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Philosophy of Communism

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PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNISM

A Lecture delivered
at the Naval War College
on 6 September 1951 by
Dr. James Burnham

Admiral Conolly and Gentlemen:

The subject that has been assigned me today—"The Philosophy of Communism"—is rather puzzling in terms of presentation. Marx, himself, said that with him and with his theories Philosophy was finished forever. "Philosophy," he said in effect, "belongs to an unscientific past—Marxism will replace it."

Looked at from another point of view, it is difficult to present the subject in a single lecture because it is extremely difficult and very abstract. Assuming that the subject exists—assuming, that is to say, that there *is* a Philosophy of Communism—the problem arises: shall we discuss it in a technical, narrow sense, in terms of what scholars used to call "metaphysics," or more broadly?

What I am going to try to do in the time I have this morning is to approach the subject in its broader sense, as the theoretical system of Communism in general. Above all, I want to try to indicate to you something of how a Communist thinks; what terms, what categories, what basic ideas he has in his own mind when he approaches a problem. In this way, perhaps, if you get something of the answer to the question of how a Communist thinks, you may

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RESTRICTED

57

RESTRICTED

be able to project yourself into the position of a Communist and to answer new problems the way he would answer them. In that way you can learn to anticipate his actions in various fields—including that of your own professional interest. Let me add that the system of thought of Communism is very powerful. Don't dismiss it lightly. It is capable of absorbing a man's entire intellectual allegiance.

Finally, I am going to try to indicate, briefly by necessity, how the theoretical system of Communism links up with Communist practice—in particular, with Communist political and strategic practice. I'll use, as I go along, a series of charts that may perhaps make the structure of my remarks a little clearer.

Let me take the first chart.

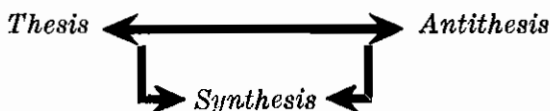
The Philosophy of Communism: I

Theory of Reality:
(Marx-Engels)

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

Reality consists of material particles in a continuous process of motion, change, and transformation.

The "Triadic" principle of dialectic transformation:



The three "laws" of Dialectics:

1. Unity of Opposites
2. Negation of the Negation
2. Negation of the Negaion

RESTRICTED

If any of you looked over the outline that was distributed a few days ago, you may have noticed that I divided the *Theory of Communism* (the systematic theory) into four main phases. We begin with the basic *Theory of Reality*—a general theory about the nature of Reality—; go on to a *Theory of History*; then to a *Theory of Government and the State*—a theory of society, in particular of the state; and finally, a *Theory of Power*—the theory on which strategy is directly based.

According to the general *Theory of Reality*, all Reality consists ultimately of material particles in motion; that is to say, the Philosophy of Communism is a form of what is called, technically, "materialism." This means that everything else—ideas, soul, God, spirit, mind, and so on—are only indirect expressions of matter, and are not in themselves real. But the Communist insist that their theory is not like that of earlier types of "materialism," because it always treats matter as in process, in transformation, in motion—never as static.

They go on from this basic idea that all of Reality consists of matter in motion to a discussion of what they claim to be the basic principles and laws of the motion of matter. These principles and laws apply, moreover, to all phases of Reality—not merely to matter in its direct sense, but to the expressions of matter in society, in politics, in thought, and in art. Their chief principles they take over from Hegel—the so-called "dialectical principles." According to these Reality evolves or develops through the existence of what they call a "thesis." Then, opposed to this "thesis," an "antithesis" leads (combining in the course of the development) into a "synthesis." You must understand, however, that this new "synthesis" immediately becomes a new "thesis"; an "antithesis" arises, and a still newer "synthesis" is developed.

RESTRICTED

Let me give you a few examples, although some of them won't make much sense. According to Hegel, for instance, the world around us arises out of a basic triad. There is the thesis, "true being," by which is meant a kind of "eternal reality," or "absolute." Next comes the antithesis to "true being"; namely, "nothing." The combination of "being" and "nothing" results in the *synthesis* of "becoming." "Becoming" is the material, historical world that is in one way real, but in another way (since it fades into something else, since it is only partial)—in another way, is nothing. A curious idea, that Reality as we know it—the world of history, of becoming—is a synthesis of "being" and "nothing."

