

# Two Superpowers: Equally Enemies of World's People

In the last issue of *Revolution*, in the article "On the Three Worlds and the International Situation," the rulers of the two superpowers, the U.S. and the USSR, are referred to as being "to the same degree and the same extent the main enemies of the world's people." Grasping this is essential for making sense of the situation in the world today, and for developing revolutionary strategy and tactics in different countries.

Why did the article use this expression, which is drawn from Enver Hoxha's report last November to the Seventh Congress of the Party of Labor of Albania? The reason is simple—it states emphatically that the two superpowers are *equally* the enemies of the international proletariat and the people of the world and that *together* they comprise the main target of the international united front against imperialism in this period.

What gives the U.S. and the USSR superpower status in the first place is the fact that "no other imperialist power is strong enough to contend as an equal with either superpower, especially in forming blocs for the purpose of world domination." ("World War: The Correct Stand Is a Class Question," reprinted in *War and Revolution*, p. 13) They are contending for the throne of chief exploiter and oppressor of the world's people, using their vast military, economic and political power to "oppress a whole number of nations and enmesh them in dependence on finance capital." (Lenin, "A Caricature of Marxism," *CW*, Vol. 23, p. 34) Each is driven by the laws of capitalism not only to seek hegemony over more and more of the world but to try and destroy its rival for that hegemony. For the rulers of lesser imperialist powers, alignment within the bloc of one of the two superpowers is the most feasible route to expanding their own empires, even though this drive also puts them in contradiction with the superpowers to an extent. As things continue to develop toward world war, especially war centered in Europe, most of them will be forced to line up in the bloc of one or another of the superpowers.

## Soviets Overall on Offensive

The fact that the U.S. and USSR are equally the main enemies of the world's people does not deny their steadily escalating rivalry for world domination nor the very different "strengths and weaknesses" they possess as imperialist powers. Like all social phenomena, the rivalry between imperialist powers is subject to the law of uneven development. The Soviet Union, seized from the proletariat by a new capitalist class within the last quarter century, is the newcomer at the imperialist feast and as such has to take the offensive to seize a larger sphere of influence. The U.S., long an imperialist giant, is on the decline from its post-World War 2 position as indisputable kingpin of the imperialist world and as such is seeking principally to defend what it has already grabbed. And, of course, their "uneven" paths have given the superpowers certain different characteristics, which are important to analyze and understand—the U.S. has a stronger, more stable economy, the USSR a more centralized state apparatus, the U.S. has more developed and wealthier allies, the USSR a socialist cover and a better organized fifth column in its rival's camp, and so on.

The fact that the Soviet Union is the up and coming expansive imperialist power, even the fact that it is more likely that an interimperialist war will break out with a Soviet attack, does not make it a greater enemy on a world scale or the cause of a future imperialist war. The same law of uneven development was operating, for instance, before World War 1. Lenin noted that Germany was the "younger and stronger robber" out "to rob the older and overgorged robbers," but he fought strenuously against the line that there was a single main enemy of the world's people.

The present situation, with the Soviet Union grown strong enough as an imperialist superpower to go one on one with the U.S., is similar to that between the first and second world wars, described by Stalin in his reply to the discussion at the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern:

"Can it be said that the diminishing difference in the levels of development of the capitalist countries and the increased levelling of these countries weaken the action of the law of uneven development under imperialism? No, it cannot. Does the difference in the levels of development increase or diminish? It undoubtedly diminishes. Does the degree of levelling grow or decline? It certainly grows. Is there not a contradiction between



In the last few years the growing revolutionary struggle of the Ethiopian people has come face to face with first one, then the other superpower as the dominant imperialism in their country and the main backer of their reactionary rulers. To underestimate the danger either the U.S. or the Soviet Union poses to the world's people is a grave mistake.

