

REPORTS ON THE DIALECTICS SECTION

of the National Joint Study (NJS)

on the Hoxha-Mao Differences

by ex-MLC<sup>1</sup> and A. Green<sup>2</sup>

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INTRODUCTION

Until recently, both Mao Tsetung and Enver Hoxha were looked to as leaders of the foremost Marxist-Leninist parties. Now, following Mao's death in 1976, revisionist elements in the Chinese Communist Party have captured the party and set China on the capitalist road. Within the last 18 months, Hoxha has launched a virulent attack on Mao and the CPC<sup>3</sup>, repudiating the PLA's own past evaluation of Mao and the CPC<sup>4</sup>, claiming that Mao was a revisionist, that socialism was never achieved in China and that the CPC was never a Marxist-Leninist party. The criticisms by Hoxha and the PLA have initiated a major struggle in the international communist movement about the relative contributions and errors of both Mao and Hoxha. Further splits in an already splintered "anti-revisionist" movement continue to take place.

Consequently, a study was organized in the summer of 1979 by several groups in the U. S. called the National Joint Study (for lack of a better name-- groups participated from several areas of the U. S.). Its purpose is to evaluate some of the PLA's criticisms of Mao and the CPC, and the implications of these criticisms, as well as to strengthen our grasp of the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism which underlie these differences.

The study is in three areas, each to take 3-4 months: I) dialectics, II) the dictatorship of the proletariat, and III) the communist party. The questions in these three areas, especially concerning the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the role and functioning of the communist party, are at the heart of a lot of the differences between the PLA and the CPC. The section on dialectics would address not only the criticisms by Hoxha, but also serve to ground us more thoroughly in understanding dialectics.

This study will allow us to continue to situate ourselves in the international and U. S. anti-revisionist movement. We see reaching clarity and unity on these issues to be an integral part of building a Marxist-Leninist party in the United States.

The points of unity to participate in the study are included on a separate page following the Introduction.

Although a set of questions was drawn up to guide the study, groups had considerable flexibility in deciding exactly what topics to go into in depth in each area.

ex-MLC and A. Green, two small circles in the San Francisco bay area, undertook the study jointly, and have reached unity on the reports enclosed, which are the results of the section on dialectics. (Two contacts of ex-MLC

also participated in the study.)

The reports enclosed include:

- (1) The Basic Law of Dialectics,
- (2) Mao's Understanding of Dialectics,
- (3) Principles and Compromises (includes "Extracts from Lenin" on this topic),
- (4) The CPC and PLA in the Struggle Against Modern Revisionism,
- (5) The Principal Contradiction, and
- (6) The Principal Contradiction in the World and the Views of the CPC and PLA.

Reports (1), (3) and (5) are background reports, that is, for the most part they are not directly tied to Hoxha's criticisms of Mao and the CPC. We felt, however, that understanding these areas was crucial to understanding the more "immediate" issues. Report (2) focuses on Hoxha's criticisms of Mao's understanding of dialectical development (especially of contradiction) as well as Hoxha's method of criticism in this passage of Imperialism and the Revolution. Report (4) applies our understanding of the relationship of principles and compromises to specific criticisms Hoxha raises of Mao and the CPC in the struggle against modern revisionism (1954-1964). Report (6) focuses on an understanding of the international situation in terms of the four main contradictions and the principal contradiction, and on the CPC's and PLA's analyses of the international situation.

The specific question addressed (from the NJS study questions) is included at the beginning of most of the reports.

For the most part, the reports represent the views of both groups. Where unity could not be reached, whether because of specific differences or because of as yet insufficient study, the second opinion is indicated in a footnote.

So far in the areas studied, we have not agreed with the extent or the strength of Hoxha's criticism; often the criticisms have been incorrect. In the areas we have studied so far, any errors Mao made we see as being very much secondary to his strengths. However, there are important areas to be taken up, in both the sections on the dictatorship of the proletariat and on the communist party where we have more substantial criticism of Mao and the CPC: for example, some of us have criticisms of the CPC's handling of the national bourgeoisie, and all of us of the CPC's cadre policy (organizational leniency in regard to purging).

Although we recognize that the PLA played a leading role internationally in the struggle against the theory of three worlds, and we recognize the dictatorship of the proletariat in Albania, we have reservations and questions about the PLA as a result of our study of Imperialism and the Revolution and Reflections on China as well as other recent actions by the PLA; therefore, part of the goal of this study is further evaluation of the PLA.

## Footnotes

1. ex-MLC is a group of former members of the Marxist-Leninist Collective, a Bay Area communist group. We resigned from the MLC in June, 1979, because of political differences regarding the circle's past and future tasks. Those interested in more particulars of this struggle, as well as the history of the MLC and some of our political documents can write to us at: Boxholder, PO Box 40893, San Francisco, CA 94140.
  
2. A. Green is a small group of Marxist-Leninists in the San Francisco bay area attempting to contribute to the development of a genuine working-class party in this country. Some individuals in A. Green co-authored the book On the Roots of Revisionism, before the formation of A. Green, with others who are not in A. Green. The book may be ordered through the address given in the paper titled, "Principles and Compromises", (footnote 6, p33). All correspondence to A. Green should be sent to: A. Green, PO Box 40606, San Francisco, CA 94140.
  
3. The three main documents by the PLA attacking Mao and the Chinese revolution are:
  - a) "Letter of the CC of the Party of Labour and the Government of Albania to the CC of the Communist Party and the Government of China" (July 29, 1978), reprinted in the pamphlet by the Chicago Committee for a Communist Party and Former Members of Committee for a Proletarian Party, entitled, "The PLA's Treacherous Reversal: An Analysis of the PLA letter", (Boxholder, PO Box 8147, San Diego, CA 92102).
  - b) Hoxha, Enver, Imperialism and the Revolution, reprinted by COUSM-L (now the Marxist-Leninist Party) in Proletarian Internationalism, vol.1 no.2, February 1979 (Boxholder, PO Box 11942, Ft. Dearborn Stn., Chicago, IL 60611).
  - c) Hoxha, Enver, Reflections on China, reprinted in Proletarian Internationalism, vol. 1, no. 4, July 1979 and no. 5, August 1979.
  
4. For a thorough documentation of the PLA's reversal of their previous assessment of Mao and the CPC, see "On the Historical Merit..." and "The PLA's Treacherous Reversal..." (see footnote 3), especially pp 37-43.



National Joint Study (NJS)

POINTS OF UNITY

1. We strive to uphold the science of Marxism-Leninism and recognize Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin as great Marxist-Leninists who have developed this science. We agree to struggle over the contributions and errors of Mao and Hoxha, which is one of the main purposes of this study.

Groups hold differing views of other participating groups, but we unite in excluding from this study those forces which have consolidated positions against (in contradiction with) one or more of the fundamental theses of Marxism-Leninism as developed by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.\* It is understood that we exclude police agents, disrupters, etc.

2. All forms of revisionism and opportunism are irreconcilably hostile to the class interests of the international proletariat and must be combatted and defeated. The main international revisionist trends are: Soviet revisionism (and capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union, which is social-imperialist); Chinese revisionism (and the "theory of three worlds" is counterrevolutionary); Yugoslav revisionism; Euro-communism; Social-Democracy; Trotskyism.

3. Contradictions among comrades are to be resolved through ideological and political struggle, Bolshevik criticism and self-criticism and transformation in practice, in order to unite on a principled basis around line and practice, and achieve higher communist organizational forms of unity.

4. There is no genuine M-L party of the U.S. proletariat, or genuine M-L center in the U.S. communist movement, and party building is the central task of all U.S. M-L's and advanced workers. Theoretical work is principal in this period where we lack considerable M-L theory to guide practice, and practical work must be carried out simultaneously, in indissoluble connection with theory. M-L theory is needed to guide practice, and practice in turn serves to further develop theory.

5. All groups and individuals participating in the study agree to

- a. commit enough time and resources to adequately take up the study material that is developed and do the study consistently;
- b. develop and circulate a position paper and an evaluation of the study at the end of each major topic in accordance with the deadline;
- c. share the results of additional research and study related to the Hoxha-Mao differences that the group may do.

\*Note: The errors of such groups are a reflection of the main revisionist trends listed in POU#2. There is a time and place to struggle with the groups described above, but their inclusion in the study would bring about a diversion of our focus and energies, a backpedalling in terms of the lines of demarcation which the world communist movement has drawn. In view of the tiny size of our forces and the magnitude of our tasks, inclusion of such groups in the study would be a mistake.

### THE BASIC LAW OF DIALECTICS

Question: Does Mao reject Engels' three laws and claim there is only one (the unity and struggle of opposites)? If so, is Mao correct or was Engels?

Engels, in Dialectics of Nature, (hereafter referred to as "Nature") describes the three laws of dialectics in this manner:

It is, therefore, from the history of nature and human society that the laws of dialectics are abstracted. For they are nothing but the most general laws of these two aspects of historical development, as well as thought itself. And indeed they can be reduced in the main to three: the law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa, the law of the interpenetration of opposites, and the law of the negation of the negation.<sup>1</sup>

Engels seems to give equal importance to these three laws. At least, he doesn't state that one is more important than the others. After describing the three laws in Nature, Engels goes on to explain only one in detail--the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa. In Anti-Duhring, Engels devotes a chapter each to quantity and quality and the negation of the negation, but not to the unity and struggle of opposites. Of course, as this was a polemic against Duhring, it may be that Duhring either didn't take up unity and struggle or else didn't make any significant errors in this regard. Nevertheless, it seems fair to conclude that Engels thinks of the laws as being of equal importance.

Mao's position, as stated in "Talks On Questions of Philosophy" (hereafter referred to as "Talks"), is:

Engels talked about the three categories, but as for me I don't believe in two of those categories. (The unity of opposites is the most basic law, the transformation of quality and quantity into one another is the unity of opposites quality and quantity, and the negation of the negation does not exist at all.)<sup>2</sup>

This position is consistent with his usage in "On Contradiction", where he states, "The law of contradictions in things, that is, the law of the unity of opposites, is the basic law of materialist dialectics."<sup>3</sup> Here, though, there is a subtle distinction. Although he says that the unity of opposites is the basic law, he doesn't take a position as to the existence of the other two. He does, however, consistently speak of one law. From these statements of Mao, it seems fair to conclude three things: the unity of opposites is the basic law of dialectics; the transformation of quantity and quality may or not be a law, but is in any case subordinate to unity and struggle; the negation of the negation doesn't exist at all.

In "Talks", Mao goes on to say that, "The juxtaposition, on the same level, of the transformation of quality and quantity into one another, the

negation of the negation and the law of the unity of opposites is 'triplism' not monism." (p 226) What Mao is saying here is that even if he were to concede the existence of the negation of the negation (he doesn't), it would be incorrect to give equal importance to the three laws.

Lenin, in his "Conspectus of Hegel's Science of Logic", says, "In brief, dialectics can be defined as the doctrine of the unity of opposites. This embodies the essence of dialectics, but it requires explanation and development."<sup>4</sup> (hereafter, Lenin's writings are referred to as LCW). Engels himself says in his notes for the Dialectics of Nature:

Dialectical logic, in contrast to the old merely formal logic, is not like the latter, content with enumerating the forms of motion of thought, i.e. the various forms of judgement and conclusion, and placing them side by side without any connection. On the contrary, it derives these forms out of one another, it makes one subordinate to another instead of putting them on an equal level, it develops the higher forms out of the lower. (Nature, p 237)

I feel that Engels was in error insofar as he gave equal weight to the three laws.<sup>5</sup> In his defense, it might be stated that on the page following the description of the three laws in Nature he says:

We are not concerned here with writing a handbook of dialectics, but only with showing that the dialectical laws are really laws of development of nature and therefore are valid also for theoretical natural science. Hence we cannot go into the inner interconnection of these laws with one another. (Nature, p 27)

When Mao explained, in "Talks", that the transformation of quantity and quality into one another is the unity of the opposites quantity and quality, he correctly demonstrated that the one law was subordinate to the other. He did not intend to imply that the transformation of quality into quantity was not a law in the sense of being universally applicable. A careful reading of "On Contradiction" reveals that Mao did think this law could be applied to all phenomena in nature, society, and thought. He says in "On Contradiction":

There are two states of motion in all things, that of relative rest and conspicuous change. Both are caused by the struggle between the two contradictory elements contained in a thing. When the thing is in the first state of motion, it is undergoing only quantitative and not qualitative change and consequently presents the outward appearance of being at rest. When the thing is in the second state of motion, the quantitative change of the first state has already reached a culmination point and gives rise to the dissolution of the thing as an entity and thereupon a qualitative change ensues, hence the appearance of a conspicuous change. (p 67)

Thus we can see that the law of the transformation of quality into quantity and vice versa is a law of dialectics in the sense that it applies to all phenomena. Mao was correct to point out that it is an example of the unity and struggle of opposites and therefore subordinate to it.

In "Talks", Mao says that the "negation of the negation doesn't exist at all" (p 226). He goes on to say "there is no such thing as the negation of the negation." This seems very different from his position on quantity and quality. He isn't saying it's a law, but a less important one--he says that it doesn't exist at all. It seems clear that Mao doesn't think that the negation of the negation is a concept that can be applied to all phenomena. Does this mean that he also rejects the specific examples of the negation of the negation that are cited by Marx, Engels, and Lenin?<sup>6</sup> At the very least, we have to be critical of Mao for not being clear on this point. If he is rejecting the specific examples cited by other great teachers of Marxism, he should have explained specifically where they were in error. If, on the other hand, he is rejecting the negation of the negation as a universal law, he could have been much clearer.

It might be useful to devote some time to an elementary discussion of what the negation of the negation is and how it operates. We know that the development of a process or thing is carried out by means of and as a result of the unity and struggle of opposite forces or tendencies within that process or thing. Because of the struggle of these polar opposites, there exists a strong tendency for the thing or process to change itself into its opposite. If this procedure is allowed to continue without outside interference, it is easy to see how the so called "Hegelian triad" of thesis, anti-thesis, synthesis or affirmation, negation, negation of the negation could develop. In this sort of development (+, -, +), the third stage would be similar to the first.

Unfortunately, in the real world things are not so simple. In the first place, no process develops absolutely unaffected by exterior events. Secondly, we need to consider--how is the third stage similar to the first? Surely, we don't mean to imply that they are identical, as this would mean that we are talking about a circular, or metaphysical, pattern of development.

When we talk about this relationship of stages in a process, what we are really referring to is the relationship of the new to the old. We know that in analyzing this transition from one stage to another in a given process of development some elements of the old remain--else why would we think it necessary to study things historically, in their development? We also know that in this process some new things appear--else why would we refer to the new stage as qualitatively different from the old? How does this happen? Here we see how dialectical negation is different from ordinary negation. Dialectical negation involves not just the destruction or elimination of a stage in the process of development, but also the simultaneous creation of a new one. In the course of dialectical negation, that which no longer corresponds to the new conditions of existence disappears--that which does is retained and further developed in the new conditions. These "new conditions" are not mainly the result of exterior causes, but are generated primarily by the particular development of the unity and struggle of opposites in the process itself, and secondarily by the interrelationship of the given process of development with other processes that are occurring simultaneously. Of course, the precise relationship of the new to the old can only be determined by studying the concrete situation of any particular process. Lenin described this concept of dialectical negation as:



Not empty negation, not futile negation, not sceptical negation, vacillation and doubt is characteristic and essential in dialectics, --which undoubtedly contains the element of negation and indeed as its most important element--no, but negation as a moment of connection, as a moment of development, retaining the positive, i.e., without any vacillations, without any eclecticism. (LCW, 38.225)

Dialectical negation can be seen in the transition from one stage to a qualitatively different one in a process of development.

The other problem we mentioned earlier is that no process develops in a vacuum. In the real world, a process or thing must be studied in terms of "the entire totality of the manifold relations of this thing to others." (LCW, 38.220) Exterior events can interfere with and alter the pattern of development that would ordinarily occur in their absence. For example, in Engels' barley example the grain can be ground up and the process of development comes to a halt. But exterior events can also influence the development of a process in more subtle, less obvious ways.

Often in a complex process of development, a stage does not transform itself into its direct opposite. It turns into a new stage which is qualitatively different from the previous one but is not its opposite (or perhaps only relatively its opposite). It may require a number of these qualitatively different stages before an opposite stage emerges. For instance in the development of class society, primitive communism is negated by slavery which is a form of class society, but three intermediate, qualitatively different stages (feudalism, capitalism, and socialism) occur before the final opposite, communism, appears. Thus we can see that the number of stages necessary to accomplish the negation of the negation can vary. This variance is caused by the relative complexity of the process and the number of simultaneously occurring processes that influence the pattern of development.

If the negation of the negation occurs only when a truly opposite<sup>7</sup> stage develops, how do we distinguish it from the concept of dialectical negation which we discussed earlier and which we asserted may be seen in the transition of every stage of development into a qualitatively different one? The negation of the negation is a subset of the larger set dialectical negation. Negation of the negation may be seen when the underlying contradiction of the process as a whole is resolved and the "apparent return of the old" (LCW, 38.222) can be observed.