On the historical side, another favorite triad of Hegel's explained the process of historical development up to our time as involving a thesis of *oriental* civilization, which he said was primarily sensuous and the antithesis of *classical* civilization, expressing reason. The synthesis of these two was "romantic," Western European civilization, having the elements of both sense and reason.

Or consider the forms of government. In terms of development there can be, for example, the *thesis* of "anarchy." As counter, or *antithesis*, to "anarchy" grows up "dictatorship"—the rule of one strong person to solve the problem of anarchy. But these, in their turn, are dissolved into the later *synthesis* of "constitutional government."

Take a case in recent science. Dialectical theorists would claim that in biological theory we have had as *thesis* the conception that heredity alone determines the nature of man. The *antithesis* is the doctrine that environment alone determines the nature of man. The *synthesis*, of course, is a theory that takes both factors into account.

RESTRICTED

From the more strictly Marxian point of view, the basic historical triad begins with what they understood to be the first condition of society. They believed that man, in the most primitive tribes, was organized on a kind of primitive Communist principle with no private property. Then, with the beginning of what we now call "civilization," about 6000 years ago, there takes place the rise of "class" society—different forms of class society: slave society, feudal society, capitalist society. The *thesis*, then, is "primitive Communism"; the *antithesis*, "class society." Perhaps you will be able to anticipate that the *synthesis* is the "true Communism" that will succeed the Revolution, which is supposed to combine all the richness of civilization with the purity of primitive Communism, but in a new way—not just primitive ownership of everything in common, but an organization of society such that, though no individual has any special ownership interest in the means of production, all can have an abundance of individual and personal goods.

In our society, there is the triad that defines modern "class relations." The bourgeoisie—that is, the capitalists, the owners that are the means of production—is the *thesis*, and inevitably related to the *antithesis*, the proletariat (or working class) which has no interest of ownership in the means of production. The *synthesis* here is the revolutionary state—the Communist Revolution. I'll come back to this in a moment, in a somewhat different connection.

In addition to the triadic principle, which is the basic principle of the dialectic, there are supposed to be three fundamental laws. These laws are difficult to understand, even more difficult than the triad, because, as a matter of fact, they don't really make very much sense. They have, however, a kind of suggestive value which enters into Communist theory and practice. Let me try to indicate what they mean.

RESTRICTED

The law of "the unity of opposites." This would be illustrated by such an example as the life cycle of a plant: the plant dies; in the process of dying, it produces a seed; the seed falls to the ground; water and dirt surround it; it starts to grow, and soon you have a new plant. That is to say, the opposites, "life" and "death," are unified in the life cycle of the plant.

Another type of "unity of opposites" (they would claim) would be that between proletarian *terror*—as directed against the class enemies—and Communist *freedom*. Terror and freedom, the two opposites, are actually one in the revolutionary state.

The law of "the negation of the negation." Engels, Marx's associate, tries to illustrate this law from mathematics. You have *minus "a"* in algebra. Then you take another *minus "a"*. These two *negations*, put together, negate each other and give you *plus "a"*. (Of course they don't really give you a *plus "a"*—they give you *plus "a" squared*, but there is a certain sense, perhaps, in which a negation is negating). Or, in terms of the development of the revolution, Marxists would say that the proletarian terror (directed by them), operating against the "bourgeois" terror (of the Imperialist state), produces *freedom*. Still more directly related to the present day: Civil War—that is, war conducted by Communists operating against "Imperialist War," produces *peace*. Therefore, all liberals are asked to sign the Stockholm Peace Pledge.

The third law, *of the change of quantity into quality*, is probably the most important in its political and social application. The most quoted example of it is water turning either into ice or steam. The law is supposed to mean this: in any process, limited quantitative changes take place without any sharp "qualitative" effect. But, at a particular point in the process, the addition of a

RESTRICTED

very small (or even infinitesimal) quantity results in a complete qualitative transformation, which breaks the orderly, gradual rhythm. Take water, again you can raise the temperature gradually from, say, 32° F., one degree after another, and you can't discern much of a difference; suddenly, at 212° it will completely change its quality—the fluid will become a gas. Conversely, if you lower the temperature, the water will suddenly change into ice. Take the case of a human being: raise his temperature from 98.6 a few degrees more or less, and he will still be all right, but raise it up, say from 107 to 108 and the difference, qualitatively, may be complete, from life to death.

Now this principle, in its application to society and to politics, could be taken as the differentiating point between Communists (on the one hand) and all varieties of Socialists, Social Democrats, Reformists, on the other. Why is that? It may seem odd that so abstract a principle relates so directly to politics.

