



COMMUNIST SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT

Dr. Jan Karski

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28 August 1962

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COLONEL LEOCHA: Gentlemen:

Until now you have studied the United States and parliamentary systems. Today you will examine the Communist Systems of Government.

To give us a deeper insight into this area, we are fortunate to have Dr. Karski, who has become one of the most respected of our scholars in the area of the Soviet Union and communism. He holds one distinction. As Admiral Rose noted, he is a graduate and a prisoner of the Germans and the Soviets, and he has escaped from them.

Dr. Karski, it is my pleasure to introduce you to the Class of 1963.

DR. KARSKI: Thank you very much for these kind words. Admiral Rose, Gentlemen:

Speaking about communism one must keep in mind first of all that communism represents both an ideology and a scientific theory. As an ideology, communism represents immutable laws, unchangeable, which are valid all over the nature and which can be applied to the human society. Therefore, the mission of these immutable laws contained in the so-called dialectical historical materialism is recognized in the Soviet Union as well as in Yugoslavia, in Poland, and in China.

At the same time, communism represents a scientific theory, and this scientific or psuedo-scientific theory changes with time and with circumstances, and this is admitted by the Communist leaders.

Speaking about the Communist concept of state, of course one would have to mention a few essentials which make the Communist concept of state different from the Western concept of state. As you remember from the previous lectures on the Western concept of the state--and by the Western I mean the concept based on the Greek-Judaic-Christian-Roman civilization--man is a social being. On this point there is no disagreement. You could say Marx agrees with St. Thomas Aquinas.

Next, from the Western point of view, since men must live in a society, we recognize that the essence of the society is the line of authority and subordination, since we consider that the state is a natural thing for a man. Man is supposed to live in a state. Man must live in a state, exercising authority and being subjected to the authority of others.

Following this, from the Western point of view, particularly from the Christian point of view, the state, the society, is for the happiness and well-being of the individual. The individual, because of being a creature of God, is considered as having an absolute value, while the state and the society are related by usage. There are different kinds of states and different kinds of societies, and they are as good as they improve the individual both spiritually and materially.

And the last point--from the Western point of view, property is a natural thing to have for men. On what basis do we judge this? If it is true that my spiritual abilities are given to me by my Lord, who created me, consequently it should be true that the fruits of my spiritual, intellectual efforts should be under my control. Why? Because I will have to account for the usage of my spiritual abilities

one day before my Lord.

Well, these are the essentials as far as the state, the society, is concerned, from the Western point of view.

From the Communist point of view things look different. First, the state is not a natural thing for a man to live in. On the contrary, most probably in the primitive society the primitive man did not know the institution of the state. At a certain moment of the development of man private property emerged. It does not belong to this lecture how it emerged. It was thanks to the technical progress, to the barter between the tribes and between individuals. Anyway, at a certain moment the private property became well established, particularly the private property of the means of production.

Once the private property became established, the society became divided into two basic classes, by the way, in accordance with the dialectical philosophy on the basis of which everything in nature consists of its own inherent contradiction. The society became divided into two classes. What was the essential of that class, of the term "class?" Class is such a group of people which has the same relationship towards the process of production. It means it either controls or owns the process of production or it does not control and does not own it.

With the emergence of private property the society became divided between those two classes--those who did own the means of production and consequently who had political power, and those who did not own them. From that moment the classes struggled, started the class struggle which is inherent in the human society on any level of its development, as long as the private property is in existence.

It is this class struggle on which the Communist concept of the state is based. Why? Because the class struggle is the essence of history, not the history of the state. As Marx said, history is the history of class struggle and essentially nothing else.

The interests between these two classes, the property-owning class and the propertyless class, were irreconcilable. Since they were irreconcilable, chaos, confusion was to result. In order to maintain some harmony in the society, an institution of compulsion had to be created. The state was created. What is the state? The state is first a class institution. What class? The property-owning class. How do we know it?' Marx-Engels asks. We know it very well. Starting in history, whatever state you consider, from the primitive states of thousands of years ago to the most modern capitalistic state, you will find out that in every state the property is being protected by the law, by the judge, by the lawgiver, by the policeman, by the soldier, by the officer. This is the best proof that the state is an apparatus of compulsion in the hands of the property-owning classes. It is a product of the irreconcilability of the classes. The property-owning class had to organize the state in order to maintain the propertyless class under their control.

