israel using the missiles they both now possess against each others' cities? What will happen to international relations if attempts to control nuclear proliferation fail, and countries like Vietnam and Cuba on the one hand and Brazil and India on the other deploy their own nuclear warheads? What likelihood is there that a revolutionary group like the Tupamaros or the Black September could actually acquire their own nuclear arsenal? And—supposing one sympathised with their broad aims—how would one balance the prospective gains from nuclear blackmail against the enormous risks for all concerned, including possible retaliation in kind by neo-fascist groups or by Israel respectively.

This is a real dilemma for those who wish to change the existing pattern of international domination. On the one hand increasingly dangerous forms of armed struggle and international conflict. And on the other the severe limits of negotiated settlements which start from the existing distribution of power. For the latter have enormous obstacles to overcome in the vested interests crystallised around existing nation states and military organisations; in the international division of labour and patterns of international capital accumulation; in the international arms economy, and in the very complexity of the issues at stake in international conflict. To the extent that attempts to stabilise the existing pattern of international arrangements merely buy time, in which lines of conflict harden and the international production and diffusion of destructive weapons continues, they may *actually increase* the ultimate danger. Weapons and military organisations—the means of force—are in the international domain, in that their deployment and or use is a matter of common danger and common social concern for all mankind. Yet they are still appropriated and controlled by national ruling classes which use or threaten to use them to reproduce their national power and international interests. This makes social control over their use and conditions of lasting peace almost impossible to bring about without major transformation in the structures of international production, power and force. But the risks of the struggle to bring about such transformation are great and impose heavy responsibilities on those who undertake it.

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## Bulletin Volume 9 Number 2

### BRITAIN : A CASE FOR DEVELOPMENT ?

Editors Richard Jolly and Robin Luckham

Is Britain a developed country—or really a developing or even underdeveloping country, as some recent commentators have suggested? The next issue of the *IDS Bulletin* will contain various articles on Britain, using approaches and perspectives more usually applied to 'less developed countries.'

The *Bulletin* will begin with an article by Dudley Sears arguing that it is time to re-examine the present intellectual division of labour between 'development studies' and other concerns in the Social Sciences.

It is followed by articles by Richard Jolly, Bagicha Minhas, Stuart Holland and others analysing the current British predicament from the perspective of development theory. Ray Croly takes up the case of Britain's Irish periphery. This leads to a series of sectoral studies—of health, social services, energy, agriculture and armaments. The *Bulletin* concludes with an article by Sam Cole and Ian Miles which examines a number of alternative futures for Britain.