the growth of levelling and increasing unevenness of development under imperialism? No, there is not. On the contrary, levelling is the background and the basis which makes the increasing unevenness of development under imperialism possible. Only people who, like our oppositionists, do not understand the economic essence of imperialism can counterpose levelling to the law of uneven development under imperialism. It is precisely because the lagging countries accelerate their development and tend to become level with the foremost countries that the struggle between countries to outstrip one another becomes more acute; it is precisely this that creates the possibility for some countries to outstrip others and oust them from the markets, thereby creating the preconditions for military conflicts, for the weakening of the capitalist world front and for the breaching of this front by the proletarians of different capitalist countries. He who does not understand this simple matter, understands nothing about the economic essence of monopoly capitalism." (*On the Opposition*, FLP, Peking, pp. 613-614)

The unevenness of development between the U.S. and the USSR has led to a situation where these two superpowers now are equally enemies of the world's people. The slicing of the imperialist pie which followed World War 2 no longer reflects the actual situation in the world. The contradiction between this division and the uneven development that has actually taken place since can only be resolved by a new war to redivide the world—unless the contradiction itself is resolved by the overthrow by the proletariat and its allies of the imperialist rulers of the United States and the Soviet Union.

## Analyze Particularities

Related to the question of uneven development is the fact that the existence of two main enemies on a world scale has different particularities in different countries. As emphasized in the article in last month's *Revolution*, "revolution is waged and won country by country," and the proletariat's party in every country must analyze what the target of its struggle is and how to strike at that target. And this analysis cannot be correct unless it is made taking into account the overall world situation. In one or the other of the superpowers, the target is obviously the ruling class of that country. In lesser imperialist states of Europe, Japan, Australia, and so on (also called the Second World), the general situation is that the working class has to focus on the overthrow of "its own" monopoly capitalist class and as one part of this task, while opposing both the U.S. and USSR, place particular emphasis on opposing that superpower with which the ruling class is aligned.

In the numerous developing countries of the Third World, the struggle against the superpowers takes a number of different forms, and foreign imperialist powers often present themselves as the main and immediate enemy of the revolutionary struggle. For example, in Angola, the masses cannot win victory without

driving out the New Czars and their Cuban triggermen while in south Korea, it is the U.S. which imposes the vicious Pak Jung Hi puppet regime on the country. Thus, while it is necessary to oppose and beware of both superpowers, the particularities frequently call for concentrating against one or the other.

This is the case even with the People's Republic of China, which is a country of the Third World but also a socialist state under the rule of the working class. While this means China is not oppressed by imperialism or enmeshed in dependence on finance capital, it also means that the rulers of both superpowers have an implacable hatred for and deeply rooted fear of what New China represents and would like to see it destroyed. But in today's world it is the Soviet Union which poses the greatest threat to China for a variety of reasons—geographical proximity, the defeats inflicted on U.S. imperialism in Asia, China's exposure by propaganda and by example of the New Czars' socialist cover, the USSR's overall position of being on the offensive, etc. As the RCP has repeatedly emphasized, it is both correct and necessary for the Chinese government, the proletariat in power, to focus more of its attention on the greater menace—to China—of the Soviet Union while supporting and building the struggle of the world's people against both superpowers.

## CP(ML)'s Self-Exposing Tricks

To further clarify the importance of understanding why the superpowers are both together the heart of the target of the international united front against imperialism, it is instructive to turn to the "Communist Party (ML)," as the October League has taken to billing itself. Happily, the mutation seems to have preserved intact the OL's valuable role as teacher by negative example.

Recent articles in the *Call* and *Class Struggle* have seen the CP(ML)'s theoretical wizards directing a number of new spells and incantations at the correct analysis outlined above. The brunt of their argument is attributing to the RCP a "theory of equilibrium"—the quotation marks presumably aimed at duping readers into believing this is some kind of quote from the RCP.

They object strenuously to the "same extent and same degree" formulation and our analysis of this question because it exposes their familiar nonsense about

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## Revolution

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# Superpowers...