Again, the degree to which the final stage approximates the initial one varies greatly from case to case, and is a function of the relative complexity of the case under scrutiny. In a simple example, such as plant, seed, plant, the second plant is quite similar to the first. It is, of course, somewhat different as well, having grown under different conditions, etc. In a complex example, such as primitive communism, class society, advanced communism, advanced communism is quite different from primitive communism, and the "apparent return of the old" is more formal than real. It was this form of spiral development that Lenin noted when he elaborated the essence of this concept as:

A development that repeats, as it were, stages that have already been passed, but repeats them in a different way, on a higher basis

("the negation of the negation"), a development, so to speak, that proceeds in spirals, not in a straight line... (LCW 21.54)

One of the difficulties in looking at the negation of the negation as a law is that just as we can see situations where the negation of the negation appears as the outcome of a process of development, we can also think of plenty where it does not. When Engels describes the negation of the negation as a law of dialectics, does he mean to imply that it is the inevitable outcome of all contradictions? I think not. Engels describes it as "an extremely general ... law of development of nature, history, and thought."<sup>8</sup> Note he says extremely general, not absolutely general. If we look more closely at the famous barley example, we can see what Engels was getting at. He says:

Negation in dialectics does not mean simply saying no, or declaring that something does not exist, or destroying it in any way one likes ... the kind of negation is here determined firstly, by the general, and, secondly, by the particular nature of the process. I should not only negate, but also in turn sublimate the negation. I must therefore set up the first negation in such a way that the second remains or becomes possible. In what way? According to the particular nature of each individual case. If I grind a grain of barley, if I crush an insect, it is true that I have carried out the first act, but have made the second act impossible. (Anti-Duhring, p 181)

Here, Engels admits that the negation of the negation is not the inevitable outcome of every contradiction. The barley grain can be ground up and the negation of the negation does not come into being. Even if we look at the beginning of the example, Engels says "if such a grain of barley meets with conditions which are normal for it, if it falls on suitable soil, etc..." (Anti-Duhring, p 172) So from the very beginning, the possibility of an outcome other than the negation of the negation existed. I think what Engels is saying here is that the internal contradiction of a thing creates the basis for the negation of the negation but the appropriate exterior conditions are required as well. We could describe the negation of the negation as conditional (conditional as opposed to absolute). Some kind of negation is inevitable, but the negation of the negation requires specific conditions. From this, we conclude that the negation of the negation is a law in a different sense than the other two we've discussed. It occurs in processes where a step by step development leading to resolution of the underlying contradiction can be seen.

Clearly in Engels' sense of the word, "development" doesn't mean merely a change of form or even the change from one stage to a qualitatively different one. If the barley grain is ground up or an insect crushed, the form has changed but the negation of the negation has not occurred. Engels means progressive development. Lenin, in his article "Karl Marx", refers to dialectics as an "uninterrupted process of becoming and passing away, of endless ascendancy from the lower to the higher." (LCW 21.54) The implication clearly is that development is by definition progressive. Marx, Engels, and Lenin, to some extent, were all affected by the enormously influential notion of progress in many branches of learning in the 19th century. We are left with what, in our opinion, is a bias by Marx and Engels towards viewing development as progress. It's true, examples can be found in which they mention setbacks, but the main thrust of their thinking is influenced by the idea of progress.

If we reject, at least tentatively, the idea that all processes of development, if uninterrupted, do give rise to a progressive development--that was Engels' view: "Therefore, every kind of thing has its characteristic way of being negated, of being negated in such a way that it gives rise to a development..." (Anti-Duhring, p 181)--we are left with the problem, what exactly is the range of application of the negation of the negation? Does the negation of the negation apply to retrogressive development as well as progressive?

Our preliminary conclusion is that there is a place for the negation of the negation in Marxist dialectics. To describe with any degree of precision exactly what that place is, would require a systematic and comprehensive study far beyond the scope of the present one. Because our conclusions on the negation of the negation are put forward tentatively, we would like to note some areas requiring further study. The first is this whole notion of progress. Do events like the development of Soviet social-imperialism and the revisionist triumph in China force us to consider the possibility of retrogressive development? Another is the question of sublation; how exactly does the interaction of form and content described by Engels operate? What is a sublated correlative form? How is synthesis, in the abstract, different from the negation of the negation in a concrete process? Is the description of synthesis given by Mao, in "Talks", accurate? Finally, what is the range of application of the negation of the negation; in what sense can it be referred to as a law of dialectics?

In conclusion, Mao does reject Engels' three laws and claims there is only one. Mao was correct insofar as the unity of opposites is the fundamental law. The law of the transformation of quantity and quality into one another is universally applicable but is subordinate to the unity of opposites. The negation of the negation is not a law in the sense of being universally applicable.<sup>9</sup>

#### Footnotes

1. Frederick Engels, Dialectics of Nature, trans. Clemens Dutt (New York: International Publishers, 1979), p 26.
2. Stuart Schram, ed., Chairman Mao Talks to the People; Talks and Letters: 1956-1971, trans. John Chinnery and Tiejun (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), p 226.
3. Mao Tse-tung, Four Essays in Philosophy (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1968), p 23.
4. V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 38: "Conspectus of Hegel's Science of Logic" (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972), p 223.
5. Mao was correct to criticize Engels on this point, and his use of "monism" and "triplism" is striking and accurate in describing the difference. However, another aspect of the monism of Marxism has very great significance as well. This is that, in contrast with the dominant trends in Western philosophy (following Descartes in particular), which were dualist in viewing mind and matter as independent and separable, the viewpoint of Marxism-Leninism is monist in stressing the interrelation of mind and matter. This is a vital point because by, for example, introducing "life", practice into the theory of knowledge,

Marxism-Leninism undercuts idealism, "pure philosophy", all "dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking which is isolated from practice" (Marx, Second Thesis on Feuerbach). It turns us away from idle speculation and toward changing reality.

As Stalin states:

The materialist theory utterly repudiates both dualism and idealism.

Of course, both ideal and material phenomena exist in the world, but this does not mean that they negate each other. On the contrary, the ideal and the material sides are two different forms of the same nature or society, you cannot conceive of one without the other, they exist together, develop together, and, consequently, we have no grounds whatever for thinking that they negate each other.

Thus, the so-called dualism proves to be unsound.

A single and indivisible nature expressed in two different forms --material and ideal; a single and indivisible social life expressed in two different forms--material and ideal--this is how we should regard the development of nature and of social life.

Such is the monism of the materialist theory. (J.V. Stalin, Works, vol. 1: "Anarchism or Socialism?" (London: Red Star Press Ltd., 1975), p 315.

6. -Marx, Capital and Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844;  
-Engels, Dialectics of Nature and Anti-Duhring  
-Lenin, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back", and "Karl Marx".

7. There is no question that this language--"final opposite, truly opposite, relatively its opposite, etc."--is confusing. More precise terminology will have to be developed. By "final opposite", I don't mean some endpoint of development, but only the chronologically last stage in a given process before a new process develops.

8. Frederick Engels, Anti-Duhring, (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1976), p 179.

9. Some comrades in the study take a somewhat different perspective on the negation of the negation than that presented in the report. Their views follow:

We agree that the negation of the negation does have a place in dialectical materialism, at least in describing the spiral-like development of knowledge and many historical processes and the "apparent return of the old" (LCW, "Karl Marx", 21.54; and 38.222). There are more than a few examples in the writings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin bearing this out. (The most prominent are cited in M. Shirokov, Textbook of Marxist Philosophy (Chicago: Proletarian Publishers, 1978), Section IV).

It should be noted, however, that except for Engels' exposition in Anti-Duhring, the concept of the negation of the negation has not had a prominent place in the writings of the foremost Marxist-Leninists. Stalin doesn't mention it at all, and as noted in the report, Mao denies it altogether.

We don't think (nor does the report imply) that Mao's lack of attention to the negation of the negation resulted in a flawed understanding of dialectics or caused him to miss the "kernel" (Engels). Its absence did not prevent him from understanding the unity and struggle of opposites, stages in the develop-



ment of a process, qualitative change, and the resolution of contradictions in processes. He recognized spiral development and the apparent return of the old, as when he wrote in "On Practice":

Practice, knowledge, again practice, and again knowledge. This form repeats itself in endless cycles, and with each cycle the content of practice and knowledge rises to a higher level.

Hence the question could be put on the other foot: what is it that the concept of the negation of the negation contributes to Marxism-Leninism that Mao doesn't take account of? That is, we lean toward the view which considers the negation of the negation of less importance than that implied in the report. We agree that further study on the concept of synthesis is important and would probably get at the heart of the differences between those who place the negation of the negation in the forefront (e.g. Engels) and those who deny it (Mao).

The question can be raised, what's the difference? What's the difference between using the concept of the negation of the negation and not using it? While harmful effects stemming from omission of the negation of the negation can't in our opinion be shown, say in Mao's writings and work, harmful results from its use can be demonstrated.

As just one example, in one of the most critical and far-reaching questions of this century, the Communist Labor Party employs "dialectics" to argue that, regardless of the facts, capitalism can't have been restored in the Soviet Union:

One of the most basic (laws of dialectics) is the law of development from lower to higher levels. Once something has developed from a lower to a higher quality it cannot change back" (J. Aurthur, Socialism in the Soviet Union (Chicago: Workers Press, 1977), p 8)

'It can't have happened, therefore it didn't.' Logic first, facts 'later'. And elsewhere the CLP explicitly says: "the denial of the negation of the negation in Mao's dialectics forms the philosophical basis for the position that capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union." (CLP, Proletariat (journal), vol 4, No. 2, p 16)

Thus one's stand on the negation of the negation can lead to very differing views on what socialism is, the nature and role of the Soviet Union today, and our tasks as communists in this country.

One specific point about the paper: the concept of development as presented in the paper raises some good questions but doesn't offer a systematic argument in favor of the negation of the negation, in our view.

## MAO'S UNDERSTANDING OF DIALECTICS

### I INTRODUCTION

In Imperialism and the Revolution<sup>1</sup>, Enver Hoxha makes it clear that he no longer considers Mao a dialectician<sup>2</sup>. He says that

In his writings Mao Tsetung makes frequent mention of the role of revolutions in the process of the development of society, but in essence he adheres to a metaphysical, evolutionist concept. (Imperialism, p 112)

He says that Mao's understanding of contradiction also opposes the materialist dialectical concept of development. (Imperialism, p 113) Hoxha also claims that behind Mao's use of dialectics, "lurk the opportunist and antirevolutionary concepts of Mao Tsetung", and mentions Mao's view of the relationship of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie under socialism.

In this paper we will examine Hoxha's charges concerning Mao's understanding of dialectics and the meager evidence he gives to support them. Based on our study of dialectics, and especially of Mao's "On Contradiction", we reject, in the main, Hoxha's criticisms of Mao's understanding of social development and contradiction. We reject Hoxha's method of criticism in this passage of Imperialism. He makes broad assertions with little or no backup or substantiation, as well as being unclear about exactly what he is criticizing. Hoxha obscures the political issues and differences underlying his criticisms.

We feel Mao's "On Contradiction" is a valuable contribution to the international communist movement; the essay pulls together and systematizes various aspects of dialectics from Marx, Engels and Lenin. We don't think, however, that Mao further developed dialectics in this essay in the sense of developing new concepts or ideas concerning dialectics.

We are unaware of any writings or articles by Hoxha or other members of the PLA on dialectics.

### II MAO'S UNDERSTANDING OF DEVELOPMENT

Hoxha claims Mao "preaches development in the form of a circle". He says

Contrary to materialist dialectics, which envisages progressive development in the form of a spiral, Mao Tsetung preaches development in the form of a cycle, going round in a circle, as a process of ebb and flow which goes from equilibrium to disequilibrium and back to equilibrium again, from motion to rest and back to motion again, from rise to fall and from fall to rise, from advance to retreat and to advance again, etc. (Imperialism, p 112)

Mao clearly polemicizes against the metaphysical/evolutionist conception of development, which Hoxha claims he "preaches", in the first section of "On

Contradiction". He lays out the differences and upholds the dialectical view of development:

The metaphysical or vulgar evolutionist world outlook sees things as isolated, static and one-sided. It regards all things in the universe, their forms and their species, as eternally isolated from one another and immutable. Such change as there is can only be an increase or decrease in quantity or a change of place. Moreover, the cause of such an increase or decrease or change of place is not inside things but outside them, that is, the motive force is external. Metaphysicians hold that all the different kinds of things in the universe and all their characteristics have been the same ever since they first came into being. All subsequent changes have simply been increases or decreases in quantity. They contend that a thing can only keep on repeating itself as the same kind of thing and cannot change into anything different...

As opposed to the metaphysical world outlook, the world outlook of materialist dialectics holds that in order to understand the development of a thing we should study it internally and in its relations with other things, in other words, the development of things should be seen as their internal and necessary selfmovement, while each thing in its movement is interrelated with and interacts on the things around it. The fundamental cause of the development of a thing is not external but internal; it lies in the contradictoriness within the thing. This internal contradiction exists in every single thing, hence its motion and development. Contradictoriness within a thing is the fundamental cause of its development, while its interrelations and interactions with other things are secondary causes. Thus materialist dialectics effectively combats the theory of external causes, or of an external motive force, advanced by metaphysical mechanical materialism and vulgar evolutionism. It is evident that purely external causes can only give rise to mechanical motion, that is, to changes in scale or quantity, but cannot explain why things differ qualitatively in thousands of ways and why one thing changes into another...  
(Four Essays, pp 25-6)

Thus it's clear Mao didn't preach such development. Whether his work (writings and practice) exemplify a wrong conception of development will be touched on in this paper and looked at more thoroughly in the next sections of the National Joint Study.

To attempt to show that Mao sees development in a metaphysical way, Hoxha says

Thus, upholding the concept of ancient philosophy on the purifying role of fire, Mao Tsetung writes: "It is necessary to 'set a fire going' at regular intervals. How often? Once a year or once every three years, which do you prefer? I think we should do it at least twice in the space of every five years, in the same way as the intercalary month in a lunar leap year turns up once in three years or twice in five". Thus like the astrologists of old, on the basis of the lunar calendar, he derives the law on the periodical kindling of fire, on the development which goes from "great harmony", to "great disorder" and again to "great harmony", and thus the cycles

repeat themselves periodically. In this manner, "Mao Tsetung Thought" opposes the materialist dialectical concept of development. (Imperialism, p 113)

Hoxha here quotes Mao so out of context that you would never know by reading this passage that what Mao was referring to in the quoted passage was the need for mass criticism of the party, even though it was quite clear from reading the speech. (Mao, Selected Works<sup>4</sup>, vol. 5, p 458)

Mao often used analogies to make more comprehensible concepts and phenomena he was explaining (such as "to set a fire going" for mass criticism campaigns); there is nothing wrong with this as long as the analogies are clear. Mao also often referred to Chinese history and traditions in his writings to popularize concepts; Mao in the passage Hoxha cites compares the need to hold mass criticism of the party on a regular basis with the periodicity of the lunar calendar. To make this comparison is not, in and of itself, incorrect. This type popularization was part of making Marxism concrete to Chinese conditions.

Hoxha jumps onto the analogy without going into underlying concepts, and concludes that Mao is "upholding the concept of ancient philosophy on the purifying role of fire" and is "like the astrologers of old." You would never know from Hoxha's polemic that Mao and the CPC actively struggled against remaining influences of Confucian ideology in China. These labels and others throughout Imperialism, such as implying there was little difference between Mao and "the ancient Chinese philosophers" are never backed up convincingly. At best, they add nothing to Hoxha's argument; at worst, some of them are national chauvinist.

Hoxha criticizes "setting a fire going" in part because Mao says it needs to be carried out at regular intervals, ("at least twice in the space of every five year plan"<sup>5</sup>), which Hoxha says result in "cycles (which) repeat themselves periodically" and thus "oppose the materialist dialectical concept of development." This is absurd. We cannot oppose on principle the carrying out of certain activities which need to be carried out on a regular basis. According to this logic, we would have to oppose state planning sessions at regular intervals (which of course Hoxha doesn't oppose) because they also result in cycles which go "from 'great harmony' to 'great disorder' and again to 'great harmony'" and thus "oppose the materialist dialectical concept of development".

Thus we reject Hoxha's claim that Mao calling for "setting a fire going" at regular intervals reflects a metaphysical view of development.

### III MAO'S UNDERSTANDING OF CONTRADICTION

Hoxha criticizes Mao's understanding of contradiction as follows:

In dealing with contradictions, he does not proceed from the Marxist theses, but from those of ancient Chinese philosophers, sees the opposites in a mechanical way, as external phenomena, and imagines the transformation of the opposites as a simple change of places between them. By operating with some eternal opposites taken from ancient philosophy, such as above and below, backward and forward, right and left, light and heavy, etc., etc., in essence Mao Tsetung negates the internal contradictions inherent in things and phenomena and treats development as simple repetition, as a chain of unchangeable states



in which the same opposites and the same relationship between them are observed. The mutual transformation of the opposites into each other, understood as a mere exchange of places and not as a resolution of the contradiction and a qualitative change of the very phenomenon which comprises these opposites, is used by Mao Tsetung as a formal pattern to which everything is subject. On the basis of this pattern, Mao goes so far as to declare that "When dogmatism is transformed into its opposite, it becomes either Marxism or revisionism"... (Imperialism, p 113)

Although Hoxha here rejects completely Mao's understanding of contradiction, he never refers to Mao's essay on the subject, "On Contradiction". From the sweeping nature of Hoxha's criticisms, we would have to assume that Mao's "On Contradiction" is full of metaphysical views. If this is true, this would have serious implications, not only for the millions of Chinese comrades who have studied this essay, but also for the many, many comrades internationally who have studied this essay as part of obtaining a basic understanding of dialectics. Is this essay seriously flawed, and do we see the above errors in this article? The following discussion will examine the allegations with primary focus on "On Contradiction".

1) Does Mao explain development in terms of "eternal opposites" such as those Hoxha lists?