In this statement now comes the Communist attitude. The Communists, by definition, are on the side of the propertyless class. The Communists are for the destruction of the private property, in the final stage of development of the society-- at the present moment the initial stage, at least--for the destruction of the private property of the means of production. In this respect one must remember that the

human society and the state were passing different stages. We had a society based on slavery, for instance, thousands of years ago--ancient history. Then came the state, the society, based on feudal order. This was the second stage. The most modern stage was the stage / ^{based} on capitalism, in which the two conflicting classes were represented, one by factory workers, by peasants, by intelligentsia, and the other by capital-owning classes. The third stage is the socialist stage. The socialist state is a state in which the formerly property-owning classes have been liquidated physically and only the working classes are both in existence and in power.

So far, by 1962, we have only one such state. This is the Soviet Union. The other Communist-controlled states belong to a different category, the category of the so-called peoples' democracies. About this a little later.

The final form of the society will come with the definite destruction of the private property in all its forms. This will take place in the Soviet Union. Secondly, since capitalism has an international character and has international solidarity, there will come the world destruction of the capitalistic system based on private property.

Once the private property will disappear in the Soviet Union in all its forms and the capitalistic system will be destroyed all over the world, and the world union of the Soviet socialist republics will emerge, then the society will be a classless society, a society in which you will have no class oppression and class exploitation. Then the state will be no more necessary. The apparatus of compulsion will be no more necessary. Such a society will also result in a stateless society.

What is the difference between the Soviet Union and the peoples' democracies? In the peoples' democracies, which mean the countries of Eastern Europe-- in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, as well as, by the way, China, we have such a process. The property-owning classes, formerly the ruling classes, have been deprived of political power. They do not hold in their hands the government, but they are still in existence--former officers, former priests, actual priests, teachers, property-owners. They are still alive, and they are being used by the state apparatus. Consequently, in these areas you cannot have yet pure socialism as we have in the Soviet Union.

In the Soviet Union the process of the physical liquidation of the formerly property-owning classes took place in the period between 1917 and 1936. In 1936 Stalin announced that as of then the formerly property-owning class had been completely liquidated physically and that there was only one class in the Soviet Union in existence and in power--the working class. He said: "Consequently, as of now, as of 1936, we enter into a completely new stage of the state institution, mainly the stage of the socialist state." And here at this moment he gave to the people the so-called Stalinist Constitution of 1963 which is still valid in the Soviet Union.

Whatever issue of the state you will take you will understand this issue and will treat it properly only and exclusively if you take it from the point of view of class struggle. State institutions as such have no validity or importance in themselves. They are important only if taken from the point of view of class struggle and serving the interests of the working class.

Thus, for instance, while from the Western point of view we have the concept

of the separation of power--executive power, legislative, and judicial--from the Communist point of view this is nonsense--there is only one power. What is this power? Compulsion. What is the difference between the power of the legislative body or that of the judicial body? There is no difference. Both are compulsion. If you don't obey the state, the law, you go to jail. If you do not obey the verdict of the judge, you go to jail as well. This is one power. This is unity of power, the centralization of power--of course, power used for the benefit of the working class.

Justice. Here in the West, justice is based on some principles, even principles as contained in the common law. From the Communist point of view, justice cannot be based on some principles lying outside of the society itself, some moral prescription. Justice is as much a tool of the class struggle as a gun, as a bayonet. Justice must be executed in the order of serving the interests of the working class.

Examples, taken from the Soviet press: A man stands before the court accused of being the agent of American imperialism. Why? He was a drunkard. The man said, "I never saw an American. I don't speak English. I don't know anything about America. I am not the agent of American imperialism." But the judge reasoned, "Subjectively, of course, I realize you have nothing to do with Americans. But objectively, you committed a crime serving the interest of American imperialism. Does this American imperialism want the Soviet society to be efficient or not, healthy or not? Does American imperialism want the Soviet workers to be drunkards or good workers? Of course American imperialists want the Soviet

workers to be drunkards, not to produce. Are you a drunkard or not? You are a drunkard. Although subjectively you are not connected with the Americans objectively speaking you are an agent of American imperialism."

This example was actually taken even before the war from the Soviet press. The man was convicted. I don't remember what was the conviction.

Another example taken also from the Soviet press. Two men are fighting. They are drunk. At a certain moment one man throws a bottle against the other. By accident the bottle missed his adversary and hit the portrait of the great, great, great, greatest among the great, Stalin. The portrait fell. The man goes to the court. The man is convicted--six months of forced labor. Subjectively he was not guilty. He did not want to do it. He loved Stalin. Objectively, however, he lowered the prestige of the great leader and his image in the party opinion. Objectively he worked against the interest of the working class and he was sent to the forced-labor camp.