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how the Soviet Union is much more dangerous than the U.S., should be the target of the American working class' "main blow internationally" etc. For people who consider themselves revolutionaries in one of the two greatest imperialist oppressors of the world's people to take up this line is, as the RCP has pointed out in the past, a disgraceful exercise in social-chauvinism and class collaboration. Now the CP(ML) has tried to counterattack. They are out to prove that the RCP's position is "mechanical materialism" and that it presents a picture of the two superpowers as being "exactly the same" and in a state of "equilibrium," thus denying uneven development.

The *Class Struggle* article (No. 7, Spring 1977), authored by E. Klehr, commences its case by taking an article in the April *Revolution* which describes how the "rough parity" in military might between the two superpowers both feeds and is a clear sign of their increasing drive toward war. The author never answers this article, other than to say that the USSR has armed at a faster rate than the U.S. in recent years—a point the piece in *Revolution* also makes.

What the *Class Struggle* article does is to extrapolate from the RCP's position on the arms race that the Party believes "the two superpowers stand equal in the world today, exactly equal in most respects and perfectly counterbalanced in their strengths and weaknesses." Words like "exactly equal" and "perfectly counterbalanced" are inserted to give the ring of idealist metaphysics to the correct analysis of this question.

E. Klehr then goes on to assert that "the RCP fails to tie the question of the inevitability of imperialist war to the uneven development among the imperialist powers." Who is this supposed to fool? In the writings of the Party on the international situation—and those of the Revolutionary Union before it—this point is made repeatedly. See, for example, *How Capitalism Has Been Restored in the Soviet Union and What This Means for the World Struggle*, published in 1974, which also contains a *Marxist-Leninist* criticism of the theory of equilibrium, or the *Revolution* articles from 1975 and 1976 reprinted in the *War and Revolution* pamphlet.

More serious than the CP(ML)'s dishonesty, however, is the blind stupidity its own opportunism has produced. The author next quotes Stalin's comments to the ECCI cited earlier in this article! Stalin's point, as it happens, refutes their position entirely. The picture he paints of "levelling" describes the current situation with the USSR forging ahead to challenge its declining rival on every front. It is the CP(ML) who like the opportunists of Stalin's day "counterpose levelling to the law of uneven development under imperialism," (italics ours) by denying that the two superpowers can be the target of the world's people to the same extent.

In fact, the CP(ML) missed, or chose to omit, a section in Stalin's comments only a few lines later which explains why the present situation is not merely a momentary or accidental one. Stalin points out that in the age of imperialism an imperialist power cannot "overtake and then outstrip others economically," that is, as an imperialist power, "in an evolutionary way, so to speak, without spasmodic leaps, without catastrophic wars, and without redivision of the already divided world." (p. 614, italics Stalin's) Here Stalin is talking about the nature of the contradiction between imperialist powers and pointing out that only by a qualitative leap can the rising power defeat and supplant the declining one.

In other words, short of some immense change or upheaval in the international situation, only an inter-imperialist war can resolve this contradiction—and then only temporarily. Moreover, even the outbreak of such a war would not change the fact that the superpowers are in the same degree enemies of the people of the world, but would in fact confirm it. Certainly a new world war will differ in many respects from those that preceded it and it is not the job of Marxist-Leninists to predict exactly how things will develop. For example, the involvement in such a new world war of the People's Republic of China could change the overall character of the war, as happened in World War 2 after the invasion of the USSR.

If one superpower were to win a decisive victory in an inter-imperialist war—and successfully avoided revolution within its own borders—it might for a time assume the domination of an imperialist world—whose size, as after previous world wars, would certainly be diminished by the seizure of power by the proletariat and its allies in a number of countries. And inevitably in accordance with the law of uneven development new imperialists would rise to challenge its hegemony, a spiral which will only be broken by the victory of socialism on a world scale, which will be won through whatever stages are required country by country. It is the very existence of imperialism and the laws which govern it that are the source of war in today's world.