This is clearly not true. Hoxha sets up a straw man and knocks him down. First, Mao doesn't "operate with" the opposites Hoxha lists. Hoxha cites four pairs of opposites, only one of which we were able to find in Mao's writings. In "On Contradiction", the only place Mao mentions one of these pairs is in a discussion of the identity of opposites, where, as one example of how no contradictory aspect can exist in isolation, he says that "without 'above', there would be no 'below'; without 'below', there would be no 'above'". Lenin also referred to similar pairs of opposites as being in contradiction to one another, such as positive and negative in mathematics (Lenin, Collected Works<sup>6</sup>, vol. 38, p 357).

In the great majority of Mao's writings he does discuss much more concrete, socially important examples. But even so, Mao is correct to cite 'above' and 'below' as being opposites, and being in contradiction. Their unity and struggle does lead to their transformation into each other, but in the particular way appropriate to such such general, spatial concepts.

Second, Mao does not explain societal development in terms of these opposites. Hoxha doesn't provide an example of where Mao does this; he can't. Mao consistently describes/explains societal development in terms of class struggle, and the economic contradictions of which the class struggle is one manifestation.

2) Does Mao see "opposites in a mechanical way, as external phenomena"?

No, as can be shown by the section in "On Contradiction" on "The Identity and Struggle of the Aspects of a Contradiction", where Mao says

The fact is that no contradictory aspect can exist in isolation. Without its opposite aspect, each loses the condition for its existence. Just think, can any one contradictory aspect of a thing or of a concept in the human mind exist independently? Without life, there would be no death; without death there would be no life...Without landlords, there would be no tenant-peasants; without tenant-peasants, there would be no landlords. Without the bourgeoisie, there would be no proletariat; without the proletariat, there would be no bourgeoisie. Without imperialist oppression of nations, there would be no colonies or semi-colonies; without colonies or semicolonies, there would be no imperialist oppression of nations. It is so with all opposites; in given conditions, on the one hand they are opposed to each other, and on the other they are interconnected, interpenetrating, interpermeating and interdependent, and this character is described as identity. In given conditions, all contradictory aspects possess the character of non-identity and hence are described as being in contradiction. But they also possess the character of identity and hence are interconnected. (Four Essays, pp 61-62)

Also, in a passage quoted earlier from "On Contradiction", (see page 15), Mao polemicizes against the view that saw opposites as external to the thing or process.

3) Does Mao "imagine transformation of opposites as a simple change of place between them"? Is it true that Mao does not understand the mutual transformation of opposites as a "resolution of the contradiction and a qualitative change of the very phenomena which comprise these opposites"?

Mao definitely saw the resolution of a contradiction as the mutual transformation of opposites, with qualitative change in the nature of the thing or process. Mao describes how a contradiction is resolved and mutual transformation of opposites occurs in terms of the principal aspect of a contradiction in "On Contradiction". As a result of the unity and struggle of opposites, "the principal and the non-principal aspects of a contradiction transform themselves into each other and the nature of the thing changes accordingly". (Four Essays, p 54). Mao continues

We often speak of "the new superseding the old". The supersession of the old by the new is a general, eternal and inviolable law of the universe. The transformation of one thing into another, through leaps of different forms in accordance with its essence and external conditions-- this is the process of the new superseding the old. In each thing there is contradiction between its new and its old aspects, and this gives rise to a series of struggles with many twists and turns. As a result of these struggles, the new aspect changes from being minor to being major and rises to predominance, while the old aspect changes from being major to being minor and gradually dies out. And the moment the new aspect gains dominance over the old, the old thing changes qualitatively into a new thing. It can thus be seen that the nature of a thing is mainly determined by the principal aspect of the contradiction, the aspect which has gained predominance. When the principal aspect which has gained predominance changes, the nature of a thing changes accordingly. (Four Essays, pp 54-55)

Mao does refer to this transformation of opposites as being a "change of place" between the opposites, in the sense that the opposite that was previously in the dominant position is subsequently in the secondary position. Thus he says

In capitalist society, capitalism has changed its position from being a subordinate force in the old feudal era to being the dominant force, and the nature of society has accordingly changed from feudal to capitalist. In the new, capitalist era, the feudal forces changed from their former dominant position to a subordinate one, gradually dying out. Such was the case, for example, in Britain and France. (Four Essays, p 55)

However, it is a great distortion by Hoxha of Mao's writings on contradiction to assert that Mao saw transformation of opposites as a "simple" change of place, that is, without qualitative change in the very nature of the thing or process.

4) Does Mao see the mutual transformation of opposites as a "formal pattern to which everything is subject"? Is it correct to say, as Mao does, "when dogmatism is transformed into its opposite, it becomes either Marxism or revisionism" (Mao, Selected Works, vol. 5, p 440)?

As we mentioned above, we don't think Mao explained development in terms of a mechanical formal pattern. Nor does Mao view the transformation of opposites as a "formal pattern to which everything is subject". He does hold that "Everything in the world is a unity of opposites" (Mao, Selected Works, vol. 5, p 339) and that there is transformation of opposites in given conditions. But rather than this being a case of applying a "formal pattern" (Hoxha implies it is merely formal, not based on essence or content) to the real world, Mao is generalizing from phenomena observable in the real world. The two are not the same thing. One is the idealist approach, the other the materialist. We reject this implication of Hoxha's statement. We see no need to comment further on the point since Hoxha does not document his accusation with any serious evidence.

It is true Hoxha cites Mao's statement that "when dogmatism is transformed into its opposite, it becomes either Marxism or revisionism", but this is hardly sufficient to support Hoxha's case.

We believe there is a criticism to be made of this statement, but not the one Hoxha raises.

In the statement Mao asserts that dogmatism has two opposites, Marxism and revisionism. In at least two other passages Mao speaks of dogmatism and revisionism as opposites--all the statements dating from 1957. (See Mao, Selected Works, vol. 5, pp 411 and 434.)

In three other places Mao considers dogmatism and empiricism as opposites. For example:

It seems the formulation should be: oppose revisionism, which includes empiricism and dogmatism. Both revise Marxism-Leninism." (Peking Review, No. 50, 1976, p 13, quoting Mao in April 1975)

(The other two passages are Mao, Selected Works, vol. 5, p 108 (1953) and "Appendix"<sup>7</sup>, p 88f (1944).) Thus dogmatism has Marxism, revisionism, and empiricism as opposites, and may also be considered included within revisionism. Taken together these passages make quite a muddle.

We do not dispute that something may have more than one opposite. The world is full of contradictions, as Mao often says. In these contradictions there are opposites; or, more accurately, every contradiction is made up of opposites. But something, say, a country (Mao's example) does not exist only in contradiction with one other country. It exists in contradiction with all other countries, though the nature and intensity of the contradictions vary. Mao says: "The relationship between two countries is also a unity of opposites. China and the Soviet Union are both socialist countries (this was written in 1956--ed.)" and goes on to point out the contradictions between them (Mao, Selected Works, vol. 5, p 339). In the same place Mao gives other examples which indicate he holds a thing may be in opposition to more than one other thing:

The relationship between the central and the local authorities is a unity of opposites, and so is that between one department and another.

However, it must be kept in mind that all opposites are not "equal". Some opposites are "more opposite" than others, so to speak. It is this Mao refers to by the concepts of the principal and secondary contradictions. This far we are in agreement with Mao.

But in the passages cited on dogmatism there is inconsistency and confusion. Mao does not seem to be using a coherent set of concepts here. Since these are quite important concepts, the error of inconsistency must be considered quite serious.

Our tentative view is that dogmatism and empiricism are opposite, one-sided approaches to making revolution; they represent two sides of the subjective method and viewpoint. Mao conveys this well in the "Appendix" (pp 88-92). The two can be considered as ideological deviations which lead to revisionism and are found in the views of revisionists, taking revisionism in the broad sense which includes both "Left" and right deviations. If both dogmatism and empiricism are avoided, or corrected, than one will be taking a Marxist-Leninist approach.

IV Hoxha sees "the opportunist and anti-revolutionary concepts of Mao Tsetung" "lurking" behind Mao's use of contradiction. We will look at the example he cites on how Mao sees the relationship of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie after socialist revolution, because this example pretty clearly shows Hoxha's inadequate method, leading to wrong conclusions.

Thus, (Mao) does not see the socialist revolution as a qualitative change of society in which antagonistic classes and the oppression and exploitation of man by man are abolished, but conceives it as a simple change of places between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. To confirm this "discovery", Mao writes: "If the bourgeoisie and the proletariat cannot transform themselves into each other, how does it come that, through revolution, the proletariat becomes the ruling class and the



bourgeoisie the ruled class?...We stand in diametrical opposition to Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang. As a result of the mutual struggle and exclusion of the two contradictory aspects with the Kuomintang we changed places..." (Imperialism, p 113)

Hoxha here claims Mao does not see the socialist revolution as a qualitative change of society, but rather as a simple change of places between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Mao consistently viewed socialist revolution as resulting in a qualitative change of society, as reading any of his works on the dictatorship of the proletariat (as well as many passages in "On Contradiction" which won't be quoted here) shows. In the ninth comment of the Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement, written under Mao's leadership, the CPC describe socialist society as follows:

The replacement of capitalist society by socialist society is a great leap in the historical development of human society. Socialist society covers the important historical period of transition from class to classless society. It is by going through socialist society that mankind will enter communist society.

The socialist system is incomparably superior to the capitalist system. In socialist society, the dictatorship of the proletariat replaces bourgeois dictatorship and the public ownership of the means of production replaces private ownership. The proletariat, from being an oppressed and exploited class, turns into the ruling class and a fundamental change takes place in the social position of the working people. Exercising dictatorship over a few exploiters only, the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat practises the broadest democracy among the masses of the working people, a democracy which is impossible in capitalist society. The nationalization of industry and collectivization of agriculture open wide vistas for the vigorous development of the social productive forces, ensuring a rate of growth incomparably greater than that in any older society.<sup>8</sup>

(Hoxha in this passage of Imperialism counterposes a misrepresentation of Mao's view of socialist revolution with his own which sees "socialist revolution as a change of society in which antagonistic classes and the oppression and exploitation of man by man are abolished." The question of whether antagonistic classes can be "abolished" with socialist revolution (Hoxha's view) or whether antagonistic classes will exist for a relatively long period of time under socialism (Mao's view) will be addressed in the next section of the study on the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat.)

This passage from Hoxha's Imperialism is also worth looking at because it is characteristic of his method of polemic against Mao in this chapter, though perhaps more inept than in some other places.

The sentences Hoxha quotes from Mao ("If the bourgeoisie and the proletariat...") are extracted from their context and given another by Hoxha. Hoxha claims Mao uses them to "confirm" a "discovery" about socialist revolution. Actually the sentences appear in a passage on dialectics which criticizes Stalin and the Soviets for failing "to see the connection between the struggle of opposites and the unity of opposites" (Mao, Selected Works, vol. 5, p 369). This is one point.

Second, the translation given differs considerably from the version in Selected Works in English published by Foreign Languages Press. Hoxha has used the Peking French edition which someone has rendered into English. It's unclear just who did the damage, but the Peking English edition is given below. Significant differences with Hoxha's citation are underlined. Note too that Hoxha omits the rest of the paragraph, which further indicates the context Mao made the statements in:

If the bourgeoisie and the proletariat cannot transform themselves into each other, how come that through revolution the proletariat becomes the ruler and the bourgeoisie the ruled? For instance, we stood in diametrical opposition to Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang. As a result of the mutual struggle and the mutual exclusion of the two opposing sides, a change took place in our status and theirs, that is, they turned from the ruled into the ruler. Those who fled to Taiwan were only one-tenth of the Kuomintang, those remaining on the mainland accounting for nine-tenths. The latter are being remoulded by us; this is a case of the unity of opposites under new circumstances. As for the one-tenth who have gone to Taiwan, our relationship with them is still a unity of opposites, and they, too, will be transformed through struggle. (Mao, Selected Works, vol. 5, pp 368-369)

Having accused Mao of viewing the transformation of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in socialist revolution as "a simple change of places", Hoxha "quotes" from Mao's criticism of Stalin on the unity and struggle of opposites and through a French twist comes up with almost exactly the words he was looking for: "we changed places". Not taking a breath, he moves immediately to another point. Hoxha's polemical tools appear very rusty. In fact his method here has "nothing in common with Marxism-Leninism".

## V CONCLUSION

Hoxha in this passage of Imperialism and the Revolution claims Mao's understanding of social development and contradiction "opposes the materialist dialectical concept of development." If true, this is a serious charge having very serious implications for Mao's analyses of situations and resultant strategy. This is an especially serious charge considering the pre-eminence of Mao Tsetung internationally over the last several decades.

Yet Hoxha's attempt at substantiation for this charge is flimsy at first glance, and upon closer examination, the "evidence" disappears into thin air, leaving nothing but Hoxha's assertions, repeated over and over. We reject Hoxha's criticisms of Mao's understanding of dialectics. Mao's understanding of dialectics in "On Contradiction", was a correct Marxist-Leninist one.<sup>9</sup>

## VI FOOTNOTES

1. Enver Hoxha, Imperialism and the Revolution, COUSM-L edition. Referred to in the report as Imperialism for brevity.

2. The chapter in Imperialism on Mao represents an almost complete reversal of previous assessments of Mao and the CPC by Hoxha and the PLA. In 1973, Hoxha said, among other things, that Mao "further developed and creatively enriched Marxist-Leninist science in the field of philosophy," in a speech commemorating the achievements of Mao and the CPC on Mao's 80th birthday, which reads in part:

You, dear comrade Mao Tsetung, as a great theoretician and strategist of the revolution, in irreconcilable struggle with various opportunist trends...especially with the dangerous preachings of the Khrushchevite revisionists who have betrayed the cause of the revolution and communism, loyally and courageously defended the triumphant doctrine of Marxism-Leninism. As an outstanding follower of the great teachers of the world proletariat, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, in compliance with the conditions of China and the features of the present epoch, you further developed and creatively enriched Marxist-Leninist science in the field of philosophy, the development of the proletarian party, the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary struggle and the struggle against imperialism, and the problems of the construction of the socialist society. Your precepts on continuing the revolution under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, so as to carry socialist construction to final victory and bar the way to the danger of the restoration of capitalism, whatever form it takes, and wherever it comes from, constitute a valuable contribution, of great international value, to the theory and practice of scientific socialism. Your works are a real revolutionary education for all Marxist-Leninists and working people. (Albania Today, Supplement 6, 1973)

3. Mao Tsetung, Four Essays on Philosophy: "On Contradiction" (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1968), pp 23-78 Referred to in the report as Four Essays for brevity.
4. Mao Tsetung, Selected Works (Peking: Foreign Language Press).
5. The translation in Imperialism of the passage from Mao is significantly different than the Foreign Language Press translation. In Imperialism it reads "I think we should do it in the space of every 5 years...", whereas the FLP translation reads "I think we should do it in the space of every five year plan..." (Mao, Selected Works, vol. 5, p 459). The translation used in Imperialism leaves out the word "plan", and thus omits this reference by Mao to planning under socialism.
6. V. I. Lenin, Collected Works (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976).
7. Mao Tsetung, Our Study and the Current Situation; Appendix: Resolution on Some Questions in the History of Our Party (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1960).
8. Communist Party of China, The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1965), reprinted by Red Star Press Ltd., P. O. Box 71, London SW2, 1976.

9. While all in the study agreed that Hoxha's criticisms of Mao were flimsy and unsubstantiated and his method very poor, some of us did not feel comfortable absolving Mao of any significant errors in dialectics. Some of us would like to investigate a number of questions more deeply: did Mao's popularizations in "On Contradiction" and "On Practice" lead to vulgarizations? Is Mao's view of the relation of theory to practice correct? What about his emphasis on 'direct experience' and personal participation? Was Mao one-sided in his emphasis on combatting dogmatism?

## PRINCIPLES AND COMPROMISES

Questions: 1. What are Marxist-Leninist principles? Are all M-L principles of equal importance or do some take precedence over others in certain conditions?

2. What is the relation between M-L principles and compromises?  
a. In Lenin's understanding, do we ever compromise on principles? For Lenin, what is the relation between principles and compromises?  
b. Mao claims that "the integration of principle with flexibility is a Marxist-Leninist principle, and it is a unity of opposites". (Mao Tse-Tung, Selected Works (Peking, Foreign Languages Press, 1977), Vol. 5, p. 516) Does this differ from Lenin's statements on the relation between principles and compromises? Is it a correct statement?

Note: Before reading this paper it would be good to read or skim the "Extracts from Lenin" on pages 34-43.<sup>1</sup>

### Importance and relevance of the topic

The topic of principles and compromises is quite relevant to the Hoxha/Mao differences and also is important to address as we try to better ground ourselves in the fundamentals of dialectical and historical materialism. The subject comes up prominently, for example, in Reflections on China, where the question of the nature of the tactics employed by the CPC--correct flexibility or opportunist vacillation--is one of Hoxha's basic concerns. It also arises directly in relation to dialectics, as Hoxha criticizes Mao's basic understanding of contradictions and Mao himself poses the question of the relation between principle and flexibility in terms of the unity and struggle of opposites.

Also, this topic has received very little attention in the "anti-revisionist movement" to date. The movement has been distinguished by its lack of attention to principles and its failure to adhere to them. There has been a great deal of vacillation by nearly all the organized forces, large and small, which reflects a lack of stable principles. At times groups have repeated the commonplace that 'we never compromise on principles' but in our view this commonplace is wrong in the first place and second, the forces which have said it have used it merely as a phrase, since they have really had little idea what they were talking about (e.g. PL, RU, WVO). So it is appropriate to examine the subject and "even" to look at the usage of the term "principles" by Marx, Engels, and Lenin since there has been confusion over just what the term means in Marxism-Leninism. There are those who reject this approach--for example, the now-defunct Communist Workers Group--but such study, when kept in bounds, is useful and vital in trying to grasp and apply to the struggle what is sound in the history of the international communist movement. There is a crisis of Marxism and a firm grasp of the fundamentals is essential if we are going to get out of it relatively soon. An understanding of these fundamentals includes comprehension of the usage of the basic terms by the leading revolutionaries.