It is the same as far as the concept of civil rights is concerned. When you read the Soviet Constitution, civil rights are as much respected in the Soviet Union, or more, as in any so-called democratic state. Freedom of speech, freedom of public demonstration, freedom of the press, freedom of political organization, secret ballots, secret elections, all of them, are guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution. However, when you read them carefully you will find out that in most cases one, at least, of two clauses is added. One is, "In accordance with the interests of the working class;" the other, "To strengthen the socialist state." Of course, now comes the problem. Who interprets whether such action is in

of the
accordance with the interests / class or whether it is not? In some cases it is.
Then it will be allowed. If it is not, however, such rights have no absolute value.
They are relative and then such activities naturally will not be allowed.

It will be the same with the concept of morality, naturally, as far as society is concerned. While in the Western world morality is based on certain absolute commandments of divine origin, as far as the Communist society is concerned morality is as much a product of the class struggle, a product of environment, as any other institution in any given society. Thus, morality will change as well.

Examples: In the early years, 1917, 1918, and 1919 Lenin wanted to destroy, for instance, the bourgeois type of rationed family, which he considered a strong supporter of the old regime. He wanted to destroy the old concept of morality. Consequently, the government insisted on, supported, encouraged, for instance, looseness in morals, abortions, illegitimate children, divorces, which by this time were so easy that oral or written statement before the government official was enough, in 1919, to get a divorce for a man or a woman, without the agreement of the other party. There was no responsibility toward illegitimate children. All this was supported by the government.

But this was in 1917, 1918, and 1919, when the family was in support of the old regime. The society changed. Now the Soviet system is well established. Now socialism finally has been attained. Consequently, the same problems turn out in a completely different way. I assure you, it is much, much more difficult to get a divorce in the Soviet Union than it is in this blessed country here. There are much much fewer officials in the Soviet Union who dare, dare, to ask for a divorce than

there are in this blessed country here. It is an extremely delicate thing in Russia. It is tremendously frowned upon to ask for a divorce. This is considered as a very unpleasant action as far as the society is concerned. If you are troubled and if you are in a high position, it would not probably be as difficult to kill your wife. But don't divorce her, because this has a very bad effect on the society. It corrupts and demoralizes the others. Strict morals are very much observed, as you know. As you know, those American films, those hip dancers, those rock-and-rollers--the Soviet authorities frown on them very much, considering them unhealthy and undignified. Why? Because this society has already been built. Consequently morality has to be adapted to the existent conditions.

Now, in this society, in this state, the Communist Party has a specific and important role. First, speaking about the Communist Party, one must keep in mind what is the definition of the Party. What does it mean as a political party? From the Communist point of view the political party is an organization which represents the interests of a class--class interest. What is the difference between a club, a golf club, a tennis club, or any other organization, and a political party? The other organization may represent only partially some interest of some group. The political party represents the totality of the class interests. How many classes do we have in the Soviet Union? We have only one class, the working class. Is this class represented as far as the class struggle is concerned? Yes, by the Communist Party. Consequently, do the Soviet people need any other party? Evidently not. Is it democratic to have one party in the Soviet Union? Absolutely, it is democratic, because one class is represented by one political party. The

Soviet Union is a country of democracy.

Of course you could argue that we Americans are more democratic. We have two political parties. Wait a moment. From the point of view of class struggle, it is not so. Make an experiment when you have elections here. Ask a Republican candidate, Mr. So and So, "Do you support the American way of life, the American system, the American Constitution, which are the guarantee of the American system, the capitalistic system?" He will say, "Naturally, I support the Constitution." Ask now a Democratic candidate, "Do you support by any chance the American Constitution?" He will tell you proudly, "I do." Consequently, at what conclusion must you arrive? On the basic issues, which mean the protection and the preservation of the American capitalistic system, based on class exploitation, there is no difference between the two candidates. Consequently, what is the conclusion? How many political parties are here in the United States? There is only one political party, defending the interests of the capitalistic classes. You will ask, "All right. Why two names, Republican and Democrat?" Why? To make you feel better. You vote. You have a democratic system. You vote for one. You won't vote for the other. You don't realize that you are voting for the same group, for the same party. What is the United States? It is a country of the dictatorship of one party, the capitalistic party, in contradiction to the democracy of the Soviet Union.