Thus, the CP(ML)'s concoction of the nonexistent RCP "theory of equilibrium" hasn't helped them dis-

credit the correct line or erect a defense for their own erroneous line. Previous articles in *Revolution* have repeatedly exposed this position as one that is essentially class collaborationist. While paying lip service to the fact that the two superpowers are the main enemies of the world's people, they do everything in their power to portray the USSR as the "real" main enemy and let the U.S. ruling class off the hook.

## CP(ML) "Opposes" U.S.—For Appeasement

One way this position comes up in practice is the CP(ML)'s main criticism of the U.S. bourgeoisie's role in superpower contention. This criticism is that the dominant wing of the U.S. ruling class and government is carrying out an all-around policy of "appeasement" towards the Soviet Union, thus strengthening the New Czars and hastening the outbreak of world war.

The classic case of appeasement is, of course, the policy of the French and British imperialists in the last half of the 1930s, culminating in the turning over of Czechoslovakia to Nazi Germany at the Munich Conference in 1938. Their policy was to make such concessions to German imperialism as would direct its expansionist thrust eastward and, they hoped, lead Germany into armed conflict with the then socialist Soviet Union, while the Western European bourgeoisies could sit things out unscathed.

The CP(ML) does not make clear what they think the parallel with the present situation is. The main thrust of current U.S. policy towards the Soviet Union is not one of pushing it towards war with socialist China, and even the CP(ML) does not have the nerve to try and "fight appeasement" in the name of protecting China. Like the USSR, the U.S. knows that the focus of superpower contention is in Europe and it has shown no signs of making "ever-greater concessions" to its rivals, territorial or otherwise. In fact, U.S. policy around the world has been to contend ever more strenuously with their Soviet counterparts, whether it be in the field of propaganda around "human rights," or political maneuvering as in southern Africa or the Middle East, or of military preparations like the escalating rate at which new weapons systems designed for world war with the USSR are being developed.

What are the results of a line that claims the main aspect of U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union is appeasement? They can be glimpsed in a recent and somewhat schizophrenic editorial in the *Call* on why Carter decided not to go ahead with production of the B-1 bomber. On the one hand, the piece discards the idea that the B-1's high price tag was the problem, asserting "the \$94 billion, however, will undoubtedly find its way into other highly profitable military programs as the U.S. continues to build its arsenal to match the Soviet Union's."

On the other hand, the piece turns around and describes the decision "in line with other appeasement policies" and asserts that it gives the Soviet Union "yet another military advantage over the U.S." Is this supposed to be the reason Carter dumped the B-1? The article thus not only leaves the reader unclear on why the B-1 was tabled, but with its insistence that such "appeasement only hastens the pace of the opponent's aggression," leaves unclear whether the CP(ML) in fact opposes the building of the B-1 or favors it as a way to delay the onslaught of war.

The logic of the CP(ML)'s line, which they dare not admit, nonetheless leads them inexorably to open collaboration with their own bourgeoisie in the name of helping the international proletariat and its allies defeat

their "most dangerous" enemy. This is poison enough in the U.S., but they have the nerve to preach that revolutionaries in other countries, where the situation is even more volatile and complex, should take up their stand, irregardless of the particularities of their situation, and deliver their "main blow internationally" to the "main danger" the Soviet Union. This, from those whose special task should be the exposure, the crippling and the overthrow of the U.S. ruling class!

A final example of the importance of grasping that the U.S. and USSR are the enemies of the world's people to an equal extent is provided by recent events in Ethiopia. For years the dominant imperialist power in the country was the United States, which backed both feudal emperor Haile Selassie and the *derg*, the "revolutionary" military junta which replaced him, seizing power a few years ago during a great upsurge of struggle by the Ethiopian and Eritrean masses. To have portrayed the U.S. as the main enemy of the world's people, as do centrists like the *Guardian*, would have made it impossible to predict or understand the *derg's* recent switching of superpower masters to the Soviet Union, which has replaced the U.S. as sponsor of the *derg's* desperate efforts to crush the Eritrean rebellion and the struggle of the Ethiopian people.