The Socialists (the reforming kind of Socialists) aim to transform society gradually. This is true not only of Socialists, but of Meliorists of the type of John Dewey and of Liberals. They want to right a wrong here; improve a situation there; make these poor farmers better off; clear up a tenancy situation; raise the wages of the workers, etc. So, gradually, they hope to build up what they would consider a *good* society.

Now, the Communists say that that is not how the process works—that these gradual improvements can go on, but that they do not alter the fundamental *quality* of a society. Society remains “capitalist”—a “class society”—and adapts itself to all of these changes. The water with a temperature difference of 10° here or there isn't going to be altered in its fundamental structure. Eating 4000 calories or 2200 calories per day, or 3000,

RESTRICTED

is not going to alter the fact that you continue living in more or less a normal way. But suppose that you lower the calories to 200 a day, or (if it's conceivable) raise them maybe to 20,000. Then, very quickly, there would be a complete transformation. Life would be replaced by death.

According to the Communists, the real problem is not of the mere quantitative additions, but *qualitative* change—the change from water, the solid, into ice or gas. It is the change from “capitalist” into “communist” society. The revolution—that moment in the social process when the historical temperature reaches 212°—is the real meaning of the historical process, the real key, the real crux, and it is toward this that their attention is always and invariably directed.

For Communists, reforms and gradual changes have no significance whatsoever except, perhaps, as useful props for agitation and propaganda. They are not interested in reforms; they are interested only in exploiting them, in promoting a situation that will work toward the 212° point where the qualitative change from type of society into another will occur.

There is another general aspect about “dialectics” that I would like to draw to your attention. If we begin to grasp, even partially, some of these terms, and especially the triadic principle—this way of looking at things that says that you don't ever have “a” here and “*not a*” there; that you never have a clear-cut, black-white in the historical process, that there is always black-*and*-white, together; that the “thesis” is always bound up with its “antithesis—if we begin to look at the world through this Communist prism, we will understand, I think, one of the most puzzling points involved in the attitude of Communists.

RESTRICTED

In the political world of today, the *thesis* is the Soviet Union—"the fortress of the revolution"; the *antithesis* is the non-Communist world and, in particular, the United States, which concentrates the non-Communist power. A Communist projects his mind into what he imagines is going to be the *synthesis*—the world-revolutionary society—so that his view of the world combines the *thesis* and the *antithesis* at one and the same time. This means, among other things, that his judgment of institutions, events, men, actions, in the *thesis* is totally different from his judgment of them in the *antithesis*, and quite justifiable from his point of view.

For instance, is it correct to have strikes—for trade unions to go out on strike? Well, yes and no. You see it's not just "a" and "not-a"; it is not yes *or* no, but yes *and* no. Yes, in the capitalist world, as many strikes as possible, as disruptive as possible, like the present copper strike which is being manipulated by a Communist-led Union for the purpose of disintegrating as far as possible our armament production. Yes, fine! we're 100% for strikes. In the *thesis*, however, of course *not!* In the Soviet Union, that would be "a betrayal of the revolution." No strikes in the Soviet Union—that's treachery—a man would deserve Siberia or death for even talking about strikes.

Is it correct to have the most extreme form of opposition to society, including the demand for its revolutionary overthrow? Of course, yes, in the non-Communist world—in the *antithesis*. And of course no, in the Soviet Union—in the fortress of the revolution. I can believe both of these absolutely and sincerely, if I take "the dialectical point of view."

Are we in favor of disarmament, let's say? Why, certainly, in the *antithesis*—the non-Soviet world—but at the same time and for the same reason and looking at the world in the same way,

RESTRICTED

65

RESTRICTED

I'm all for the maximum of armaments in the Soviet Union. Therefore, I will sign the Stockholm Peace Pledge and talk about pacifism and disarmament at the same time (and maybe on the same occasion), praise the Red Army and its most recent advances in atomic weapons.

This dialectical double-talk helps the attitude of people like some of our own Communists—Alger Hiss, say, Fuchs, Pontecorvo, Noel Field, Lee Pressman, and the others—intelligent men, determined men who, from the ordinary point of view, are seemingly involved in contradictions. For them there are contradictions, because they reason dialectically.

Let us turn, taking the Theory of Reality as our base, to the Theory of History.

The Philosophy of Communism: II

Theory of History: (Marx-Engels)

ECONOMIC MATERIALISM

History is determined "in the last analysis" by the process of economic production.