### Question 1. Brief answer

Marxist-Leninist principles are guiding ideas or 'scientific guidelines' (CWG) for all the areas in which Marxist-Leninists wage revolutionary struggle.

Since the different areas of struggle (class, ideology, theory, organization, nations, the military, etc.) assume different positions, or play different roles at various times, the principles which Marxists apply in their work in these areas likewise have varying prominence. At times principles utilized in one form of struggle may be overridden by principles guiding another, temporarily more important form of struggle. That is, lower principles give way to higher ones. (Examples will be given later.)

### The meaning of "principles"; usage by Lenin, Marx, and Engels

The American College Dictionary gives twelve meanings for the word "principle". The one which comes closest to the Marxist-Leninist meaning, especially as seen in Lenin, is "fixed rule or adopted method as to action". However, the word "fixed" is too rigid to reflect the Marxist perspective. There are several other meanings given that relate to action or conduct, with moral overtones. A second major meaning is "rule or law exemplified in natural phenomena, in the construction or operation of a machine, the working of a system, or the like: the principle of capillary action". A third major meaning is the more general "fundamental doctrine or tenet" or "fundamental, primary, or general truth, on which other truths depend: the principles of government".

A review of the "Extracts from Lenin" indicates that Lenin is generally consistent in his use of "principle" in light of the above distinctions drawn by the dictionary. He almost always uses it in the sense of "adopted method as to action". Even when it appears he is closer to the third meaning, a fundamental doctrine or tenet, underlying his usage is the belief that a principle has genuine meaning for people only insofar as it provides guidance for revolutionary activity in concrete conditions. There is little tendency in Lenin to speak of principles as absolute, good for all time. On the contrary he stresses that principles must be applied in concrete situations; in this regard he constantly points out that truth is always concrete, there is no abstract truth. (See extracts 20,23, 25, and 30 for example.)

It is important to note that Lenin's usage is overwhelmingly in accord with the first dictionary meaning given above and seldom exemplifies the second or third major meanings. The reason is it reflects the Leninist approach to subjective and objective phenomena, which differs radically from the bourgeois approach.

Lenin doesn't deny that there are objective laws operative in nature and society. In his notebooks on Hegel and Materialism and Empirio-criticism, for example, he often refers to the "laws" in or the essence of things. But he seldom uses the term "principle" in this sense. Instead he generally reserves it for conscious intervention by the communist movement, intervention which is based on a scientific estimate of the concrete, objective reality. That is, he uses it primarily with reference to the subjective side of things.

The use of "principle" in this way by Lenin is consistent with the basic view Marx expressed in his "Theses on Feuerbach": "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it." This viewpoint marked a distinct break with Western and Eastern philosophy in many ways. In relation to principles the difference is that Marxism-Leninism views them as <sup>scientific</sup> ideas or guidelines to use in changing the world, while bourgeois, feudal, slave, etc. philosophy view them, generally speaking, as objective laws

existing in the natural world or as ideas which we derive in one way or another, without scientific examination of the material world. There is a distinct contemplative bias in these views, in other words. As an example of the former the Chinese concept "li" (translated as "principle") might be cited, which refers to objective laws governing the universe and which, in Chinese tradition, people have to adapt themselves to. An example of the latter is cited below in looking briefly at Marx and Engels' usage.

Marx and Engels' writings, especially their earlier ones, use the term "principle" in all three of the major dictionary meanings, but this is because they devoted considerable space to quoting their opponents, paraphrasing them, spinning out their arguments and refuting them, and many of these opponents were under the sway of meanings two and three. One target was those who held that we should start with a great idea or a system of ideas rather than from investigation of the concrete phenomena to discover the specific laws governing them:

Herr Heinzen imagines communism is a certain doctrine which proceeds from a definite theoretical principle as its core and draws further conclusions from that. Herr Heinzen is very much mistaken. Communism is not a doctrine but a movement; it proceeds not from principles but from facts. The Communists do not base themselves on this or that philosophy as their point of departure but on the whole course of previous history and specifically its actual results in the civilised countries at the present time . . . Communism, insofar as it is a theory, is the theoretical expression of the position of the proletariat in this struggle and the theoretical summation of the conditions for the liberation of the proletariat. (Engels, "The Communists and Karl Heinzen" in Marx and Engels, Collected Works (New York: International Publishers, 1976), Vol. 6, pp. 303-04, 1847)

In another place Engels argues against "theoretical visionaries who are not concerned with real events, in whose view it is not the men and the circumstances that develop the principles but the principles develop of themselves". (Engels, "The Festival of Nations in London", in Marx and Engels CW 6.5, 1845)

To conclude on this point, we think Lenin's usage should be followed: using principles to refer to the ideas striven for to guide revolutionary activity, activity which is based on study of the welter of phenomena and understanding of the essence or laws underlying the phenomena. That is, principles refer to ideas, consciousness, the subjective realm, while essence and laws refer to the material world, the objective realm.

#### Principles in relation to theory, aims, tactics, etc. in Lenin

Lenin's usage is not one-hundred percent consistent when it comes to differentiating principles from theory, aims, etc. but it would be unrealistic to expect any revolutionary not to have such inconsistencies when his writings fill forty-five volumes. In one place Lenin writes: "In order to make a comparison of the programmes and to assess them, it is necessary to examine the principles, the theory, from which the programme flows". (Extract 67; compare extract 36) In another he says: "Principles are not an aim, a programme, a tactic, or a theory. Tactics and theory are not principles . . .". (Extract 59)



These passages are not consistent in that one tends to equate the two terms by way of an appositive (second word or phrase renames or is synonymous with the first: "the principles, the theory") while the other explicitly denies such a connection.

Overall the former usage seems quite dominant in Lenin; he stresses the interrelation of principles and theory, and not only the interrelation of those two, but the interrelation of principles with all facets of communist activity. Lenin's perspective is that we have to struggle hard to arrive at principles; our practical activity and theoretical work provide the basis for arriving at them; we have to strive to uphold our principles through all of our activity as it is easy to fall away from them. While in one passage he denies the identification of principles with tactics, and even implies a radical separation between them, he views certain tactical questions as questions of principle (extract 4) in another passage and in a third passage speaks of the "underlying principle of our tactics". (Extract 47).<sup>2</sup> We think the emphasis in Lenin on linking principles with all areas of communist activity is correct.<sup>3</sup>

### The relations among principles in Lenin

The heart of this will be looked at in the next part of the report on the relation between principles and compromises, but a few points should be made here.

There are principles for all areas of work in which Marxist-Leninists are active. In Lenin there are a number of references to ideological and programmatic principles, tactical principles, and organizational principles, to use Mao's ideology-politics-organization framework. At times some of these principles must be eclipsed, put in the background, "violated", as the resolution of contradictions in one area of activity becomes more pressing than (or the determinant of) the resolution of those in another. In such situations the principles communists adhere to in the "more pressing" area take precedence over those bearing on the less pressing area. (This is explained by Mao through the principal and secondary contradictions.)

An explicit example in which Lenin takes this viewpoint is seen in his discussion of Plekhanov at the Second Party Congress in extract 77 (Collected Works, Vol. 42, p. 47) There "the good of the revolution, the good of the working class, is the highest law". (The word "law" is used at least partly because both Plekhanov and Lenin are alluding to the Latin expression: *salus populi suprema lex.* Plekhanov uses "principle" and "law" pretty much interchangeably in his comments here.) Lenin approves the view that subsidiary "laws" must sometimes give way so that a higher "law" may be preserved.

### Question 2a. Brief answer

Yes, we must sometimes "compromise on principles", as outlined above. Circumstances may force us into compromises, even in very critical matters. But we do resist compromises, we strive to pursue a policy which fully embodies our principles. When we do compromise, we have to recognize that there are different kinds of compromises. Some advance the revolutionary cause. Others are an expression of opportunism. We have to direct our criticism mercilessly against those concrete compromises which are an expression of betrayal of our fundamental interests.

### Compromises and principles in Lenin

The most noteworthy and significant examples of compromises, it would seem, occurred after the Bolsheviks had gained state power. The ones about which the most noise was made by the "Left" seem to have been Brest-Litovsk and NEP. It's a measure of Lenin's greatness that he was able to recognize the necessity for these two compromises, especially the latter, after a lifetime of pursuing the often isolated, principled Leftist road.

Both Brest-Litovsk and NEP were criticized by opponents as violations of proletarian principle. Brest-Litovsk was the treaty which the Bolsheviks were forced to sign with Germany at a great loss in territory to the world's first proletarian state. Lenin recognized the necessity to sign a treaty early on, while Trotsky and others resisted and sabotaged the signing, hoping for the expected European-wide revolution, which instead died out. To Lenin, Brest-Litovsk was a forced compromise. NEP was the temporary policy which allowed a certain renewal of capitalism in the countryside so as to preserve the battered worker-peasant alliance, an underpinning of Soviet power, and prevent the total defeat of the revolution. Bukharin and others at first criticized this policy--another forced compromise--as the liquidation of a proletarian perspective.<sup>4</sup>

Lenin doesn't, to our knowledge, refer to either compromise as a violation of proletarian principle, though in his treatment of NEP he is definitely aware of the likelihood of its being so construed and thus rejected by some. But there are cases in which Lenin is explicit that the party is violating "proletarian principle". These are examples of lesser importance by far and not very well known, but examples none-the-less. They have to do with the policy of admission of new members to cooperative societies and the payment of high salaries to bourgeois experts. (See extracts 49-51, CW 27.255, 27.311, 27.315-16) Lenin says the Soviet government has adopted a policy which is an abandonment of "the only consistently proletarian principle" (CW 27.255), and he defends the action.

From these two lesser examples, as well as Brest-Litovsk and NEP, it seems evident that those who say the Leninist view is that we never compromise on principles--which the PLA for one has said--must follow this up by claiming that Lenin was mistaken on the point. Lenin is explicit in the two lesser examples; there is no way round them. The conventional "M-L" wisdom says that we never compromise on principles. The truth in this is that we work very hard in that direction; we try to combat the sea of vacillation that seems to be a feature of the left in many times and places; but circumstances sometimes force us to compromise certain principles, even the "only consistently proletarian principle", in favor of higher principles.

Chapter eight of "Left"-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder contains Lenin's longest treatment of the subject of compromises. Having gained a reputation as "uncompromising", Lenin argues on behalf of the Bolsheviks against the "Leftists" who threw out compromise altogether. One passage is useful in leading into the next question (2b) we will take up:

Naive and utterly inexperienced people imagine that it is sufficient to admit the permissibility of compromises in general in order to obliterate the dividing line between opportunism, against which we wage

and must wage an irreconcilable struggle, and revolutionary Marxism, or Communism. But if such people do not yet know that all dividing lines in nature and in society are mutable and to a certain extent conventional--they cannot be assisted otherwise than by a long process of training, education, enlightenment, and by political and everyday experience. (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1970, p. 65)

This is about as close as Lenin gets to being explicit about the relation between principles and compromises in formally dialectical terms. There is revolutionary Marxism and there is opportunism, and to determine whether a specific policy or line is one or the other, the concrete circumstances must be examined and the nature of the compromise, if there is one, ascertained. If the circumstances change, then a previously revolutionary policy might be opportunist in the new conditions. Or conditions might not change but the policy might be pursued in a one-sided way. In such cases principled compromise could go over the "dividing line" and become unprincipled compromise. (As Mao wouldn't hesitate to say, it could turn into its opposite.)

The subject of modification of principles is dealt with in another passage which takes up the struggle against dogmatism. (See extract 53) Here Lenin speaks of the need for modification of "the fundamental principles of communism (Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat)" in certain particulars so as to "correctly adapt and apply them to national and national-state distinctions".<sup>5</sup> Needless to say, in modifying them communists can't go so far that they cross over the "dividing line" and end up in opportunism.<sup>6</sup>

#### Question 2b. Brief answer

Mao's statement about the relation between principle and flexibility does differ from Lenin's. It goes further than Lenin did, in describing the relation between the two as a unity of opposites. Besides, Lenin spoke more of compromises than of flexibility. However, though somewhat differently phrased, Mao's views are basically consistent with Lenin's on the relation between principles and compromises. Mao's development of the idea that principles and flexibility are a unity of opposites is also correct.<sup>7</sup>

#### Mao on principles and flexibility

Mao writes that "Everything in the world is a unity of opposites. By the unity of opposites we mean the unity of opposite things differing in nature. For instance, water is a combination of two elements, hydrogen and oxygen." (SW 5.339) For Mao then there can be no doubt that there is an opposite for principles. Mao calls the opposite "flexibility", though it's clear that to him the idea is very closely related to compromises or "concessions".

It seems somewhat more accurate to refer to principles and flexibility rather than principles and compromises. One point is that there are two kinds of compromises, revolutionary ones and opportunist ones, principled ones and unprincipled ones. If compromise is the opposite of principle, which is meant, principled or unprincipled compromise? Presumably the latter, since it lacks principle, but still flexibility seems a broader and more apt term which avoids any confusion. Second, and a lesser point, is that if principle refers to guiding ideas, and (unprincipled) compromise to misguiding ideas, there is still the possibility of ideas which provide no guidance at all (policies moulded by insanity, total flexibility, anarchy). Not just a possibility but who would assert that this hasn't occurred in various sections of the "Marxist left"? For this

reason too, though not of major significance in the "orthodox" Left, flexibility seems the more encompassing term or opposite.

The above has looked at the "dividing lines" in terms of a progression from principles to principled compromise to unprincipled compromise to total flexibility.<sup>6</sup> Once past principled compromise we have incorrect views which err on the side of "all unity" (little or no struggle). But it is also possible to err on the side of "all struggle", which occurs when a policy is adopted or pursued which lacks flexibility, rests on "pure principle", and this would tend to isolate the revolutionary forces as much as unprincipled compromises would tend to merge them with intermediate or enemy forces. Looking at it from these angles, Mao seems correct in speaking of the need to integrate principle with flexibility.

It could be objected, but in calling for the integration of principle with flexibility isn't Mao deviating by combining two into one? We don't think so. What it comes down to is recognition that while we must strive to pursue a principled policy, one that upholds the basic interests of the working class and the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism, we do so with the recognition, as discussed above, that we can't avoid all compromises. If we just take "principle" and try to stay on a "pure" revolutionary path, we will end up in isolation and defeat. What we concretely integrate is the basic interests of the working class with partial and temporary recognition of the interests of forces which can and must be allied with in specific circumstances. For example:

To sustain a long war by long-term co-operation or, in other words, to subordinate the class struggle to the present national struggle against Japan--such is the fundamental principle of the united front.  
(SW 2.215)

If we were maintaining the "pure" principled position, we would not think of "subordinating" the class struggle to the national struggle. But this is the Trotskyist position, which was defeated in the course of the Chinese revolution. It is also tantamount to not recognizing that there is a principal contradiction and that this may differ from the fundamental contradiction. Of course it depends on how "subordination" is understood and carried out. The above is an example not of combining two into one, but of the correct estimation of the relations between two forms of struggle, the grasping of the "key link" in regard to two forms of struggle, the subordination of principles governing one area of struggle to those governing the other so as to maintain still higher principles ("the good of the revolution").

In another place Mao maintains:

Socialist ownership by the whole people is the principle, but in order to realize this principle we should combine it with flexibility. And flexibility means state capitalism, which takes not one but "various" forms, and which is to be realized not overnight but "gradually". That makes for flexibility. We write into our constitution what is feasible now and exclude what is not. (SW 5.143-44)

Some would argue that Mao is wrong in principle here, that this is an example of combining two into one, that communists in power cannot foster state capitalism. Indeed, arguments along these lines are becoming fashionable in the wake of Hoxha's attacks on Mao and the CPC. We are still investigating the concrete policies pursued and so do not have firm conclusions in this area, but we do take a stand on the question of principle involved. That is whether or not forms of state capitalism may or may not be employed by the working class in power in backward or peasant-majority countries in the construction of socialism. We agree with Mao that they may. This is consistent with the experience and teachings of the Bolshevik party in the time of Lenin and Stalin, and those who criticize Mao on this point of principle must go further and attack Lenin and Stalin as well. Rather than being an example of combining two into one, of blurring opposites by combining them into a muddle, the above is another example of the recognition of opposites and a view of their dialectical relation, which in this case results in the eventual dying out of the one (state capitalism) and the winning out of the other (socialist ownership), assuming correct policies are pursued for a fairly long period of time. This example is closely bound up with Mao's view, which is consistent with that of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, that revolution is made by stages and sub-stages, not all at once or as we would like it.

A second objection that could be raised to Mao's statement is that Mao uses the word principle twice and gives it two different meanings, so his statement is a jumble.

In 1937 Mao wrote that "There are major and minor principles in everything, and the minor principles are subordinate to the major." (SW 2.19)

In saying that "the integration of principle with flexibility is a Marxist-Leninist principle" Mao isn't giving the word "principle" two different meanings but referring to major or minor, greater or lesser principles, principles of different scope.