Now, the Communist Party--and this must be remembered--bases its activity on the understanding and the recognition of those immutable laws I mentioned before, laws of dialectical historical materialism. It is not a party which serves

the temporary, immediate interest of the working class. It is the party which acts in accordance with the laws of the society as established by Marx, Engels, and later on, Lenin. Consequently, first, this party does not have to respond, as the bourgeois capitalistic parties supposedly do, to the immediate interest and needs of the working class. It can sacrifice them. It has to follow those immutable laws. The Communist Party consequently is infallible. The Communist Party is supreme. The Communist Party cannot make mistakes. Particular members can, but the party as such, once the party line is established, has its total validity as far as the class struggle is concerned, because, in addition to following the immutable laws of dialectical historical materialism, it commands the support and the trust of the working class, and in the class struggle it throws the working class on one side. Consequently, the working class cannot contradict itself, contradict its own interests. The Communist Party is infallible and the Communist Party cannot be challenged.

Of course it is an organization which is essential in the state organization, which is naturally superior to the government, while the government is only an apparatus of compulsion, of suppression, but it is a technical apparatus. The Party is the organ of policy-making, it is an organ which will command the government itself. As a rule, by the way, the great tradition of the Communist leaders in the Soviet Union was that they did not participate in the government directly. Lenin did not like to be in the government directly. He considered it as an inferior work, as a work for technicians, not for a Communist leader. The most important position is the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the

Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Taking now under consideration the role of the Communist Party in the Soviet society and the concept of class struggle, one will find out that over there you have freedoms unknown in the bourgeois capitalistic countries—freedom of political organizations. Is there such a freedom? Of course there is. In the Soviet Union or as a matter of fact in the other Communist-controlled countries, is there anyone free to organize a political organization? Absolutely. Everyone is free. However, let us suppose that in the Soviet Union you want to organize another political organization. You will be allowed by the definition, by the Constitution, naturally, most probably. The following night a policeman will pay you a visit and in a friendly way, probably, he will discuss with you this issue. "Do you agree to support the socialist system?" "I do. If I don't this is constitutionally punishable. We are for the strengthening of the socialistic system." "Do you recognize that in the Soviet Union we have only one class, the working class?" "I do. This is constitutionally guaranteed." "Do you agree that the working class is represented by the Communist Party?" "I do. This is inserted in the Constitution. The Communist Party is the vanguard and the leader of the working people." "But still you want to set another political party. What does that mean? It means that you want to have the representation of the interests of some nonworking class. This is constitutionally punishable. This is a crime. You are consequently free to set a political organization, whatever organization you like, but we are free also to put you in jail, because this is against the interests of the already defended interests of the working class."

In this respect there is freedom of speech. There is freedom of the press. Since it is the Communist Party which establishes the party line which interprets the interests of the working class, in accordance with the dialectical historical materialistic laws of the society, consequently, let us say, if a journalist or a commentator will follow the party line, of course he is absolutely free. Most probably he is freer than any commentator in any capitalistic country to serve that line as well as he can. Of course if he does not want to serve this line, this will be punishable constitutionally as directed against the interests of the working class.

This will go also for religion. Is there freedom of religion in the Communist-controlled state? Naturally. The Soviet Constitution guarantees freedom of religious worship. However, this does not mean freedom of the Church organization. The Church organization is a very specific thing. It may own the property. It is an organization. It is the organization which does not act in agreement with the interests of the working class, because it is a both unscientific and contrary to the materialist philosophy/^{or}religious concept. Consequently, the freedom of religious worship should not be identified with the freedom of the Church organization and Church activities. Also freedom of religious worship should not be identified with nonfreedom of anti-religious activities. If you want to believe in any religious concepts you are completely free, as free as you are free to have a cancer, a disease. Religious beliefs are based on thousands of years of tradition and this cannot be eliminated in one generation in any Communist-controlled country. However, the anti-religious activities and propoganda should be allowed in order to

inform and indoctrinate the people.

In this system now, one must ask a question: What is the role of the man, of the individual? Again there is a basic difference from what I termed before the Greek-Judaic-Christian-Roman heritage which all of us follow. Man is nothing more than a most highly developed animal. Man's brain is a matter on the highest stage of development, so high that it produces the thought which makes the difference between a man and an animal. However, man has no absolute value. Man has only a relative value. Man is a manure for the future generations. Contrary to the individualistic concepts of ^{the} society of men and man as the Western philosophy has it, the Communist world recognizes only the collectivist approach. Man when it is necessary has to be sacrificed for the good of the society, of the collective. It is the interest of the collective which is important.

Americans want a new canal. Americans have plenty of money. They can build it. In the Soviet Union the Soviet people have no money. That doesn't mean that there will never be canals in the Soviet Union. No. There are millions of men who can be forced to build a canal. They will die of exposure and starvation. So what? For generations hundreds upon hundreds of millions of people will take advantage of those canals and they will serve the society. What was the price for building the canals? Chiefly human energy. Man in a way is the cheapest source of energy.