The Pyramid of Social Reality

Philosophy, Religion)	
)	
Art, Science)	"Superstructure"
)	
Government, Law)	
)	
)	

RESTRICTED

Class Relations)	
)	
Method of Distribution)	Economic "Base"
)	
Process of Production)	
Matter in Motion		"Ultimate Reality"

The fundamental principle of historical development:

The Class Struggle

Both the Theory of Reality and the Theory of History were developed in their essentials by Marx and Engels. Later theoreticians only added to what Marx and Engels had done. Now this whole historical theory (which can be called the Theory of Economic Materialism) is based upon the central principle that history is determined (in the last analysis) by the process of economic production: technological process (handicraft, or cooperative industry or machines, or mass production) and also the distributive process (in both its physical and financial sense). There may be details in the historical process, little ups and downs, which cannot be explained fully by the process of production, but "in the last analysis" — in the final outcome — it is the process of production that decides what will happen in all spheres — military, governmental, in law, philosophy, religion, art, as well as in everything else. The outcome is inevitable. Granted a certain change in the process of production, sooner or later analogous changes will take place in all other spheres. The Communist revolution, also, is inevitable. In theory, matter in motion according to the dialectical laws is the final philosophical explanation, but that really is not of very great significance. In practice, the basis of explanation is the economic process.

RESTRICTED**67**

RESTRICTED

Let's look at this in a structural way, instead of in terms of the law of development. Society can be pictured (according to the Communist theory) as resting on the theoretical base of matter in motion according to the dialectical laws. Then there is the economic base, the processes of production and of distribution, and the class relations that are based upon these processes. The class relations are also economic; slave owners and slaves, feudal lords and serfs, would be examples of two correlative classes. In modern society, there is the class of the owners of industry, and that of the workers who do not own, but merely work for wages—bourgeoisie and proletariat.

Then, as if frosting on a cake, or some kind of decoration or facade, you have what is called, technically, the "superstructure." Government and law, art, science, philosophy and religion—all of these are indirect (in the casual sense) and relatively insignificant expressions of the economic base. They are secondary. They don't affect the outcome except in details, and perhaps in minor elements of timing. "The superstructure is," they say, "the expression of the economic base."

You may notice, if you think about it, that it would follow as a deduction from this conception of society that all science, philosophy, religion, art, and so on are merely class expressions, class theories. Truth is a class truth. You don't just have truth about the world—you have a feudal truth or a capitalist truth. Religion is just an indirect expression of certain peculiarities of the economic structure, or a compensation for some of those peculiarities and difficulties. Communism is committed by its theory to an anti-religious, not merely a non-religious, view. So long as philosophy and religion last, they prove that the problems of the economic base are not properly handled. If these are organized correctly, philosophy and religion will disappear.

RESTRICTED

Communism is also committed to the view that only Communists can know the truth—all other theories are “class truths.” The Communist truth is the only true truth. And they have here an absolute commitment. The fellow travelers, the deluded Liberals, the people who think hopefully that you can reconcile Communism and religion or Communism and genuine science, don’t understand the nature of the Communist system. There can be no reconciliation. The Communists may use religion, for a temporary period, to further the revolution at that special moment. But they *must*, according to their own theories, regard religion as false, as illusory, as a delusion and a hallucination. So with any other non-Communist theories—they *must* be committed, in the realm of ideas as in action, to a monolithic, totalitarian view, to the abolition of all ideas except their own.

That last chart pictured the structure of society statistically, you might say; how it is arranged in order of importance, with its economic base, and the superstructure erected on top. If we now consider society from the point of view of its dynamic development, the basic principle of the Theory of History is seen to be the principle of The Class Struggle. This is the steam that keeps the engine going. This is the source of energy that makes things change and happen. In our day, the class struggle (according to Communist theory) means the struggle of the proletariat, or working class, against the bourgeoisie, the owners of the economic plant. There are, of course, other classes in society today. There are peasants, for instance; there are middle-class shop-keepers, artisans, and landlords. In some parts of the world, even feudal lords are left. But these classes are lesser and subordinate from a historical point of view.