A third objection could be: does Mao's statement mean that to integrate principle with flexibility we must always compromise in some way, even on major principles? Mao's answer is no:

the basic principles of Marxism must never be violated, otherwise mistakes will be made. It is dogmatism to approach Marxism from a metaphysical point of view and regard it as something rigid. It is revisionism to negate the basic principles of Marxism and to negate its universal truth. (SW 5.434)

And he also says that "When it comes to questions of line, questions of principle, I take a firm hold and do not relax my grip. On major questions of principle I do not make concessions". (Stuart Schram, ed., Chairman Mao Talks to the People; Talks and Letters: 1956-1971, trans. John Chinnery and Tiejun (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), p. 295)



Footnotes

1. Some of the more important ones are numbers 3, 16, 20, 23, 36, 45, 47, 48, 49, 53, 59, 65, 76, 77 and also 50, 51, 52.
2. Cf. Hoxha's remark that "within tactics there are principles which must be respected and must guide the new tactic". (Reflections on China (COUSM-L, 1979), p. 52) This is a correct but rare observation by Hoxha bearing directly on dialectics.
3. At times Lenin separates or fences off principles from certain areas of activity, as when he said:

In general, Comrade Trotsky's great mistake, his mistake of principle, lies in the fact that by raising the question of "principle" at this time he is dragging back the Party and the Soviet power. We have, thank heaven, done with principles and gone on to practical business. (CW 32.22, extract 56)

Lenin had an important point to make and it appears he stretched things --actually, contracted them--to make the point. He implies there are no principles governing "practical business". It would have been more accurate to say there are lesser principles governing practical business, and the less important the business, the "lesser" are the principles involved until the point is reached, the "dividing line", when they are insignificant. As we have said, the above quote is not representative of Lenin's approach generally, which acknowledges the interpenetration of principle with all (significant) areas of communist activity.

As a subject for further study we note that Liu Shao-chi, basing himself on some remarks of Stalin, argues unconvincingly that we don't compromise on "principles", only in practical matters. Liu doesn't distinguish between major and minor principles but refers simply to "principles". See Boyd Compton, Mao's China: Party Reform Documents, 1942-44, trans. Compton (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), pages 147-55.

4. Brest-Litovsk is discussed by Lenin in "Left"-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder, chapter 4.
5. Here Lenin limits the "fundamental principles of communism" to two, as he does in other writings of this period. But elsewhere he refers to other basic or fundamental principles of communism (e.g. truth is always concrete), so stress should not be put on this formulation. Cf. Engels, "The Principles of Communism", 1847.
6. This is one of the points made in the book On the Roots of Revisionism (pp. 232-34) criticizing Dimitrov's theoretical presentation of Popular Front governments. (The book is available from Road Publications, P.O. Box 24589, San Francisco, CA 94124 for \$6.90.)
7. Some comrades are reserving judgment on the conclusions reached in this area.
8. This may be viewed in terms of a spectrum, but we prefer to avoid diagrammatic analogies as they are easily misused.

EXTRACTS FROM LENIN ON PRINCIPLES

\*see footnote on last page of Extracts

- 1897 1 2.333-34 The attitude of the working class, as a fighter against the autocracy, towards all the other social classes and groups in the political opposition is very precisely determined by the basic principles of Social-Democracy expounded in the famous COMMUNIST MANIFESTO. ... This support does not presuppose, nor does it call for, any compromise with non-Social-Democratic programmes and principles-- it is support given to an ally against a particular enemy.
- 2 2.338 First, it lies in the general failure of the representatives of old revolutionary theories to understand the principles of Social-Democracy, accustomed as they are to base their programmes and plans of activity on abstract ideas and not on an exact appraisal of the actual classes operating in the country, classes that have been placed in certain relationships by history. This lack of realistic discussion of the interests which support Russian democracy can only give rise to the opinion that Russian Social-Democracy leaves the democratic tasks of Russian revolutionaries in the background.
- 1899 3 4.211-12 We do not regard Marx's theory as something completed and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the foundation stone of the science which socialists must develop in all directions if they wish to keep pace with life. We think that an independent elaboration of Marx's theory is especially essential for Russian socialists; for this theory provides only general guiding principles, which, in particular, are applied in England differently than... in Russia. ... But to forget the political struggle for the economic would mean to depart from the basic principle of international Social-Democracy, it would mean to forget what the entire history of the labour movement teaches us.
- 4 4.237-38 Such is our view on the demands that must be met by the section of our programme dealing with principles and on the basic postulates that must be expressed in it with the maximum precision and clarity. ...the means of struggle should be precisely those indicated by the Emancipation of Labour group (agitation, revolutionary organisation, transition at "a suitable moment" to determined attack, not rejecting, in principle, even terror); ... The programme should leave the question of means open, allowing the choice of means to the militant organisations and to Party congresses that determine the tactics of the Party. Questions of tactics, however, can hardly be introduced in the programme (with the exception of the most important questions, questions of principle, such as our attitude to other fighters against the autocracy). ... The victory of socialism must not be connected, in principle, with the substitution of direct people's legislation for parliamentarism.
- 5 4.240 This section of the programme [the second section on practical demands] must (in conjunction with the preceding section) provide the basic, guiding principles for agitation, without in any way, of course, hindering agitators in this or that locality, branch of production, factory, etc., from putting forward demands in a somewhat modified form, demands that are more concrete or more specific.
- 6 4.244-45 "The Russian Social-Democratic working-class party, giving its support to every revolutionary movement against the present state and social system, declares that it will support the peasantry, insofar as it is capable of revolutionary struggle against the autocracy, as the class that suffers most from the Russian people's lack of rights and from the survivals of serfdom in Russian society. [new paragraph] "Proceeding from this principle, the Russian Social-Democratic working-class party demands: ..."



7 4.250 It is, of course, not easy to draw a line of demarcation here, but we do not believe that any one demand in our programme can be "easily" realized. Our role is to outline the basic principles and basic tasks; those who will be called upon to decide these problems in practice will know how to consider the details.

1902 8 5.342-43 It is particularly in regard to the political struggle that the "class point of view" demands that the proletariat give an impetus to every democratic movement. The political demands of working-class democracy do not differ in principle from those of bourgeois democracy, they differ only in degree. In the struggle for economic emancipation, for the socialist revolution, the proletariat stands on a basis different in principle and it stands alone (the small producer will come to its aid only to the extent that he enters, or is preparing to enter, its ranks). In the struggle for political liberation, however, we have many allies, towards whom we must not remain indifferent. But while our allies in the bourgeois-democratic camp, in struggling for liberal reforms, will always glance back and seek to adjust matters so that they will be able, as before, "to eat well, sleep peacefully, and live merrily" at other people's expense, the proletariat will march forward to the end, without looking back.

9 6.47 Against sections XI and XII I have an extremely important objection in principle: these paragraphs present the relation of the proletariat to the small producers in an altogether one-sided and incorrect way (for "the working and exploited masses" consist of precisely the proletariat and the small producers). The two paragraphs are directly at variance with the fundamental theses of the Communist Manifesto, the General Rules of the International ... ("Notes on Plekhanov's Second Draft Programme")

10 6.203-04 The Socialist-Revolutionaries are confusing socialisation of the land with bourgeois nationalisation of the land. Speaking in the abstract, the latter is conceivable on the basis of capitalism too, without abolishing wage-labour. But the very example of these same Socialist-Revolutionaries is vivid confirmation of the truth that to advance the demand for nationalisation of the land in a police state is tantamount to obscuring the only revolutionary principle, that of the class struggle, and bringing grist to the mill of every kind of bureaucracy. ... Let the agrarian programme of the Socialist-Revolutionaries serve as a lesson and a warning to all socialists, a glaring example of what results from an absence of ideology and principles, which some unthinking people call freedom from dogma. When it came to action, the Socialist-Revolutionaries did not reveal even a single of the three conditions essential for the elaboration of a consistent socialist programme: a clear idea of the ultimate aim; a correct understanding of the path leading to that aim; an accurate conception of the true state of affairs at the given moment or of the immediate tasks of that moment.

11 6.286 The stormy period we are experiencing, with the struggle flaring up now here, now there, makes it possible, under cover of this struggle, to evade all and sundry questions of principle, limiting oneself to sympathetic support of all its manifestations and to the invention of "individual resistance" during a comparative lull.

1903 12 6.307 This task is a very difficult one, for it is not unity of a few handfuls of revolutionarily minded intellectuals that we need, but unity of all leaders of the working-class movement, which has roused the whole of a large class of the population to independent life and struggle. We need unification based on a strict singleness of principle which must be consciously and firmly arrived at by all or by the vast majority of committees, organisations, and groups, of intellectuals and workers, ... ("Announcement of the formation of an Organizing Committee")

- 13 6.326 Two fundamental principles by which all Social-Democrats in Russia should be guided in the national question have been quite correctly outlined by the League [of Armenian Social-Democrats]. These are, firstly, the demand for political and civil liberties and complete equality, rather than for national autonomy; and, secondly, the demand for the right to self-determination for every nationality forming part of the state. But neither of these principles is as yet quite consistently brought out by the League of Armenian Social-Democrats.
- 1904 14 7.230 The principle involved is: should we leave it to the organisations and members of the Party to apply the general and fundamental theses of the programme to their specific conditions, <sup>and</sup> to develop them for the purpose of such application, or are we, merely out of fear of suspicion, to fill the programme with petty details, minutiae, repetitions, and casuistry? The principle involved is: how can Social-Democrats discern ("suspect") in a fight against casuistry an attempt to restrict elementary democratic rights and liberties?
- 15 7.274 [mentioned; on Mensheviks and membership in party]
- 16 7.328 Plekhanov's resolution lays down a general principle, outlines a definite attitude as regards principles and tactics, towards bourgeois liberalism in Russia, whereas Starover's attempts to define the concrete conditions in which "temporary agreements" would be permissible with "liberal or liberal-democratic trends" ... The absence of any general principle and the attempt to enumerate "conditions" result in a petty and, strictly speaking, incorrect specification of these conditions.
- 17 7.340 the Bund withdrew from the Party after the Second Congress rejected the principle of federation.
- 18 7.341 It is the unquestionable and incontrovertible fact that the minority was formed of those in our Party who gravitate most towards opportunism. The minority was formed of those elements in the Party who are least stable in theory, least steadfast in matters of principle. It was from the Right wing of the Party that the minority was formed.
- 19 7.365-66 from the standpoint of principle these endless exposures of my contradictions boil down to nothing but anarchistic phrase-mongering. ... If the talk about bureaucracy [by Martov, etc.] contains any principle at all, if it is not just an anarchistic denial of the duty of the part to submit to the whole, then what we have here is the principle of opportunism, which seeks to lessen the responsibility of individual intellectuals to the party of the proletariat ...
- 20 7.368 This misfortune befell Comrade Plekhanov because he violated a basic principle of that dialectics to which he so unluckily referred, namely, that there is no abstract truth, that truth is always concrete.
- 21 7.405 However poor I may be, I am a thousand times better off than those whose supporters do not utter an awkward phrase inadvertently, but on every issue—whether of organisation, tactics, or programme—~~adhere~~ stubbornly and persistently to principles which are the very opposite of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy.
- 22 7.407 ("A Few Words on Dialectics")
- 23 7.409 \*The difficult problem of drawing a line between squabbling and differences of principle now solves itself: all that relates to co-optation is squabbling; all that relates to analysis of the struggle at the Congress, to the controversy

over Paragraph 1 and the swing towards opportunism and anarchism is a difference of principle. ... One of the basic principles of dialectics is that there is no such thing as abstract truth, truth is always concrete.

- 24 7.412 the proletariat can, and inevitably will, become an invincible force only through its ideological unification on the principles of Marxism being reinforced by the material unity of organisation. . . .
- 25 7.475-76 Comrade Luxemburg commits exactly the same basic error. She repeats naked words without troubling to grasp their concrete meaning. She raises bogeys without informing herself of the actual issue in the controversy. She puts in my mouth commonplaces, general principles and conceptions, absolute truths, and tries to pass over the relative truths, pertaining to perfectly definite facts, with which alone I operate. And then she rails against set formulas and invokes the dialectics of Marx! It is the worthy comrade's own article that consists of nothing but manufactured formulas and runs counter to the ABC of dialectics. This ABC tells us that there is no such thing as abstract truth, truth is always concrete.
- 1906 26 10.163 ("Principles of Party Organisation") the principle of democratic centralism in the Party is now universally recognised; ... the elective principle in the Party organisations should be applied from top to bottom; ... departures from this principle, for example: two-stage elections or co-optation to elected bodies, etc., may be permitted only when police obstacles are insurmountable, and in exceptional cases especially provided for; [this was from the piece titled: "A Tactical Platform for the Unity Congress"]
- 27 10.462-63 And the Bolsheviks defined the tactics of the socialist proletariat during the bourgeois-democratic revolution as follows: the proletariat must lead the peasantry, without merging with it, against the old authorities and the old order, paralysing the instability and inconsistency of the liberal bourgeoisie, which wavers between people's freedom and the old authorities. [new paragraph] It is exactly these principles of the tactics of the Russian Social-Democratic proletariat in the present period that the Mensheviks have not understood. ... The Bolsheviks assert that the opportunism of the Mensheviks consists in their forgetting the basic interests of democracy, and consequently of socialism, because it cannot achieve real successes in an era of bourgeois revolution unless democracy is successful...
- 28 11.365 [Kautsky on underlying principles of tactics of Social-Democrats in Russian bourgeois revolution]
- 29 11.160 From the point of view of principle, the Central Committee's mistake lies in its utter failure to understand the difference between a demonstration strike and a strike for an uprising. ("Political Crisis, Bankruptcy of Opportunist Tactics")
- 30 11.404 Plekhanov, in violation of the elementary principles of Marxism, deduces the concrete relations between the Russian Social-Democrats and the Cadets from the "general concept" bourgeois revolution, instead of studying the actual specific features of the Russian bourgeois revolution in order to obtain a general conception of the mutual relations between the bourgeoisie, the proletariat and the peasantry in contemporary Russia.
- 31 11.406 Will not electoral agreements be prejudicial to what we hold most dear: "the purity of the principles" of Social-Democracy?



- 1907 32 12.167 ("Petty-Bourgeois Tactics") The principle of class struggle is the very foundation of all Social-Democratic teachings and of all Social-Democratic policy.
- 33 12.172 The unity of the Party is most dear to us. But the purity of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy is dearer still.
- 34 12.212 We thought that, particularly in a revolutionary epoch, Social-Democracy should, at its congresses, sum up the periods of social development, applying its own Marxist methods of analysis to them and teaching other classes to glance back and view political events from the standpoint of principle, not from the standpoint of the interests of the moment or the achievements of a few days in the way the bourgeoisie do--the bourgeoisie actually despise all theory and are afraid of any class analysis of recent history.
- 35 13.111 Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution, ... is a systematic statement of the fundamental tactical differences with the Mensheviks. ... The Bolsheviks claimed for the proletariat the role of leader in the democratic revolution. The Mensheviks reduced its role to that of an "extreme opposition". ... How these differences of principle were reflected in practical activities is well known.
- 1910 36 17.34-36 The theory of Marxism, "the fundamental principles" of our entire world outlook and of our entire Party programme and tactics, is now in the forefront of all Party life not by mere chance, but because it is inevitable. ... It was precisely this rapprochement on the question of the fundamental principles of Marxism that constituted the real basis for really harmonious work between the pro-Party Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks during the whole year following the Plenary Meeting. ... It is precisely from the standpoint of "fundamental principles" that Trotsky's bloc with Potresov and the Vperyod group is adventurism.
- 1911 37 17.94 he did not yield to the quite usual and quite philistine tendency to keep out of any sharp struggle on questions of principle, ... On the contrary, every time a question arose concerning the fundamental nature of the revolutionary party of the working class, its ultimate aims, blocs (alliances) with the bourgeoisie, concessions to monarchism, etc., Singer, who devoted all his life to this practical activity, was always to be found at the head of the staunchest and most resolute fighters against every manifestation of opportunism.
- 38 17.265 A faction is an organisation within a party, united, not by its place of work, language or other objective conditions, but by a particular platform of views on party questions. The authors of the message are a faction...Every faction is convinced that its platform and its policy are the best means of abolishing factions, for no one regards the existence of factions as ideal. The only difference is that factions with clear, consistent, integral platforms openly defend their platforms, while unprincipled factions hide behind cheap shouts about their virtue, about their non-factionalism.
- 1912 39 18.246-47 ("Questions of Principle") Rech has begun to speak (It has done so at last!) of the differences it has with the Lefts over questions of principle. ... "Over a period of five years," writes Rech, "we have never seen any difference between the tactics of the Social-Democratic Party within the framework of the Duma and those of other opposition parties. Yet in this case it is a question of elections to the Duma." There you have a specimen of sophistry and distortion of the truth! Not on a single question have Social-Democratic tactics in the Duma been akin to Cadet tactics. They have been fundamentally different on all questions: they have not been tactics of "peace" or of liberalism; they have

always been tactics of democracy and the class struggle. (new paragraph) Does Rech really maintain that mere "voting against" can be described as kinship in tactics, instead of kinship in posing questions from the standpoint of principle in the Duma speeches and in the formulas of procedure?

40 18.304 We shall remark in this connection that a liberal demand is being put forward here instead of a democratic one and as a disguise for a complete departure from democracy. The participation of people's representatives in a court of justice is undoubtedly a democratic principle. The consistent application of this principle requires, in the first place, that the election of jurors should not be made conditional on qualifications, i.e., the right to be chosen should not be restricted by educational, property, residential or any other conditions.

1914 41 20.473 We welcome the "carrying of strife into the ranks of the workers", for they and they alone will distinguish between "strife" and differences on principles; they will sort out these differences for themselves, form their own opinion and decide not "with whom to go, but where to go", i.e. their own definite and clear line, drawn up and tested by themselves. [Moscow workers wrote about not with whom to go, but where to go, repudiating Plekhanov.]

1916 42 23.35 National self-determination is but one of the democratic demands and does not, in principle, differ from other democratic demands.