Within every Communist-controlled state organization there is one principle which is recognized and which does not change--by the way the principle established by Lenin. It is the principle of democratic centralism. As you know, the

Communist-controlled state is based on soviets, on towns, on elections. In the Soviet Union alone we have approximately 10,000 soviets in every field. Every organization is based on elections--universities, schools, high schools, the government, economic institutions, cultural institutions--everything is based on soviets and elections. The principle says that the democratic aspect means that all higher echelons are being elected democratically by the lower echelons. However, once elected, they directly command obedience unchallenged by the lower echelons.

This democratic centralization is particularly strongly stressed always within the Communist Party, but it applies also to other institutions. Practically, this means self-preservation. It means a continuance of centralized authority.

Does the Soviet system recognize regionalism, local interests, and first of all, nationalism? Yes, it does. However, again, as established by Lenin and Stalin, in a specific and very particular way.

In the final Communist, stateless, classless society, the nations and even national languages will disappear. There will be one language, one culture, Soviet Communist culture. However, to come to such a state you must respect the national culture, however, cultures national in form but socialist in concept. From this stems the Communist interpretation of literature, of history. History will be interpreted in such a way as to fit Marxism and Leninism into all great events in history and all great personalities in history. They will be described in such a way as to follow the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of history. This will be very interesting and I would encourage you very much to read about American

history and what the Soviet encyclopedia says about American history, American great personalities. You will find very interesting material. It is a pity that the American public opinion does not know enough about it. You would learn very much from it and learn in what respect they treat those aspects.

Does the Communist system respect differences between the Communist regimes? It should. According to the second part of the Communist ideology and theory, communism is also a scientific theory. Communism adapts itself to circumstances. Everything is a product of environment. So even the state organization and the social organization, consequently, from the theoretical point of view, and the so-called national roads to socialism, which Khrushchev supports so openly, are valid. Of course in this respect naturally there is much room for disagreement and for controversies within the Soviet Bloc itself. As we know, in this respect apparently the Chinese leaders do not go along entirely with Khrushchev. Many people hope that the peaceful changes will come within the Soviet Bloc.

Will they come? Naturally. Everything is changeable. We change as well as probably the Soviets change. The best example in this respect is--and remember this example--the Roman Empire was master of the world. Nevertheless, once corruption entered the scene and defiance of tradition, it disintegrated and fell. In this respect, however, let us be very careful, because the Roman Empire started to be corrupted in the first century of the Christian era, by the way, at the time of acceptance of the spread of Christianity. The Roman Empire fell 400 years later. It was those 400 years which were so unpleasant.

Thank you.

COLONEL LEOCHA: Dr. Karski is ready for your questions.

QUESTION: Dr. Karski, would you discuss the systems in some of the other Communist countries and how they differ from Russia both with regard to the ideology and the principles?

DR. KARSKI: Let us start with Poland with which I am most familiar. Apparently the main difference is that, first, in Poland you have a rather traditional enmity toward Russia, because Russia dominated Poland for several generations. Consequently, the apparent ties between the Polish Government and the Russian Soviet Government are not emphasized. This is one difference. Gomulka does not speak about this very much.

Secondly, there are much more what we would call freedoms, particularly freedom of speech or rather of discussion. Everybody who comes from Poland says that you can discuss, you can even criticize the government. It would be much more difficult to have a public lecture on this subject. It is still more difficult to be able to write on the subject. But you can talk. That is more or less free.

As far as agriculture is concerned, before 1956 approximately 40 percent of agriculture was collectivized. Now no more than 2 percent is collectivized. The land was given back to the peasants. I don't speak, of course, about the state farms which even under the capitalistic system the government owns. I speak only about collective farms.

Then, as far as decentralization is concerned, there is even more than in the Soviet Union, although, as you know, Khrushchev also supports the idea of greater

decentralization, particularly in the industrial sector of the country. Why is it so? I think it is recognized that communism also is a productive environment, and Poles are known for individualism. They are rather unfriendly people. So find the Russians. So there is either greater freedom or there is chaos--whichever you prefer to call it. Consequently to force them or to impose on them is rather unpleasant, and this may bother the Soviet Union.

All this was started, by the way, in 1956, at the time when the prospect of another Hungary in Poland was in view. I can imagine that the Soviet leaders did not like the prospect of that odor of Budapest now to spread into also Poland. They agreed on it, as far as the essentials are concerned. I have not the slightest doubt that Gomulka is absolutely an orthodox Communist, interested and engaged in the interest of the Soviet Bloc. He is a faithful follower of Marxism and Leninism, and particularly whenever the interests of communism against the capitalistic system are concerned he always will follow the Soviet interests.