The direction in history, and the outcome of this period, are determined (according to Communist theory) by the struggle of

RESTRICTED

the working class against the bourgeoisie. Modern history is precisely the history of this struggle, the struggle by the proletariat for the destruction, the total elimination of the bourgeoisie, of the whole society dominated by the bourgeoisie, and of all of its institutions. The basic struggle goes on in the economic base, not within the superstructure. The destruction of the bourgeoisie and of the capitalist economic base must, in the long run, mean the destruction of the whole superstructure: that is, of the type of government we have, the type of religion, philosophy, science, art, law, and so on. These would have no foundation to stand on any further.

In the remaining three phases of the theory, we come to the typical additions made by Lenin and Stalin. These follow out suggestions in Marx and Engels that were not really developed by them.

Incidentally, let me go back one moment to the Class Struggle in our time. Note the dialectical nature of this explanation of the Class Struggle. Observe that the proletariat is the *antithesis*. The bourgeoisie is the *thesis*. And note a peculiar thing: in destroying the thesis (i. e., the bourgeoisie), in the long run the proletariat will destroy itself, also, because it exists only as the antithesis to the preceding bourgeois thesis. According to the theory, this should mean in the long run the abolition of all classes whatsoever. The great revolutionary *synthesis* would be the ideal classless Communist society.

Now, let me spend a few moments on the Theory of the State.

The Philosophy of Communism: III

Theory of the State:
(Lenin-Stalin)

RESTRICTED**CLASS DICTATORSHIP**

1. The state is the executive committee of the (economically) dominant class.
2. "True democracy" ("communism" or "the classless society") entails the abolition of the state.
3. Class society can be transformed into communism only through the *Dictatorship of the Proletariat*.

According to Communist theory and philosophy, the state or government within any nation or society never represents the people — never represents all the interests of that society. The government is always a form of dictatorship — either disguised or open. The government, or state, is the executive committee, the staff, the political staff of the economically dominant class. In a feudal society it represents the interests of the feudal lords; in a slave-owning society, the interests only of the slave owners. In modern society it represents the interests of the capitalists owning class — the bourgeoisie. And, with respect to all other classes in society, it is a dictatorship counter to their interests, counter to the peasantry, counter to the working class. The government uses the phraseology of universal interest, of public interest, but this (according to Communist theory) is a masquerade, a disguise.

Democratic government, therefore, according to Communist theory, is an illusion; there cannot be such a thing. Government, in the sense of a State with armies, police, and so on is by its very nature dictatorial. Observe a consequence of great practical importance. On the basis of this theory (and this is, in a practical sense, perhaps the key theory) the government of any non-Communist State is a dictatorship representing only the big capitalists', imperialists' interests, and directed against the interests of all the rest of society—workers, peasants, middle-class, intellectuals, pro-

RESTRICTED**71**

RESTRICTED

professionals, even soldiers, I imagine, and sailors. The theory therefore means that from the point of view of a Communist all such governments are enemy governments, necessarily; there is no possibility of avoiding this conclusion. They are representatives of the "class enemy", and by the class theory of the structure of the state this defines the really basic enemy. Communists can regard only the Soviet government (the basic Communist government) as their own government. It follows that all Communists in this country, as in France, in Italy, in England, in India—wherever it may be—are necessarily traitors. They are necessarily, in one or another sense or capacity, enemy agents.

If you think over the implications of this theory, you will see that this is unavoidable; it is unavoidable in theory and also in practice. In practice it may be that some of them are only half-conscious of this at the beginning, but in the long run in practice, as from the beginning in theory, they must regard the government in Washington as an enemy government. They must believe that their real government is the government of the Kremlin. Keep this in mind, I urge you, when you judge the whining talk about "persecution," and the contemptuous way in which some people refer to the efforts to outlaw Communism as "witch hunting"—these are *real* witches and we had better hunt them and hunt them now if we don't want to have still more trouble with witchcraft when more shooting starts. When you hear people say that Communists should be allowed to teach in our schools or universities, and be granted super-rights in the courts, and so on—keep this theory in mind, and it may help also to guide our own practice.

Now it further follows from this Theory of the State that a true democracy would have to mean the abolition of the state, of government, in the theoretical classless society. But the Communists are sensible enough to recognize (and if they didn't, reality

RESTRICTED

would recognize it for them) that this is a very distant goal indeed. It can't be achieved, as they would put it, all in one moment. Class society can be transformed into the classless society of Communism only by what they call in their technical language, "the dictatorship of the proletariat," the dictatorship of the working class.