43 24.77 Its [the true internationalist trend] principle is: "Our chief enemy is at home." [in WWI]

44 24.437-38 Is it not the duty of a democrat, who wishes to raise the question of re-elections, to recognise and emphasize the principle of democracy--the right of the population at any time to recall each and every representative, each and every person holding elected office?

45 25.309 ("On Compromises") The task of a truly revolutionary party is not to declare that it is impossible to renounce all compromises, but to be able, through all compromises, when they are unavoidable, to remain true to its principles, to its class, to its revolutionary purpose, to its task of paving the way for revolution and educating the mass of the people for victory in the revolution.

46 26.389 This is the way of bourgeois intelligentsia, of all conciliators, who ruin everything with their constant agreement in principle and disagreement in practice.

1918 47 26.444 On examining the arguments in favour of an immediate revolutionary war, the first argument we encounter is that a separate peace at this juncture would, objectively speaking, be an agreement with the German imperialists, an "imperialist deal", and so forth, and that, consequently, such a peace would mean a complete break with the fundamental principles of proletarian internationalism. (new paragraph) This argument, however, is obviously incorrect. Workers who lose a strike and sign terms for the resumption of work which are unfavourable to them and favourable to the capitalists, do not betray socialism. The only people who betray socialism are those who secure advantages for a section of the workers in exchange for profit to the capitalists; only such agreements are impermissible in principle. ... [p.445] In other words, the underlying principle of our tactics must not be, which of the two imperialisms it is more profitable to aid at this juncture, but rather, how the socialist revolution can be most firmly and reliably ensured the possibility of consolidating itself, or, at least, of maintaining itself in one country until it is joined by other countries.

- 48 26.446 It is said that the German Social-Democratic opponents of the war have now become "defeatists" and are requesting us not to yield to German imperialism. But we recognised defeatism only in respect of one's own imperialist bourgeoisie, and we always discountenanced victory over an alien imperialism, victory attained in formal or actual alliance with a "friendly" imperialism, as a method impermissible in principle and generally wrong. ("Theses on the Question of a Separate Peace")
- 49 27.255-56 Secondly, the essence of the compromise is that the Soviet government has abandoned the principle of admission of new members to cooperative societies without entrance fees (which is the only consistently proletarian principle); it has also abandoned the idea of uniting the whole population of a given locality in a single cooperative society. Contrary to this principle, which is the only socialist principle and which corresponds to the task of abolishing classes, the "working-class co-operative societies" (which in this case call themselves "class" societies only because they subordinate themselves to the class interests of the bourgeoisie) were given the right to continue to exist.
- 50 27.311 Then out come Julius Ceasar and Napoleon III and the Brest-Litovsk peace and everything; but not a word about your experts, about your engineers. And when they say, when Bukharin says, this is no violation of principle, I say that here we have a violation of the principle of the Paris Commune. State capitalism is not money but social relations. If we pay 2,000 in accordance with the railway decree, that is state capitalism.
- 51 27.315-16 From this basic fact follows, on the other hand, the explanation as to why the Soviet government was obliged in certain cases to take a step backward, or to agree to compromise with bourgeois tendencies. Such a step backward and departure from the principles of the Paris Commune was, for example, the introduction of high salaries for a number of bourgeois experts. ... Compromises of this kind are needed at the present time as the sole (because we are late with accounting and control) guarantee of slower, but surer progress.
- 1920 52 31.37 The conclusion is clear: to reject compromises "on principle", to reject the permissibility of compromises in general, no matter of what kind, is childishness, which it is difficult even to consider seriously. A political leader who desires to be useful to the revolutionary proletariat must be able to distinguish concrete cases of compromises that are inexcusable and are an expression of opportunism and treachery; he must direct all the force of criticism, the full intensity of merciless exposure and relentless war, against these concrete compromises, and not allow the past masters of "practical" socialism and the parliamentary Jesuits to dodge and wriggle out of responsibility by means of disquisitions on "compromises in general".
- 53 31.92 the unity of the international tactics of the communist working-class movement in all countries demands, not the elimination of variety or the suppression of national distinctions (which is a pipe dream at present), but an application of the fundamental principles of communism (Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat), which will correctly modify these principles in certain particulars, correctly adapt and apply them to national and nation-state distinctions. To seek out, investigate, predict, and grasp that which is nationally specific and nationally distinctive, in the concrete manner in which each country should tackle a single international task: victory over opportunism and left doctrinairism within the working-class movement...



- 54 31.355 [quoting himself from 1906] "Why does Mr. Blank hold it self-evident that all Marxist principles were forgotten during the period of 'whirlwind'? Because he distorts Marxism into Brentanoism, and thinks that such 'principles' as the seizure of liberty, the establishment of revolutionary authority and the use of force by the people are not Marxist. ..."
- 55 31.383 Serrati fears the destruction of the trade unions, the co-operative societies and municipalities, and the inefficiency and mistakes of the novices. [new paragraph] What the Communists fear is the reformists' sabotage of the revolution. [new paragraph] This difference reveals Serrati's error of principle. He keeps reiterating a simple idea: the need for flexible tactics. This idea is incontrovertible. The trouble is that Serrati leans to the right when, in the present-day conditions in Italy one should lean to the left.
- 56 32.22 In general, Comrade Trotsky's great mistake, his mistake of principle, lies in the fact that by raising the question of "principle" at this time he is dragging back the Party and the Soviet power. We have, thank heaven, done with principles and have gone on to practical business.
- 1921 57 32.80 ("Disagreements on Principle") [criticism of Bukharin and Trotsky on "industrial democracy", etc.]
- 58 32.90f [on roots of mistakes, the theoretical roots of mistakes by Bukharin especially: eclecticism, not dialectics]
- 59 32.468f Among Communists, who have already convened their Third Congress and have worked out definite fundamental principles, compromises under certain conditions are necessary. ... [p.469] I have met and talked with few anarchists in my life, but all the same I have seen enough of them. I sometimes succeeded in reaching agreement with them about aims, but never as regards principles. Principles are not an aim, a programme, a tactic, or a theory. Tactics and theory are not principles. How do we differ from the anarchists on principles? The principles of Communism consist in the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and in the use of state coercion in the transition period. Such are the principles of communism, but they are not its aim.
- 60 32.475 Nevertheless we won through because we kept in mind not only our aims but also our principles, and did not tolerate in our Party those who kept silent about principles but talked of aims, "dynamic tendencies" and the "transition from passivity to activity". Perhaps we shall be blamed for preferring to keep such gentlemen in prison. But dictatorship is impossible in any other way.
- 1900 61 34.44 [on the split over principles in the Social-Democratic movement]
- 1901 62 34.83 I am not at all so stubborn about toning down specific remarks, but as a matter of principle I cannot give up the ideas that it is our right (and our duty) to trounce R.N.S. for his political juggling.
- 1915 63 35.196 These people in principle "firmly disagree" with the opportunists, but in practice, on all important questions, they agree!! Mme. Roland-Holst rejects the principle of defence of the fatherland, i.e., she rejects social-chauvinism. That is good. But she does not reject opportunism!
- 1914 64 36.294 [report of a lecture] He, Comrade Lenin, had always pointed out the opportunism lurking in such an approach, he had always fought against conciliatory attitudes which sacrifice principles. All the resolutions of Vandervelde



and Kautsky suffered from this opportunist tendency of smoothing over obvious contradictions.

- 1918 65 36.498 But the example of Proshyan revealed how deep the roots of patriotism were even in the most sincere and convinced socialists from among the Left S.R.s, how differences in the general principles underlying men's world views had inevitably shown themselves at a difficult turning-point in history.
- 1912 66 39.737-38 [principles in reference to nations, including during war time]
- 1903 67 40.53 In order to make a comparison of the programmes and to assess them, it is necessary to examine the principles, the theory, from which the programme flows.
- 1901 68 43.52 I cannot agree that the demand for state unemployment insurance could serve to stir the workers into action. I doubt whether this is right in principle: in a class state unemployment insurance can hardly amount to more than deception. ... Aid and benefits for the unemployed are all right, but "state insurance"--?
- 1904 69 43.150 [Mensheviks lack of principle on the party] This is no battle of principles. It is the most outrageous mockery of the Party and principles.
- 1905 70 43.164 this point is enormously important in principle, and its practical significance for the future will also be very great.
- 1910 71 43.232 it is precisely in Germany that the theoretical principles of Marxism have taken deepest root...
- 1911 72 43.269 The liquidators ... put out leaflets, ... specially to provoke squabbles and confuse the struggle over issues of principle.
- 1912 73 43.285 [mentioned; not important]
- 1915 74 43.478 What we need is ... a consistent revolutionary declaration of principles to help the workers find the correct path.
- 1917 75 43.633 The principle should be established that the Party should not answer scandalmongering and slander ... until ... [three conditions listed]
- 1902 76 5.525 [Opportunism is a lack of definite and firm principles]
- 1917 77 42.4749 [quoting Plekhanov, with agreement] "I fully support what Comrade Posadovsky has said. Every given democratic principle should be examined not on its own merits in the abstract, but in its bearing on what may be called the basic principle of democracy, namely, on the principle that says: [Latin] the welfare of the people is the highest law. Translated into the language of the revolutionary, this means that the success of the revolution is the highest law. If it were necessary for the success of the revolution to restrict the effect of one or another democratic principle, it would be criminal to stop at such a restriction."...The enemies of socialism may be deprived for a time not only of inviolability of the person, and not only of freedom of the press, but of universal suffrage as well. A bad parliament should be "dismissed" in two weeks. The good of the revolution, the good of the working class, is the highest law. That was how Plekhanov spoke when he was a socialist. [Lenin is commenting on speeches at the Second Party Congress in 1903]

\*The following group of passages from Lenin's Collected Works is presented as background reading for the paper on questions A1 and A2 and as a guide for further study of the topic. We strongly recommend reading, or at least skimming, the extracts before reading the paper.

There is a danger of using such material out of context, and we have examined the context before using specific passages in the report. We encourage those reading the paper to do likewise. It goes without saying that any utilization of such brief passages must take the context into account if distortion or misinterpretation is to be avoided. This does not negate the value of having the extracts for ready reference.

All words in brackets (squared corners) are the editors'.

## THE CPC AND PLA IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST MODERN REVISIONISM

**QUESTION:** Does Hoxha successfully back up his accusation that Chinese policy lacked an M-L spinal cord in his comments in Reflections on China (ROC) on the struggle against revisionism after 1956 (or the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution)? Or does Hoxha show himself unable to understand tactical flexibility? (the question in parenthesis is not dealt with in this paper)

### Introduction

In July, 1978, the PLA in an "Open Letter" to the Central Committee of the CPC and the government of China condemned China's actions which unilaterally cut off all economic aid to Albania. Like Khrushchev and the CPSU in the early 1960s, the CPC raised ideological and political differences between parties to the level of state-to-state relations.<sup>1</sup> While it was correct for the PLA to respond to these attacks, they raised a number of charges and criticisms against the CPC that contradicted previous positions they had taken. At the time of the PLA "Open Letter" most of us (at least those of us in the XMLC) did not closely scrutinize its contents. We are self-critical for not doing a more detailed analysis of the letter. While we correctly saw the treachery of the CPC actions, and we undertook to support and defend the PLA, we slavishly accepted the PLA's charges, or at least did not seriously question them. When Imperialism and the Revolution (Imperialism) came out, and later ROC, we were forced to deal with the PLA charges and criticisms, which were then much more extensive. In the main we characterize our error as slavishness toward the PLA, and of belittling the importance of doing detailed, independent investigation of important political questions.

One area where the contradictions between the PLA's current and past views are very clear is the PLA's re-assessment of the struggle against modern revisionism. Previously, the PLA recognized that the CPC played a leading role in the struggle, and consistently praised that role, at least openly. They now view the CPC role in the struggle as conciliatory and vacillating ("lacking an ML spinal cord"), motivated by national interests, and as secondary to their own leading role in the fight against Khrushchev. The old and new positions are in sharp contrast.

The XCPP-CCCP<sup>2</sup> article, "The PLA's Treacherous Reversal: An analysis of the PLA Letter", specifically addresses most of the PLA criticisms of the Chinese role in the struggle against modern revisionism (see pgs. 48-65 of their pamphlet). This report will use the "Reversal" article as a focal point: expressing areas of agreement and disagreement, raising criticisms of the article, and raising some additional points as well.

The general conclusions reached in this report are:

- 1) basic agreement with the "Reversal" article, especially on the fact that the PLA has distorted or re-written much of what took place in the struggle;
- 2) the PLA has exaggerated its own role in the struggle and has essentially denied that the CPC played an extremely important and leading role;
- 3) the CPC did make certain errors in the struggle and showed some vacillation around certain issues;

4) the strengths of the "Reversal" article (the section that deals with the struggle against revisionism) outweigh its weaknesses but there are some problems--a tendency to exaggerate the CPC role in responding to the PLA's charges; to make some assertions about the PLA role which are not always factually borne out; and most importantly to apologize or take a soft stand towards both the CPC and PLA on certain questions.

Some of us in the study feel that there may be some significant errors that both parties made in the struggle against modern revisionism such as: endorsing the 1957 and 1960 Moscow Statements, either in their entirety or without significant reservations; both parties' stand (or lack of it) toward open polemics; the attitude and practice of both parties on reconstituting another international. While we are mainly raising these as questions, and the scope of this report did not cover them, some of us do feel that the XCPP-CCCP article lacks in really trying to address these and other questions.

### Yugoslavia

The CPC is charged with vacillation and conciliation toward Yugoslavia in the 1954-1957 period (actually the PLA says up till 1960, which is factually incorrect--see "Reversal" pg. 49 bottom). This period, from 1954-57, marked Khrushchev's attempt for rapprochement with Belgrade. Almost all sources, and "Reversal" concurs, show that the CPC went along with the CPSU in treating Yugoslavia as a fraternal socialist country. The CPC justified this stand "for the purpose of winning it (Yugoslavia) back to the path of socialism" and to keep a watchful eye on Tito, although they "did not entertain very much hope for the Tito clique even then" (Polemic on the General Line, FLP, pg. 176)

During this same period the PLA maintained a strong stand against Tito and Yugoslavia. In fact, Albania launched vehement attacks against Yugoslavia during this period, especially stepping them up after the Hungarian Revolution. Because of the perilous danger that Yugoslavia and Tito represented to Albania, it is quite understandable that the PLA played such a strong role in criticizing and condemning Titoite revisionism. When Khrushchev sought reconciliation with Tito, the PLA felt even more threatened. The PLA obviously did not go along with the CPSU's attempt to redeem Tito. Subsequently, the flow of capital goods from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to Albania was reduced in 1955, and Moscow's general political interest in Tirana declined. An interesting note is that the PLA managed to offset the decline of capital goods imports and aid from the SU and East Europe by obtaining Chinese economic support which rose rapidly from 1955-57. By 1957 the Soviets and East Europeans increased aid and credits to Albania, presumably as a response to growing Chinese-Albanian relations.

The CPC erred by going along with the CPSU's attempts to rehabilitate Tito and to treat Yugoslavia as a fraternal socialist country, although the CPC did not go as far as the CPSU. Enough was known of Tito and Yugoslavia that there should have been no doubts or illusions whatsoever. The struggle against Titoite revisionism required consistent and determined ideological and political struggle, not conciliation to any degree. There was no apparent good reason to compromise by backing off the struggle against Tito at that time. We question the 'conclusion' reached in the XCPP-CCCP article:

Let us note in passing that the above arguments of the CPC are rather similar to the reasons given by the PLA for uniting with the allegedly vacillating CPC in the struggle against Khrushchevite revisionism! Noting this, one can wonder why the PLA so sharply condemns Chinese "conciliation" with the Yugoslavs, which lasted for three years, while they see no problem in their own extremely close ties with the CPC which they now characterize as not really a

Marxist-Leninist Party, over the last 20 years. Furthermore, the CPC never praised the Yugoslavs, as the PLA did consistently. (pg. 50)

This comparison of China's tactics vis a vis Yugoslavia during the 1954-57 period to the PLA's toward China for the past 20 years essentially becomes an apology for both the CPC and PLA because it does not really question whether these actions by both parties were incorrect. Instead the article leaves it hanging, as to whether the parties were wrong or right. It seems that 'rotten diplomacy' and an incorrect view of open polemics characterized the actions of both parties in these particular relations during the periods in question.

### 1960: The Conflict Sharpens

During 1960, a year which reflected the real opening of polemics and the sharpening of the struggle, the CPC, despite PLA charges to the contrary, played a strong and leading role. In April of 1960, the CPC published "Long Live Leninism", a series of articles which polemicized against the Soviet views on peaceful coexistence, peaceful transition<sup>3</sup> and more. The CPC made strong distinctions between the peace policy of the proletariat, the Marxist-Leninist parties, and socialist countries, and the 'peace policy' of the imperialists. The CPC did struggle sharply with the CPSU on a number of questions in 1960, unlike what the PLA says or implies. Further, in this particular case, the publishing of the articles led to much sharper struggle at the Bucharest Conference for instance.

The Soviets knew the articles were a polemic against them. They denounced the series as distortions, and as incorrect interpretations of Lenin, especially on the matter of peaceful coexistence. The Soviets also responded with press articles which attacked present-day leftism and dogmatism in the international communist movement.