So this is as far as Poland is concerned. As far as Yugoslavia is concerned, from the very beginning Tito was much more independent of Moscow than any other Communist leader. Tito from the very beginning had his own underground movement. I don't want to enter into details or technicalities. He was independent throughout the war. By the way, he got Allied support earlier than any other Communist leader. You remember that in September 1943 when the Italians surrendered, they had to surrender their arms to Tito. Consequently Tito could afford to have greater freedom from the Soviet Union.

What is the difference? Greater stress here on regionalism and on federalism,

which in Yugoslavia is very important, in view of Croats, Slovenes, Czechs, Montenegrans, Macedonians, et cetera.

This is one thing. A second thing, there is a greater possibility for what you would call private initiative. The land is not nationalized, not collectivized, in defense of the peasant. As far as commerce and industry are concerned, more than in other countries there is room for private initiative.

In China, on the contrary, Chinese leaders apparently hold the view that they have no time, on one hand; secondly, that what I would call human life in China is probably as cheap as it was in Russia in 1917. After 45 years of success the Soviet society is well established. The regime is well established. You have an emerging new class-bureaucracy, managers. They don't want to risk too much. But in China/over 650 million people, with everything on a low level, there are problems, and harsh measures, harsh nationalism, or even war apparently represent much less risk for the leaders than they do in the Soviet Union. Consequently you have experiments, for instance, with agriculture, which you remember, by the way, apparently did not result in great success.

QUESTION: Where does the definition of a property-owner start? In other words, a person owns something, in effect--clothes, an automobile. Where does he become in the eyes of the Communists a property-owner?

DR. KARSKI: This is a very good question. This problem of private ownership, for instance, in the Soviet Union, is very often misunderstood. What can you own in the Soviet Union? Or what can you not own in any Communist-controlled country? You cannot own or control individually the means of production. You

cannot own a factory. You can own an average establishment, a little shop which employs a few people--3, 4, or 5 people. You cannot own a factory. You cannot own a mine. In the later stage, in the Soviet Union, you cannot own the land. But in the Soviet Union you can own your clothes, of course, your furniture, your house--not an apartment, your house--as long as this house does not represent the means of production or income. It means you can own the house but you cannot rent the house. You cannot rent a room in your house, or an apartment in your house. They do it, but it is illegal. You cannot have an income on your capital. If you rent a room in your house, this is, of course, capital.

Next, on the collective farms peasants own more or less a half-acre of land which is under their control, and they plant, and they can sell the products on different markets. Stalin introduced in the late thirties this practice. He did it very cleverly. The peasants did not want to produce. The collectives went very badly. So Stalin gave the peasants little pieces of land, with the result that on these little pieces of land they produced more than in the whole collective. But then the government knew what could be done on the collectives, and raised the norm. But Khrushchev retained the system, so peasants own those little pieces of land.

What can they keep on this land? This will give you an example. A man can have a cow. This will give milk for him and for his family. He can have a chicken. He can have a pig, for pork. He cannot own a horse. Why? A horse is a source of energy. It is a means of production. A horse can be only a collective item. You can have in the Soviet Union a nationalized horse. You can have a collectivized

horse. You cannot have a privately owned horse on the farm. This is too much.

But you can have a cow.

Now, can you inherit property? Well, here we don't have so much information, but I will give you this from my friends who saw Poles during the war. They visited the dacha of Aricheto Stoi, the great writer. This house can be compared with the greatest capitalistic houses, which means his house in itself is a great museum with a value of probably millions of dollars. This was during the war. It has great galleries, great pictures, manuscripts, et cetera, and he owns it. Now, of course, will it be inherited? No, most probably, no. But, why? I imagine that when he dies he will give it to the society. That is good communism. If he does not do it he will be made to do it. It will be done in this way.

So, can you own private property? Yes, you can own private property, but in certain ever-diminishing degrees, until the classless society--not the state--will emerge in which the notion of private property will not exist any more. To achieve such a state, the capitalistic encirclement, the capitalistic societies all over the world must be eliminated, because, as long as capitalism exists it will always have a tendency to grab and to destroy the socialist society. They have to be destroyed so that Soviet socialist apparatus of compulsion--the Army, the Air Force, the police, the bombs-- can be destroyed, because they will not be threatened any more. Then private property will disappear completely.

QUESTION: You mentioned, Doctor, that the Soviet system will become a classless system. It seems to me that the scientists in the Soviet Union are an elite class to themselves. They demand higher salaries. They have better housing.

