

## RESOLUTION ON THE NATURE OF RUSSIA, CHINA AND POST-REVOLUTIONARY SOCIETIES

### XXXXXX Pre-ambule

This resolution comes from the work done by us on the Trotskyism pamphlet. We have spent a long time doing detailed research on this question and we want to make it accessible to the rest of the organisation, which clearly is hampered in its international and domestic work by the lack of a characterisation of such countries. Inevitably it is a complicated motion because the issues are right at the centre of marxist theory. To help comrades we have included a few notes at the end of the motion. We think however, that the motion articulates the general trend in how we've approached discussing such countries in the past, and in the International Commission report.

### Motion

That Russia and similar countries in Eastern Europe are neither socialist or state capitalist. In these countries the private ownership of the means of production has been abolished, but this (combined with the dictatorship of the proletariat) in any post-revolutionary society is only a pre-condition, the starting point for socialism, not socialism itself. A transition to socialism in its full sense must involve the total transformation of the social relations of production and the rest of society.

This includes; movement towards:-

- i) Workers' and peoples' ~~xxx~~ management of economy and society and freedom of association and criticism.
- ii) Elimination of differences between manual and mental labour, and divisions of labour between town and country, and men and women.
- iii) The egalitarian distribution of rewards and knowledge.
- iv) Elimination of competition and production for exchange value in the economy and its replacment by democratic planning and production for use.
- v) Elimination of the power of the old classes and struggle against the growth of new elites in the party ~~xx~~ and state structures.
- vi) Revolutionising the ~~mode~~ mode of work, what is produced and how.

If these tendencies are successful communism will then be:-

- i) The abolition of wage labour.
- ii) The abolition of classes.
- iii) The abolition of the state.
- iv) Full socialist development of the productive forces in the context of world Communism.
- v) From each according to ~~his~~ <sup>their</sup> ability, to each according to their needs.

On the basis of the above criteria, Russia etc. are not socialist or even in a transition to socialism because the social relations of production have not been transformed and are still constructed on class lines. But it is not capitalist or state capitalist because state ownership and control of the means of production eliminates generalised commodity production, a competitive market economy and exchange value (see note). Therefore Russia etc. are class societies based on a new mode of production, where the working class and peasants are exploited and dominated by a new ruling class (based on top party, state and managerial strata) who exert power through their monopoly control of the means of production ~~and~~ ~~xxx~~ through the state apparatus. The goal of this class is the maintenance of their monopoly of power and distribution of rewards and the re-production of their position and privileges.

The above criteria are meant as a methodology to judge transitional societies. On this basis we regard China as building socialism. This because they have put the transformation of the relations of production and society at the centre of the struggle and have fought against the emergence of new classes and elites. However we recognise that any society, in a socialist transition can also de-generate into a new class system. In China this may happen either because of the existence of revisionist tendencies in the party/state apparatus or because they have failed to fully institutionalise and make permanent mass democracy. We also recognise that the Chinese foreign policy based as it is, on a wrong notion of the world being divided into equally dangerous imperialisms (Russian and American) produces an incorrect foreign policy, which on occasions has played a directly counter-revolutionary role (Ceylon, Pakistan, Angola, Chile etc).

(2)

Other societies that have recently overthrown Imperialism we also regard as societies in a progressive transition to socialism or as building socialism - (eg. Vietnam, Angola, Mozambique etc). But the aim of the resolution is not to provide a shopping list, but a methodology for political analysis.

Paul T. (Liverpool)  
Guy O. (Manchester)  
Richard L. (L'pool)

Notes

We hope to have a much longer section of the future pamphlet out before the conference so comrades can go deeper into the analysis.

Definitions of capitalism: Marx defined capitalism as a mode of production based on generalised commodity production. That is all products (goods and services) and all elements of the labour process (including labour power) are commodities produced for the purpose of exchange on the market (and hence profit) rather than for the use of the producers or the mass of people as consumers. On this basis Russia could not possibly be capitalist, as the state monopoly transforms economic and social relations, including not merely the destruction of private capital but exchange value and the market as the regulator of economic activity. The elements of a market and competition that exist in Russia are still stimulated and controlled by the state monopoly of the new ruling class.