At the Bucharest Conference in June, the Soviets launched an attack on the CPC, which the CPC made a strong response to. The PLA became the main, perhaps only, supporter of the CPC from this conference. In the "Reversal" article (pg. 51-53) the account of this Conference seems accurate. There is one point made in the article that might not be on the mark:

And it was China who was the first victim of Khrushchev's anti-Marxist policy of extending the antagonisms which developed between two parties over questions of principle into the realm of state-to-state relations. These are histeric facts.....(pg. 52) (our emphasis)

It is not so clear who was the first victim of Soviet economic (state-to-state) reprisals unlike what is called an "historic fact" by the XCPP-CCCP. First, Albania suffered from some economic reprisals in 1955-57, when the Soviets and East Europeans reduced their exports of capital goods to Albania<sup>4</sup>. Second, the Albanians also received economic reprisals in the summer of 1960, the same time that the Soviets withdrew aid from China. One of the sources for this report<sup>5</sup> states that the Soviet actions toward Albania were more drastic and difficult to unravel than its moves against China. Our main point here is not so much the fact that the Soviets took these actions against China and Albania, but rather is a point of accuracy. Since the PLA is often inaccurate in describing its own role or that of the CPC in the struggle, we think it is important to avoid the same error. The XCPP-CCCP assertion of "historic fact" as quoted above seems to fall into the category of inaccuracy and needs to be pointed out.

### The Moscow Conference, November, 1960

The Moscow Conference saw the continuation of the sharp ideological struggle

from the Bucharest Conference. The CPC played the leading role in struggling against Khrushchev, including a successful battle against the Soviet attempt to stifle any opposition. Under the guise of opposing fractionalism, the Soviets wanted to eliminate any differing views by making the majority views of the conference binding on all, and by banning any fractional activity within the bodies of fraternal parties. The CPC successfully opposed the Soviet proposals around this, charging it was a maneuver to prevent the CPC and others from openly publicizing their views.<sup>6</sup>

Hoxha was China's most outspoken ally in Moscow. In his speech delivered on November 16<sup>7</sup>, he repeated most of the Chinese positions on the nature of the epoch, peaceful coexistence, peaceful transition, and so on. He denounced Khrushchev for economic reprisals against Albania, for attempting to subvert the PLA, and for his actions at the Bucharest Conference. The speech contained all the major themes of the PLA attack on Khrushchev which was made public a year later.

The one question of conciliation or vacillation during the Moscow Conference is whether both the CPC and PLA made unprincipled compromises by signing the Moscow Statement?

### 1962: Continuation of Polemics

A number of twists and turns characterized the nature of the ideological struggle in the international communist movement during 1962. To begin with, in January the Central Committee of the North Vietnamese Workers Party proposed to a number of parties that a cessation of polemics in the Sino-Soviet dispute take place, and that an international conference to discuss the differences take place. A number of other parties had basic agreement with the proposal. It appears that both the Chinese and Soviet Central Committees accepted the proposal in principle, but actual negotiations for the conference broke down, especially over the role of Albania. The Soviets demanded that Albania yield ground as a precondition for improving Soviet-Albanian relations. The Chinese proposed:

...we sincerely hope that the Soviet comrades and the Albanian comrades will both take positive steps to remove their differences and restore normal relations between the two Parties and the two countries. In this connection, it seems necessary for the Soviet comrades to take the initiative.<sup>8</sup>

The PLA account of the Chinese role around this conference seems to conflict with the CPC stand reflected in the above quote. Hoxha claims:

Now all the efforts of the Chinese comrades are centered on the question of convincing us of lifting the preconditions we have laid down for a meeting and take part in the one which, of course, the Soviets and the Chinese are to prepare.<sup>9</sup>

From our limited research the CPC version is more accurate. Hoxha's charge in ROC was not borne out.

In April, 1962, there was improvement in Sino-Soviet and Soviet-Albanian relations. Overt polemics between China and the Soviet Union had ceased,<sup>10</sup> although the CPC continued them in an indirect way by writing historical essays about former revisionists. Direct Albanian polemics against Khrushchev by name stopped in mid-April. The Soviets ceased public condemnation of Hoxha and Shehu about the same time. Also, in April the Chinese ambassador returned to Moscow after five months absence, and a new Sino-Soviet trade agreement was signed.

In late May Hoxha referred to the problem with Moscow as "a number of existing difficulties, for which we are not to blame".<sup>11</sup> The surface improvement of Sino-Soviet and Soviet-Albanian relations was both deceptive and short-lived. Chinese

polemics against 'famous revisionists' were extensive. Albania continued with its attacks on Yugoslavia despite the warming of Soviet-Yugoslav relations. Chinese ideological and economic support of Albania showed no significant signs of wavering.

It is evident that for a period in 1962 the Chinese did make moves to resolve or lessen the differences with the Soviets. It is also apparent that the Albanians did so as well, although not to quite the same extent. Was it wrong in principle, or was it a correct compromise for the CPC to do so, and the PLA, too? It did not seem wrong as a compromise or tactically for the CPC and PLA to pursue such a course, especially in light of the call by various parties for attempts at international dialogue and possible reconciliation. To moderate polemics or to hold off temporarily to help make room for an international conference where more forces would be closely exposed to the struggle and hopefully could be won over is a good thing. Of course, had either party gone overboard by stopping all polemics, by holding back for a long period of time, or by consistently going along with revisionist theses, which does not seem to be the case, it would have been an unprincipled compromise.

It seems, then, that in the main the charges leveled by Hoxha in ROC during 1962 are inconsistent and exaggerated at best. They make no mention of their own conciliatory actions, and they are very one-sided in making little or no mention of the positive contributions of the CPC to the struggle in this period.

### Border Disputes

In Reflections on China, excerpts 7 and 8 of 1964, Hoxha accuses the Chinese of national chauvinism for raising border questions with the Soviet Union. He charges "the raising of claims and the way Chou En-lai has done it is not right either in principle or as a tactic of the moment"<sup>12</sup>. One of Hoxha's main concerns is that the "ideological and political struggle against Khrushchev must not be diverted into delicate questions of territorial claims"<sup>13</sup>. While he claims that the Chinese made a grave error of principle, he says little to really back up his charge. In fact, he makes several references to the possible justness of the claims, but conveniently does not elaborate (it seems that it would be an error of principle not to raise legitimate territorial claims and uphold the right of self-determination).

Did the CPC err, either in principle or in the tactics of the moment<sup>14</sup>, by raising the territorial claims as and when they did? The XCPP-CCCP basically supports the Chinese actions around the claims (see pgs. 63-65 of "Reversal"). They feel that it was another means to expose Khrushchev.

Comrades, just whose expansionism and great nation chauvinism was exposed by raising the question in this manner? Wasn't it still another very concrete, proof that Khrushchev had abandoned the principles and practice of Lenin and Stalin with regard to the Chinese border question and was in fact carrying on like a "new tsar"? The ugly performance by the Soviet Union strengthened the polemics, not weakened them.<sup>15</sup>

Within our study we were unable to reach unity on this part of the report. We did agree that the Chinese did not err in principle by raising the claims. A number of us in the study have questions around the Rumanian claims and whether it was correct for the CPC to play the role that they did in relation to them. We also have serious questions about Mao's role vis a vis the Japanese Socialist Party in the struggle over territorial claims between Japan and the Soviet Union<sup>16</sup>.

We could not reach unity on whether tactical errors were made by the CPC. The author of this report feels that the CPC did make tactical errors by raising the claims when they did. The Soviets used this issue of Chinese territorial claims to



divert attention from many of the ideological issues that were being struggled over at that time. They tried to expose the Chinese 'hegemonists' in order to discredit them in the international communist movement. It seems that, in this author's opinion, to a certain extent the Soviets were successful in doing so. There were others in the study who did not think the evidence at hand warranted the author's conclusion, and some who seemed to basically agree with the XCPP-CCCP position.

Before ending this report a few more comments need to be made on the XCPP-CCCP article. They state:

Once again, comrades must admit that the Chinese were leading the struggle against Khrushchevism and that they were not prepared to sacrifice all principles for "reconciliation and agreement with Soviet revisionists", as is claimed by the PLA letter. And they must ask themselves what purpose is being served by concealing and distorting these historic facts. (pg. 61)

First, it is not such a clear "historic fact" that the CPC led the struggles throughout the period as implied. They did play the leading role during much of the period but not all of it. The PLA did step from playing the role as the main supporter of the CPC to playing the leading role during particular periods, especially since they were first to make an open break with the Soviet Union. Second, and more important, the question raised in "Reversal", "what purpose is being served...", is a good one. Some of the reasons that might be behind the current PLA stands are: 1) an attempt by the PLA to show that they have remained staunch and consistent Marxist-Leninists over the years; 2) trying to uphold Stalin over Mao as a great Marxist-Leninist; 3) trying to focus on Mao and the CPC alone as the source of the most recent brand of revisionism--Chinese revisionism--instead of going back further and deeper; 4) grasping at straws to find fodder for their polemical war against the CPC, Mao and China. Overall the PLA's new views seem representative of nationalist deviations by the PLA. We feel that more attention must be devoted to why the PLA positions on Mao, China and the CPC have changed so drastically, what made them change so much, and why the PLA was so close-lipped about their criticisms of the CPC and Mao over the years.

#### FOOTNOTES

- 1) We don't want to imply that raising political and ideological differences between fraternal (or once fraternal) socialist parties to state-to-state relations is always wrong. Once differences reach a certain level, communists should do this. But the manner and timing in which the CPSU in the early 60s and the CPC in 1978 cut off aid to once fraternal socialist countries was wrong. If Albania and China had been able to do this to the Soviet Union once it had degenerated, or if Albania had been in a position to cut aid to China when China had set out firmly on its revisionist course, they should have.
2. XCPP--former members of Committee for a Proletarian Party; CCCP--Chicago Committee for a Communist Party; for copies of pamphlet write Boxholder, PO Box 8147, San Diego, Ca. 92102
3. Long Live Leninism, FLP 1960; some members of the study group have reservations about this series of articles, particularly how they deal with the question of peaceful transition, and other questions.
4. W. Griffith, Albania and the Sino-Soviet Rift (MIT Press, 1966) Chapter 1
5. *ibid*; for a more detailed account of Soviet economic and political actions toward Albania in the mid 1950s
6. J. Gittings, Survey of the Sino Soviet Dispute (Oxford University Press, 1968) Chapter XVIII
7. The Party of Labor of Albania in Battle With Modern Revisionism (Tirana, 1972) "Speech Delivered by Enver Hoxha at Moscow Meeting" pgs. 3-107

8. op cit (Gittings) extract 83 (CPC document)

9. Hoxha Reflections on China (Tirana, 1979) pg. 19 (extract 9, 1962)

10) actually CPC-CPSU open polemics had stopped sometime in January in response to the call by the North Vietnamese party. Also, it seems that the CPC stopped reprinting PLA anti-Soviet articles in early 1962.

11) op cit (Griffith)

12) op cit (Hoxha, Reflections) pg. 74

13. " " " " " "

14. Hoxha discusses the border disputes in terms of a distinction between principles and tactics, though he doesn't always seem clear on the distinction himself, as shown in the quote in the preceding paragraph. This paper employs the distinction, in some cases, also. Some of the members in the study believe that the distinction is all right if by "principle" is meant more important, general principle and if it is recognized that "tactics" are guided by principles, lesser principles, as well. As quoted in the paper "Principles and Compromises", "There are major and minor principles in everything, and the minor principles are all subordinate to the major" (Mao) and "within tactics there are principles which must be respected and must guide the new tactic" (Hoxha). "Tactics" doesn't mean licence for unlimited maneuvering.

If the above points are belittled and the distinction between "principles" and "tactics" is taken too far, mistakes will result. "Principles" tend to be separated from "tactical" activity; the interpenetration (unity) of the opposites of principles and practice is destroyed. See the paper on "Principles and Compromises" for further comments on this point.

15. "The PLA's Treacherous Reversal" pg. 64

16. In Chapter XX of Survey of Sino Soviet Relations there is an excerpt from a talk that Mao had with a delegation of the Japanese Socialist Party. In this talk Mao is quoted as saying "There are too many places occupied by the Soviet Union... The Soviet Union has an area of 22 million square kilometers and a population of 200 million. It is about time to put an end to this allotment. Japan occupies an area of 370,000 square kilometers and its population is 100 million... In regard to the Kurile Islands, the question is clear as far as we are concerned--they must not be returned to Japan." In another book, Sino Soviet Relations 1964-65, also by W. Griffith, it is claimed that Mao said, "The Japanese nation is a great nation." Griffith speculates that the reason this talk was never published in China was because it sounded so pro-Japanese and because it "appealed to Japanese irredentist nationalism".

Principal Contradiction

Question: Did Marx, Engels, Lenin, or Stalin utilize the idea of the principal contradiction? Did Mao develop Marxist theory on the principal contradiction? (B1)

Marx and Engels never explicitly made use of the concept 'principal contradiction'. They did use the concept of 'fundamental contradiction' in the same way as Mao -- that contradiction which determines the essence of a process, is the foundation for all the other contradictions within a particular process, and without whose resolution a qualitatively new process cannot emerge. (Marx and Engels used the terms 'fundamental' and 'basic' interchangeably to refer to the same concept)

"Hitherto, the owner of the instruments of labor had himself appropriated the product, because, as a rule, it was his own product and the assistance of others was the exception. Now the owner of the instruments of labor always appropriated to himself the product, although it was not longer his product but exclusively the product of the labor of others. Thus, the products now produced socially were not appropriated by those who had actually set in motion the means of production and actually produced the commodities, but by the capitalists. The means of production, and production itself, had become in essence socialized. But they were subjected to a form of appropriation which presupposes the private production of individuals, under which, therefore, everyone owns his own product and brings it to a market. The mode of production is subjected to this form of appropriation, although it abolishes the conditions upon which the later rests. This contradiction, which gives to the new mode of production its capitalistic character, contains the germ of the whole of the social antagonisms of today..... the contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation manifested itself as the antagonism of proletariat and bourgeoisie. ...the capitalist appears. In his capacity as owner of the means of production, also appropriates the products and turns them into commodities. Production has become a social act. Exchange and appropriation continue to be individual acts, the acts of individuals. The social product is appropriated by the individual capitalist. Fundamental contradiction, whence arise all the contradictions in which our present-day society moves, and which modern industry brings to light."<sup>1</sup>

Engels did make reference to the subordination of one contradiction to another; however he did not utilize the concept of principal contradiction as defined by Mao -- that contradiction which plays the leading role in the particular stage of the development of a complex process.

"Dialectical logic, in contrast to the old, merely formal logic, is not, like the latter, content with enumerating the forms of motion of thought, i.e. the various forms of judgement and conclusion, and placing them side by side, without any connection. On the contrary, it derives these forms out of one another, it makes one subordinate to another, it makes one subordinate to another instead of putting them on an equal level, it develops the higher forms out of the lower."<sup>2</sup>

Lenin, however, with the term 'key link' (LCW Vol 27 p. 274) recognized more explicitly the concept of principal contradiction. Like Mao, Lenin implies that from the identification of the principal contradiction (or key link) the main or central task in a given stage can be grasped. In the article 'The Immediate Tasks of the

Soviet Revolution' Lenin speaks of the transition from the stage of conquest of state power and suppression of the exploiters to the stage of the administration of the state and the practical work of organizing the dictatorship of the proletariat:

"A third task is now coming to the fore as the immediate task and the one which constitutes the peculiar feature of the present situation, namely, the task of organizing administration of Russia. Of course, we advanced and tackled this task on the very day following October 25, 1917. Up to now, however, since the resistance of the exploiters still took the form of open civil war, up to now the task of administration could not become the main, the central task. Now it has become the main and central task. We, the Bolshevik Party, have convinced Russia. We have won Russia from the rich for the poor, from the exploiters for the working people. Now we must administer Russia. And the whole peculiarity of the present situation, the whole difficulty, lies in understanding the specific features of the transition from the principal task of convincing the people and suppressing the exploiters by armed force to the principal task of administration."<sup>3</sup>

Stalin, in an analysis of the international situation in 1928 does utilize the term and concept 'principal contradiction'.

"At the time of the Fifth Congress (1924) very little was said about the Anglo-American contradiction as the principal one. It was even the custom at that time to speak of an Anglo-American alliance. On the other hand quite a lot was said about contradictions between Britain and France, between America and Japan, between the victors and the vanquished. The difference between that period and the present period is that, of the contradictions in the capitalist camp, that between American capitalism and British capitalism has become the principal one."<sup>4</sup>

It is questionable if Stalin framed the principal contradiction correctly for this period in history. It is also evident that the Comintern made important errors in analyzing the relationship between the principal contradiction and the secondary contradictions.\*(see OROR) Nevertheless it is evident that both Lenin and Stalin utilized the concept of principal contradiction in the formulation of strategy and tactics.

We cannot say that the concept of principal contradiction was an original contribution by Mao to Marxist theory. However, he certainly contributed to the development of the concept through systematizing the various threads in ML on the concept, and popularizing this concept through his application to the Chinese revolution and its particular stages.

#### Footnotes

1. Engels - Socialism: Utopian and Scientific (contained in Engels: Selected Writings, edited by W.O. Flenderson, Penguin Books), pp 209-10, 224.

2. Engels - Dialectics of Nature, (International Publishers), p 237. For Engels, as for Lenin, the motion of thought is but a reflection of the motion of matter so that:

Logic is the science not of external forms of thought, but of the laws of development 'of all material, natural and spiritual things', i.e., of the development of the entire concrete content of the world and of its cognition. (LCW 38.92-93)

3. Lenin - Collected Works, (International Publishers), vol. 27, p 242.

4. quoted in On the Roots of Revisionism, p 57. (OROR)

\*not all members of A. Green and ex-MLC have studied this.

(WORKING DRAFT)

THE PRINCIPAL CONTRADICTION IN THE WORLD AND THE  
VIEWS OF THE CPC AND PLA; An Answer to Question B.5.