They are permitted to travel in foreign countries. I wonder if you care to comment on them.

DR. KARSKI: This is a very good question. Theoretically, yes, the Soviet society eventually, naturally--there is no opposition to it in the theory--will become a classless, consequently a stateless, society, as I said, after the liquidation of the capitalistic societies. In the meantime, a new class is emerging. There is evidence of this. I will not argue. Genus, for instance, in his book, The New Class, writes so much about it, and he knows very well. He says that a regular class--not only in the capitalistic sense--emerges in the Soviet Union, and, by the way, in Yugoslavia, as well. He says that this new class is even more oppressive than the capitalistic property-owning class. Why? He says that because in the capitalistic countries the capitalist has all economic control. Indirectly he also commands the government apparatus of compulsion. Indirectly he commands the police, the Army, the legislation, et cetera.

But he says that under Stalin or under Tito in Yugoslavia those great managers, this new class, command very openly the apparatus of compulsion directly. This means that the manager by a five-year plan is asked to produce so much. All right. Then he goes to the secretary of the local Communist party and he tells him, "Comrade, I am unable to do it." "Why?" "Well, these workers do not produce that much. I cannot pay them so much. I must have more workers on a higher salary." Then the secretary of the local Communist party will get him more workers, will allow him to lower the salaries, to raise the quota, to raise the norm. Genus says of course this means a new and more oppressive class.

Is there a contradiction between those two notions? I imagine a Communist, Stalin, would answer, probably, "But contradiction is in the nature of dialectics. There should be contradiction, because only through this contradiction eventually will come the final victory."

I cannot see any other answer, because both notions are correct.

QUESTION: Doctor, the Trotsky-Stalin split had to do with Trotsky's advocacy of permanent revolution. How does the Common Congress Party make the Stalin idea of socialism, of one state, compatible with the idea of world revolution or domination?

DR. KARSKI: Well, again, this is a very important and basic question. You are right. There was such a controversy. Trotsky said, "We cannot build socialism in one country. That international capitalism will not allow. We can only wage the struggle on a worldwide basis." Stalin said, "We did it in 1917, 1918, and 1919, and 1920 and 1921. What happened? The totalitarian forces were victorious in many areas. We won in Hungary. We won in Bavaria. We won almost in Poland. We won almost in Finland. We almost won in Rumania. But what happened? International capitalism jumped and destroyed the lawful, victorious, proletarian force. Why was it so? Because we did not dispose of a center of power--military, political, economic. We did not have ^a package around to support the local forces. The capitalists are international by nature. And for this we must build the Soviet Union as a strong, powerful state, economically, militarily, and politically."

So, in 1938--to give you the answer to your question--such a theater was

organized in the Soviet Union. At a certain moment in Pravda appeared an open letter from a certain worker, a certain Comrade Ivanov. Probably the editor wrote himself a letter. But Comrade Ivanov wrote an open letter to Stalin himself, saying, "Comrade Stalin, isn't there a contradiction? Marx-Engels-Lenin says that once the proletarian class wins the state is going to wither away, and our Soviet state is not withering away. Is there a contradiction?" And Stalin, in his generosity, answers this Ivanov, this obscure worker, in an open letter, and explains to him this problem. He says, "Yes. The practice in the Soviet Union contradicts the teachings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. No. The practice in the Soviet Union does not contradict Marx, Engels, and Lenin." He says, "Is there a contradiction in this? Of course. This is the essence of dialectics. In dialectics itself everything contains a contradiction. How does this work in life? We are encircled by the capitalistic state. Let us suppose we dissolve our Army, our police, our apparatus of compulsion. What will happen? Americans will move in. English will move in. French will move in. We must have a stronger and ever stronger state. On the other hand what does this mean, that we have a stronger and stronger Soviet state? It means that relatively the capitalistic forces are weaker and weaker. The balance of power changes, until we will become so strong that we will be able to crush international capitalism and the world union of the Soviet socialist republics will emerge. And then the process of the withering of the state will take place. Consequently the Soviet state will be weaker and weaker by being stronger and stronger. Yes. Consequently, are we in agreement with Marx in building a reality in contradiction to what Marx wrote? Yes."

Only such an interpretation must be applied. In this way Stalin combined Trotsky's idea, in a way, of a permanent revolution. "Of course we are for permanent revolution, only in circumstances which the American intelligence agent, Trotsky, did not want to understand and did not want to recognize."

QUESTION: Doctor, some other speakers have led us to believe that there is something inherently weak in communism and that if we can hang on for about 10 years it is going to fold up, from its own weight. What is your feeling on this subject?