"The dictatorship of the proletariat" means the period of transition from Capitalism to Communism. Its functions are, *first*: to destroy (I use the word very literally and advisedly), to destroy all institutions—political, social, legal, religious—of existing society and to destroy along with all these institutions all the associated beliefs and moral attitudes and, *secondly*: (the sort of antithetical task) to build a new society based upon the collective ownership of the means of production and on dialectical, materialist beliefs. If this were actually done, no classes would any longer exist because there would be no economic differentiation to define a class; therefore, there would be no state, the dictatorship would be over, and government would cease to exist.

Nevertheless, the dictatorship of the proletariat, itself—which is our problem: Communist society we can leave for several million years from now—the dictatorship of the proletariat is itself a state and therefore in their own terms necessarily a real dictatorship. They openly state this, and openly conclude that their dictatorship must make use of the proletarian terror, in order to rid society of all the remnants of other classes, other beliefs and institutions. They say that the dictatorship of the proletariat will occupy an entire historical epoch, and that this epoch will be filled with wars, civil wars, and revolutions. Lenin remarked once that it might even be that two-thirds of mankind would be destroyed in the course of this transition, in the course of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but that nevertheless this would be a small price to pay for Communism.

RESTRICTED**73**

RESTRICTED

Finally, let's look more specifically at the Theory of Power

The Philosophy of Communism: IV

Theory of Power: (Lenin-Stalin)

COMMUNIST POWER MONOPOLY

1. The Proletariat "as such" cannot take and hold power.
 2. The monolithic Communist Party, as "vanguard of the proletariat," must "exercise" the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.
 3. The Strategy and Tactics of the Revolution are equivalent to the specific methods for achieving the specific objective: the communist monopoly of world power.
-

—here, again, developed by Lenin and carried further by Stalin. It is a very interesting theory in its practical meaning. I'll try to indicate to you why they conclude that the only solution for the Communist Revolution is to establish a proletarian dictatorship. Lenin pointed out that the proletariat cannot itself conduct the state. "It is not mature enough," he said, "to hold power as a class." He explained the difference between the proletariat and other classes which have matured slowly in society and have had many of the elements of wealth and power *before* they took over the state. For instance, the Capitalists grew up in still feudal society. Because they had private property, they could start factories, banks, and businesses, and they learned how to run things before they were developed to a stage where they took over the whole state, as in the French Revolution, and became the really dominant class. But the workers have no ownership interest in

RESTRICTED

the means of production—the real basis of society in Capitalist society. They therefore don't learn how to run society as a whole. Well, that would seem to make the Communist program impossible, for the program says that you have got to have the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

Lenin solved that problem by his theory of "The Party." "The Communist Party," Lenin says, "is the vanguard of the proletariat, the general staff of the Revolution, and it can and *must* (as he puts it) exercise the Dictatorship of the Proletariat *for* the Proletariat." Incidentally, the Proletariat is intellectually deficient, too, so that those deficiencies have also to be made up for by the Communist Party. The Communist Party, itself, is not Proletarian, and Lenin contended against the view that it should be. The Party does include some individual workers, but many of its members—in fact, most of the leading members of Lenin's own party—are intellectuals and middle-class in origin, not proletarian. But though not itself proletarian in social composition, the Party "expresses the interests of the Proletariat." How do you know? How does any one know that? By no objective test, outside of the Communist Party itself, because the Communists say that no truth about these things. The authenticity of the Communist Party is self-derived. Only the Communists can know the truth about history.

But suppose that the Working Class at some particular moment disagrees with the Party; that it doesn't vote for it; that it doesn't follow the Party in strikes or an attempted Revolution. Doesn't this show that the Communist Party is not really the Party of the Workers? Not at all, according to Lenin and Stalin; it shows that they are ignorant, and still too stupid. And if the Communist Party is alone, then everybody else is out of step. If

RESTRICTED**75**

RESTRICTED

Workers disagree with the Party, it is the Workers who are wrong, and it is the party's business to teach them the truth by methods as severe as necessary.

It's a peculiar thing about how this theory applies to history, when it comes to a question of predicting what will happen. If you will think over what I've just been saying, you'll see that the Party cannot be wrong—there is nobody that can check it. It says, "We represent the Workers," but if the Workers don't follow, that is because they are stupid; the Party has a superior knowledge, and so on. A recent Polish defector said, "In a way the whole heart of the theory of Dialectics can be expressed in this instance: I predict that the house will burn down. I then throw a can of gasoline on the stove. It does burn down. That is Dialectics. Therefore, Dialectics is proved." You see, I predict that the Communist Party has got to be right, but I won't recognize any possibility or any way in which it can be wrong; and, therefore, I prove that it must always be right.