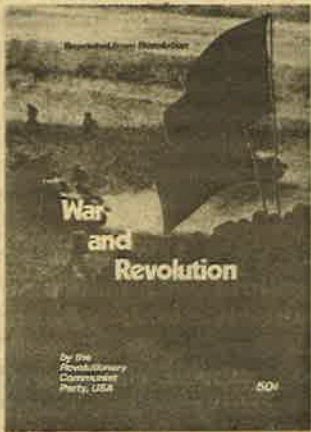
To conclude from this, however, that the Soviet Union is the main enemy of or main danger to the world's people would be an equally serious error. Leaving aside U.S. attempts to use the Soviet Union's Ethiopian commitment as a lever to dislodge its other holds in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, the U.S. is also not resigned to the loss of Ethiopia. Together with a number of European powers, it is trying to find puppets in and seeking to influence the Eritrean movement, and to try and turn the revolutionary sentiments and struggle of the Ethiopian masses to its advantage, is bankrolling the phoney Ethiopian Democratic Union, a landlord-led guerrilla movement which controls sections of the Ethiopian countryside. With the *derg* increasingly shaky and revolutionary ferment growing, the United States and the Soviet Union represent a rock and whirlpool past both of which the Eritrean and Ethiopian masses must navigate in order to win victory in their struggle.

Revolution is made and won country by country and it is the task of revolutionaries in every country to develop a strategy which can lead the masses to victory. Such a strategy cannot be developed without a correct analysis of the international situation and the struggle of the masses on a world scale.

The CP(ML) can come up with a dozen reasons why the enemy of its own bourgeoisie should be the main target—the USSR is on the rise, it's more likely to be the one which shoots first in a new war and so on. And of course there are those who will hold up the opposite pole of the same idiocy, equally sham Marxist-Leninists like the *Guardian* centrists who will come up with a dozen reasons for letting the Soviet Union off the hook—the U.S. is still the dominant imperialist power in the world, it is the biggest backer of outlaw regimes like Israel and South Africa and so forth.

The fact remains that what the working class and its allies, in the U.S. and worldwide, need is dialectics and concrete class analysis of conditions internationally and in each country. That analysis tells us that on a world scale there are two main enemies of the masses of people and to underestimate either one in the slightest degree is a mistake of the gravest proportions. ■

## War and Revolution



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The international situation today is marked by rapid change and great turmoil. It is crucial for the working class to grasp the essence of this situation, to create clarity out of confusion on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought and turn the turmoil to its greatest advantage in order to advance its struggle worldwide toward the goal of revolution and socialism. This pamphlet presents seven important articles from *Revolution* on the key question of war and revolution.

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# Arms...

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defensive strategic posture; neutron warheads, if they are approved by Carter, will dramatically improve the ability of NATO to defend Western Europe from a Soviet attack, and even offer a greater possibility of a successful counterattack to "liberate" Eastern Europe. Each such improvement by the U.S. will be met by an attempt to counter it by the Soviet Union, each such improvement by the Soviet Union will attempt to be countered by the U.S., this is a necessary part of their rivalry for world domination.

An object of a war between the two superpowers and their blocs, besides victory, is the successful protection of their own means of production. If Western Europe and the U.S. lose their cities in a general nuclear exchange, any victory at the front lines would be very hollow, indeed, no matter how bad off the Soviet Union was. The two new U.S. weapons are perfectly suited to this kind of protection. Neutron warheads over West Germany, or East Germany should NATO move to "liberate" parts of the Soviet empire, will keep the prize intact. Cruise missiles, with their increased first strike capability, offer them the hope of catching Soviet missiles in their silos, saving the U.S. capitalists' factories, or, at least, more than previously could be hoped for.

Despite the hue and cry about "defense" and "going slow in arms production" the neutron bomb and B-1 decisions are clear exposures of the escalating imperialist war preparations of both the U.S. and USSR. ■