DR. KARSKI: Well, you know, I think predictions should be avoided altogether because they are very embarrassing. Will the Communist control system change? No one can say no. Khrushchev will not say no. Everything is changeable. According to dialectical historical materialism nothing is permanent, nothing is absolute, nothing is unchangeable. Everything evolves. Everything changes. In what respect will it change? In what direction will it change? This is difficult.

My feeling is that very much will depend on ourselves, which means, if we, because we do represent a different approach, a different world--there is no doubt about it--are unimaginative, if we are weak, if we are stupid, if we are ignorant, if we are cowards, if we are unable to sacrifice in defense of our own principles, or our own Lord, communism will change, will spread, and will take more and more. If we are strong, if we are clever, and shrewd, and honest at the same time, if we are not cowards, I have no doubt that communism will shrink. If somebody would ask me, I don't see it as impossible that within

our own lifetime we will not see the Soviet Government in Washington, D. C. This is absolutely possible. And it is absolutely possible to me that in our own lifetime people in the Soviet Union will look around and will say, "How could we have a Communist system for 50 years?" Or think of the Nazi Germany.

There is nothing like permanent, unchangeable government or the notion that the best government must fall by nature. I don't believe in either notion. About the Nazi system, ask any German today. He will answer you, very strongly, and I think honestly and sincerely, "How could the people believe in that nonsense of Mein Kampf, or Twentieth Century Revolution, by Rosenberg? If you read those books today they are nonsense. He's an illiterate, an ignormus." I believe this is sincere, but I also assure you I was there, 25 years ago. Millions of the most excellent, otherwise honest people considered this the last word in human thought.

History shows that even stupid, evil ideas and leaders, at least for a certain time, appeal to the masses. Not only good governments but bad governments are successful, and very often they last for a very long time.

Everything depends on the balance of power and the attitude of the adversary. So much depends on our own attitude as far as communism is concerned.

QUESTION: Dr. Karski, I'd like to pursue this remarkable logic one step further. Does not the goal, the supposition of a glorious, worldwide worker state under dialectical materialism concept presuppose the simultaneous existence of the opposite capitalistic property ownership? How can this be held as an ideal when by definition it will include its own opposite?

DR. KARSKI: Well, now I must be very careful, sir, because here is such a point. I can answer you from the Communist point of view here. From the way you phrased your question, and even the smile on your face, I gather that you want to embarrass me, you know, and this Communist attitude. From the Communist point of view the answer will be: There are many people in the capitalistic bourgeois society who are unwilling or unable to understand the essence of dialectical historical materialism, and we admit it openly. With such people we don't argue. We kill them.

But, taking it that you were sincere in your question, I will answer you. As I said in the beginning, the original sin in the history of humanity was the emergence of private property. Since the private property made you have this division of classes, once the private property will disappear, of course the classless state will appear. This does not mean that the society will not be divided into different groups opposing each other. It will, but not on the economic basis, not on the basis of class oppression or class exploitation. Lenin wrote about it. He said, "For instance, I can imagine, society will be divided." He gave two examples. The society will have the question of how to spend the leisure time. There will be great discussion, and great opposition. One group will want to spend the leisure time in one way and the other will want to spend the leisure time in another way. And the society will be divided into such groups.

Another example. For instance, the problem of a school for art—very important. People will be divided between the different reputations of different artists. He said, "Why is it always necessary to be divided on the point of exploitation?"

This class division will disappear forever. But dialectical, inherent contradiction within society itself will never disappear." "Dialectics," says Engels, "ceases to operate only with death itself. Everything is dialectical in nature, which means inherent self-contradiction."

QUESTION: Doctor, will you comment on the role of the military in modern communism?

DR. KARSKI: I just mentioned before this present period that I am always suspicious when lecturing before this type of audience. You gentlemen are here, and very often I am asked questions by people who know more than I do on the subject. So on this question I really have no comment.

QUESTION: Would you comment on the effect of the Berlin wall on the Communists in various countries?

DR. KARSKI: Only from the press, of course. As far as I gathered, it is a rather embarrassing problem, which of course they try to get away with and try to explain. As you know, one explanation is that they don't want the unpleasant elements to come to East Germany--not vice versa. The wall is there because they don't want any more CIA agents going to the East. This is the true reason. They try to get away with it because it is embarrassing. To what degree it is embarrassing, it is difficult to judge. It is generally an embarrassing problem as far as I understand it, for the world Communists.

COLONEL LEOCHA: Dr. Karski, on behalf of the Commandant and the student body, thank you very much for a very interesting lecture.