Or, in the process of history more generally. I predict that Capitalist society is subject to grave social disorders, and then I have my people call disruptive strikes, start sabotage, etc. I say, "You see, my Theory of History is scientifically exact—it can't be wrong." And it is quite true under those circumstances—it can't be.

Now, observe that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is and must be equivalent in practice to the Dictatorship of the Communist Party. This Dictatorship, moreover, must be monolithic; i. e., with no deviation or no opposition or variation. Any opposition to it, or any deviation from it, must by definition express the interest in one or another form of an alien class force: that is to say, must be counter-Revolutionary, and you know what Communists think should be done to counter-Revolutionaries.

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The problem of the Revolution, therefore, is to prepare for, achieve, defend, and expand the Communist monopoly of power. Until the monopoly is complete (that is to say, unchallenged and unchallengeable on a world scale), this is, was, and will continue to be the goal of Communism. If this is understood—that the practical, the strategic goal is the world monopoly of Communist power—then everything essential can be understood through this. And if there is any doubt or confusion on this point, then nothing is understood, and I repeat and emphasize NOTHING, no matter how much formal studying has been done in connection with Communism—NOTHING is understood until this is understood. It is to doubts and confusions on this point, on the part of many of our leaders during the past decade, that not a few of the political disasters of this period can be traced.

So long as any one thinks, "Well, maybe this time they *really* mean that they want peace, or maybe they are trying to negotiate an honest agreement," so long as even a moment's doubt on that subject crosses one's mind, one does not understand the first principle of the nature of Communism. The strategic goal of Communism, the deduction which follows from the entire theory and philosophy, is simply a Communist monopoly of world power. This problem was fully realized and the strategic goal first clearly formulated, by Lenin in 1903, at the London meeting of the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Party. Since then it has been pursued without deviation.

In the pursuit of this goal, a number of phases are distinguishable—some of them overlapping each other. For example: the 1903 meeting really was the first phase—the formation of the nucleus of the Party. There followed a phase primarily concerned with the formulation of the basic theory and strategic principles.

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Along with that went the selection and training of the first cadres. Then, a little later on, to the extent possible a phase of "nibbling" at the social structure—the Communists were not powerful enough to do much more than "nibble" then, primarily by propaganda. Then, in World War I, came the phase of Revolutionary opposition to the war. In 1917, there followed the great "key" phase of this whole period—the conquest of "state power in Russia." This is the big, dividing line. Russia, thereafter, becomes the main base (or as they put it, "the fortress of the Revolution"), and the entire strategy enters a new period.

I won't try to go into the intervening or intermediary phases between then and now—I haven't time for it. I would distinguish them as seven—the principal phases between 1917 and today. I would, however, like to take a moment or two to discuss the immediate phase. I define this as "Phase L *minus* 4," using "L" in the mathematical sense as the symbol of "Limit," and considering that the "limit phase" is the achievement of the goal: that is, the monopoly of Communist power on a world scale.

Now this phase, which I defined first in 1944, still continues: the preparation for the open stage of the Third World War. That is the easiest way in which to state its over-all character. It has two primary aspects: *First*, the consolidation of the Eurasian base; and *second*, the undermining of the non-Communist world. This goal, with its two sub-phases, is carried out in this period by both military and political means, but the military means are secondary and preparatory as against the political, subversive means, which are primary for this period. Incidentally, I would say that L *minus* 3 is to be understood as the open phase of the Third World War, and the defeat of the United States; L *minus* 2, the defeat (or probably capitulation) of the remaining Powers; L *minus* 1, the

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internal Sovietization of world society outside of the Soviet Union (this may have been completed in Satellite areas before then). Finally, the process ends at the limit phase—the Communist monopoly.

Incidentally, it seems to me that the survey of Communist philosophy as a whole, and more particularly the statement of the strategic goal of Communism which is deduced from that philosophy and follows necessarily from it, indicate quite plainly the only possible strategic counter-goal for us: namely, the reduction of the power of Soviet-based Communism to impotence. Or, put in other words, the destruction of the Communist regime—the regime in the Kremlin. With that the entire strategy would be undermined, and made impossible of achievement.

You, gentlemen, let me add in conclusion, would seem to me have not a little share in the responsibility for deciding whether that counter-goal will be understood and achieved in time. Thank you!