Question: How did the CPC in A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement explain the four contradictions in the world? How does the "theory of three worlds" analyze them? What about the PLA? In examining the different views, look for: (a) whether one or more of the contradictions is cited as the principal or main contradiction; (b) how the interrelationship between the contradictions is explained; (c) analysis of how the contradictions will (should) be resolved.

I In A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement (hereafter referred to as "A Proposal"), the CPC stresses that the starting point for defining a general line for the international communist movement must be a concrete class analysis of "world politics and economics as a whole and of actual world conditions"<sup>1</sup>. This class analysis is the determination of the "fundamental contradictions in the contemporary world"<sup>2</sup>.

Marxist-Leninists have consistently upheld four main or major contradictions in the world since the October 1917 revolution. To the three "contradictions of imperialism" discussed by Stalin in Foundations of Leninism (in chapter one), a fourth--between Imperialism and Socialism--was added by the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union.<sup>3</sup>

In 1963, the CPC states these contradictions as:

- a) between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp;
- b) between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries;
- c) between oppressed nations and imperialism; and
- d) among imperialist countries and among monopoly capitalist groups.<sup>4</sup>

The PLA claimed full agreement with "A Proposal" at the time the letter was published. In an article entitled "A Document of Great International Significance" (Zeri I Popullit, July 24, 1963) the PLA states:

The PLA and the Albanian people who have carefully studied the June 14 letter see that the views of the CPC on all matters are right, in complete agreement with the teachings of Marxism-Leninism and the conclusions of the Moscow Declarations, that they express the aspirations of all the revolutionaries, all that the communists of every country for whom the lofty ideals of communism are dear, think, feel and desire. It is for this reason that our Party and our people are in full agreement with this important document of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.<sup>5</sup>

It is important to emphasize this claim of correspondence of the PLA view in 1963 "on all matters"--including one must suppose the analysis of world contradictions--with those presented by the CPC. As explained below, not only do the views of the current revisionist leaders of the CPC in their "theory

of three worlds" differ from the position put forward in "A Proposal", but the current position of the PLA also shows some significant differences with "A Proposal" that was "in complete agreement with the teachings of Marxism-Leninism." Additionally, at the time, or at least soon afterward, by 1966, the PLA had a very different assessment of the main world contradictions. In other words, there was not a real correspondence of views on this question.

"A Proposal" stressed the objective existence of all four of these contradictions because the Soviet revisionists and their followers were in essence denying them by saying only one contradiction, between the socialist and imperialist camps, existed. While noting the importance and intensity of this contradiction, the CPC goes on to say:

...Marxist-Leninists must not regard the contradictions in the world as consisting solely and simply of the contradiction between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp.<sup>6</sup>

Further, the proposal is clear about the relationship among these contradictions:

These contradictions and the struggles to which they give rise are interrelated and influence each other. Nobody can obliterate any of these fundamental contradictions or substitute one for all the rest.<sup>7</sup>

and is straightforward about how they must be resolved:

It is inevitable that these contradictions will give rise to popular revolutions, which alone can resolve them.<sup>8</sup>

"A Proposal" also addresses a number of erroneous views held by the Soviet revisionists and their followers on the question of major contradictions in the contemporary world. A brief look at these views is helpful in understanding their reappearance today in the "theory of three worlds", and some deviations currently being made by the PLA on the question of major contradictions:

a) the view which blots out the class content of the contradiction between the socialist and the imperialist camps and fails to see this contradiction as one between states under the dictatorship of the proletariat and states under the dictatorship of the monopoly capitalists.<sup>9</sup>

The "theory of three worlds" in lumping together socialist countries with developing capitalist countries in the "third world", and promoting a united front of this "world" with the lesser imperialists of the "second world" and US imperialism, develops this erroneous view to a higher level today.

b) the view which recognizes only the contradiction between the socialist and imperialist camps, while neglecting or underestimating the contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist world, between the oppressed nations and imperialism, among the imperialist countries and among the monopoly capitalist groups, and the struggles to which these contradictions give rise.

The PLA today errs in this direction, as noted below. The PLA stresses this contradiction, and tends to negate the contradictions among the imperialist countries and monopoly groups. (See also pp 65-69 below.)

c) the view which maintains with regard to the capitalist world that the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie can be resolved without a proletarian revolution in each country and that the contradiction between the oppressed nations and imperialism can be resolved without revolution by the oppressed nations.

This is essentially the view of the "theory of three worlds".

d) the view which denies that the development of the inherent contradictions in the contemporary capitalist world inevitably leads to a new situation in which the imperialist countries are locked in an intense struggle, and asserts that the contradictions among the imperialist countries can be reconciled, or even eliminated, by 'international agreements among the big monopolies'.

The PLA today errs in this direction, stressing a basic unity of imperialism, rather than recognizing the intensifying struggle and contention among imperialist countries and monopoly groups. (See pp 62-65 below.)

e) the view which maintains that the contradiction between the two world systems of socialism and capitalism will automatically disappear in the course of 'economic competition', that the other fundamental world contradictions will automatically do so with the disappearance of the contradiction between the two systems, and that a 'world without wars', a new world of 'all-round co-operation', will appear.

The essence of this view is the opportunist "theory of productive forces" which also is at the root of the Chinese revisionists' policies of "modernization" and the "theory of three worlds", especially as formulated by Teng in his 1974 United Nations speech.

## II "A Proposal" and the Principal Contradiction

While "A Proposal" is entirely correct in opposing the revisionist position that views the world contradictions "as consisting solely and simply" of the contradictions between socialism and imperialism, it falls short itself in presenting a comprehensive analysis of these contradictions. The shortcoming is mainly the failure to explicitly determine the principal contradiction among these four main contradictions.

As discussed in the previous report, we think Mao's conception of a principal contradiction is a correct continuation of the dialectical views of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin:

There are many contradictions in the process of development of a complex thing, and one of them is necessarily the principal contradiction whose existence and development determine or influence the existence and development of the other contradictions.<sup>10</sup>



and again:

But whatever happens, there is no doubt at all that at every stage in the development of a process, there is only one principal contradiction which plays the leading role.<sup>11</sup>

However, in contrast to the CPC's explicit use of this concept in analyzing the course and development of the Chinese revolution there is not a word in "A Proposal" about a principal contradiction in the international situation. If, indeed, the principal contradiction plays the leading role, determining and influencing the existence and development of the other world contradictions, once could rightly ask: what then is this contradiction? And especially in a proposal for a general line of the international communist movement one would expect the question would be addressed. Furthermore, since Mao plainly states that "once this principal contradiction is grasped, all problems can be readily solved"<sup>12</sup>, it seems all the more important for a proposal putting forward a general line to provide some guidance to the communist movement on this issue, to orient communists to better grasp the situation, and solve "all problems".

"A Proposal" uses the concept of a "focus" of world contradictions, similar to the manner in which Stalin analyzed the Russian revolution and viewed Russia as the focus of the contradictions of imperialism.<sup>13</sup> "A Proposal" states:

The various types of contradictions in the contemporary world are concentrated in the vast areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America; these are the most vulnerable areas under imperialist rule and the storm-centers of world revolution dealing direct blows at imperialism.<sup>14</sup>

But without determining the principal contradiction in the international situation, this focus on the areas of the world where the contradictions of imperialism are concentrated tends to equalize the importance of all four contradictions, rather than bring one to the forefront.

This view of contradiction closes in on the current Soviet presentation of the development of a complex process. In the Soviet view, there is not a principal contradiction (or principal aspect), but a number of contradictions, one not any more important than the others, that determine the nature of the process and its development. These are called "basic" contradictions, ones "that determine all the more or less essential aspects of a phenomenon, playing this role at every stage of its development"<sup>15</sup>. This view speaks mainly to the co-existence and not the interrelationship of contradictions. While "A Proposal" does stress that the main world contradictions are "interrelated and influence each other", it is a weakness to not also stress the importance of determining the principal contradiction, since it does not seem possible to adequately describe this interrelationship and mutual influence without knowing which contradiction is principal.

However, this is not to say it was incorrect for the CPC to point out the focus of world contradictions; it was entirely correct, since the Soviet revisionists were denying the revolutionary significance of the anti-imperialist struggles in these areas and were not acknowledging the relationship of these struggles and those of the international proletariat. But the determination of

the "focus of contradictions" does not substitute for the determination of a principal contradiction.<sup>16</sup>

This is not at all unique in Mao's and other CPC writings on the international situation since WWII. In fact, in contrast with their analysis of the domestic course of the Chinese revolution, Mao and other writers do not use this concept at all (with at least one notable exception noted below) internationally. A few illustrations of this follow (pp 57-62 below):

1) 1946, in "Talks with...Anna Louise Strong": Mao discussed the question of the U.S. starting a war with the USSR; he noted two aspects of the anti-Soviet propaganda: yes indeed, the U.S. is preparing war against the Soviet Union, but

On the other hand, this propaganda is a smoke-screen put up by the U.S. reactionaries to cover many actual contradictions immediately confronting U.S. imperialism. These are the contradictions between the U.S. reactionaries and the American people and the contradictions of U.S. imperialism with other capitalist countries<sup>17</sup> and with colonial and semi-colonial countries."<sup>18</sup>

Here Mao places the contradiction between Imperialism and Socialism in the background, noting the other three contradictions as actual and more immediate, but not stating that one of these is principal.

It is important to note that Mao (and Stalin, as noted below), while seeing the important nature of the contradiction between imperialism and socialism did not see it as a major determinant of the course of world events after WWII. This in contrast to the PLA view placing it squarely in the forefront as the principal contradiction. From the same article:

the fact that the U.S. reactionaries are now trumpeting so loudly about a U.S.-Soviet war and creating a foul atmosphere, so soon after the end of WWII, compels us to take a look at their real aims. It turns out that under the cover of anti-Soviet slogans they are frantically attacking the workers and democratic circles in the U.S. and turning all the countries which are the targets of U.S. external expansion into U.S. dependencies.<sup>19</sup>

2) 1957, in "Talks at a Conference of Secretaries of...Party Committees": Mao discussed the British-French-Israeli seizure of the Suez Canal after Nasser nationalized it, and analyzed these events as part of the process of U.S. imperialism supplanting British imperialism in the Middle East:

Did Britain direct the spearhead chiefly at Egypt? No. Britain's moves were against the United States, much as the moves of the United States were against Britain.

From this incident we can pin-point the focus of struggle in the world today. The contradiction between the imperialist countries and the socialist countries is certainly most acute. But the imperialist countries are now contending with each other for the control of different areas in the name of opposing communism. What areas are they contending for? Areas in Asia and Africa... At present their contention converges on the Middle East, an area of great strategic

significance... In the Middle East, two kinds of contradictions and three kinds of forces are in conflict. The two kinds of contradictions are: first, those between different imperialist powers, that is, between the United States and Britain and between the United States and France and second, those between the imperialist powers and the oppressed nations. The three kinds of forces are: one the United States, the biggest imperialist power, two, Britain and France, second-rate imperialist powers, and three, the oppressed nations."<sup>20</sup>

Which of these contradictions is the principal one, Mao didn't say, although from his discussion, it appears implicit that the one among the imperialists is. After a brief discussion of the relations between socialist and imperialist countries and the contradiction between imperialism and socialism, Mao summed up the relationship between this contradiction and the one among the imperialists:

In short, our assessment of the international situation is still that the embroilment of the imperialist countries contending for colonies is the greater contradiction. They try to cover up the contradictions between themselves by playing up their contradictions with us. We can make use of their contradictions, a lot can be done in this connection. This is a matter of importance for our external policy.<sup>21</sup>

This is as close as I found Mao stating a principal contradiction in the international situation, that one contradiction is of greater importance than another. However, it is only a partial view: is the contradiction among the imperialists of equal or greater importance than that between imperialism and oppressed nations, etc. There also are other questions raised by Mao's analysis, particularly in how it relates to the "theory of three worlds". The CPC revisionists use the first quote above as proof that Mao saw the division of the world into three,<sup>22</sup> but it is clear they are distorting what Mao said: Mao is very specific about talking about contradictions and forces in a particular area (the Middle East) and not the whole world, and his correct discussion of the three different forces is very far from dividing the world into three. It was also generally correct to view the contradictions between the imperialist and socialist countries as of lesser importance at the time.<sup>23</sup> However we are not clear if by having this analysis, Mao and the CPC then tended to overly downgrade and ignore this contradiction, to not examine its relationship to the other main contradictions, to the point where the revisionists were easily able to lump the socialist countries with the developing capitalist countries of the "third world".

3) 1963, in "More on the Differences Between Comrade Togliatti and Us"<sup>24</sup> one of the CPC polemics against the followers of Soviet revisionism, there is a long section on contradictions in the contemporary world. The view expressed is in agreement with the above views of Mao, with the essence of the position being that two contradictions are in the forefront, one between imperialism and oppressed nations, the other among the imperialists. The formulation of the focus of contradictions is a complete muddle, and therefore is very different than that in "A Proposal":

The changes occurring in the world in the past sixteen years have proved again and again that the focus of post-war world contradic-

tions is the contradiction between the U.S. imperialist policy of enslavement and the people of all countries and between the U.S. imperialist policy of worldwide expansion and the other imperialist powers. This contradiction manifests itself particularly in the contradiction between the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys on the one hand and the oppressed nations and peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America on the other, and in the contradiction between the old and new colonialists in their struggles for these areas. (p 200)

The "focus of contradictions" here is presented as itself a contradiction, in fact, as two contradictions, which are given their particular political manifestations in the second half of the quote. Several points here: first, if this use of "focus" was meant to be similar to a principal contradiction--the one contradiction on which the others turn, etc.--its formulation is wide of the mark and wrong. The focus is where all the contradictions are concentrated, and as a concept was not meant to substitute for the principal contradiction.<sup>25</sup> The quote is further confusing since a few pages earlier in the article "focus" is used in an entirely different way, the way it was used in "A Proposal": "...these areas (Asia, Africa, Latin America) are the focus of all the contradictions of the capitalist world. These areas are the weakest link in the imperialist chain and the storm-centers of world revolution" (pp 193-4). The point being made in the quote might begin to make more sense if it read, "the main contradictions of the post-war period are...", but it does not do this. Second, it is incorrect to formulate the contradictions as between a "policy" and actual class forces (for example, the U.S. policy of world-wide expansion, on the one hand, and the other imperialist powers, on the other). These just are not dialectical opposites in a basic sense. Third, the formulation "people of all countries" does not bring out the class nature of the contradictions with imperialism, and is therefore an incorrect term. This is discussed below in the section on Lin Piao's views on the principal world contradiction. Fourth, it is mistaken to speak of the imperialist "policies" of enslavement and expansion. These are basic features of imperialism itself. Imperialist countries are driven by economic necessity to either expand and enslave other peoples, nations and countries or to fall by the wayside and be dominated by stronger imperialists. This is independent of the will--the "policies"--of the imperialists. To speak of policy in this way implies some element of choice in these matters on the part of U.S. (or any other) imperialism, which a Leninist understanding of imperialism holds as not true. A policy means the possibility of a change in policy, that U.S. imperialism can change its spots and not expand or enslave. This is not Leninism, but it is the view embodied by the Chinese revisionists in their "theory of three worlds". The sloppy formulation embodied in this quote and the errors it contains are surprising, especially in the context of a generally good and correct presentation of world contradictions in the rest of this section of the article.

This article also stresses the correct view that the contradictions among the imperialists were at that time more important than those between imperialism and socialism:

In terms of the actual interests of the imperialist powers, these contradictions and clashes (that is, among themselves) are more pressing, more direct, more immediate than their contradictions with the socialist countries. Failure to see this point is tantamount to denying the sharpening of the contradictions which arise from the



uneven development of capitalism in the era of imperialism, makes it impossible to understand the specific policies of imperialism (correct to use policies this way) and thus makes it impossible for Communists to work out a correct line and policy for fighting imperialism. (p 212, editors' parentheses)

4) 1969, in Lin Piao's, "Report to the Ninth Party Congress...": the question of world contradictions is only briefly touched on, with no indication that any of the four contradictions stood out or was principal:

...there are four major contradictions in the world today: the contradiction between the oppressed nations on the one hand and imperialism and social-imperialism on the other; the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist and revisionist countries; the contradiction between imperialist and social-imperialist countries; and the contradiction between socialist countries on the one hand and imperialism and social-imperialism on the other. The existence and development of these contradictions are bound to give rise to revolution.<sup>26</sup>

5) 1972, Shih Chun, in "Again on Studying World History",<sup>27</sup> reasserts the areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America as the "focal point of the contradictions of the present-day world", and in this context, mainly discusses the contradictions among the imperialists and between imperialism and oppressed nations. Again, a principal contradiction is not noted.

6) 1965, in the brief survey for this paper, Lin Piao's Long Live the Victory of People's War, is the only place found in the Chinese literature where the concept of principal contradiction is used in the international situation. In this essay, Lin lays great stress on the concept of principal contradiction both in the Chinese revolution and in the international situation, and credits this to the great merit of Mao:

The concrete analysis of concrete conditions and the concrete resolution of concrete contradictions are the living soul of Marxism-Leninism. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has invariably been able to single out the principal contradiction from among a complexity of contradictions, analyse the two aspects of this principal contradiction concretely and 'pressing on irresistibly from this commanding height', successfully solve the problem of understanding and handling the various contradictions.<sup>28</sup>

Internationally, Lin has this to say:

At present, the main battlefield of the fierce struggle between the people of the world on the one side and U.S. imperialism and its lackeys on the other is the vast area of Asia, Africa and Latin America. In the world as a whole, this is the area where the people suffer worst from imperialist oppression and where imperialist rule is most vulnerable. Since World War II, revolutionary storms have been rising in this area, and today they have become the most important force directly pounding U.S. imperialism. The contradiction between the revolutionary peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the imperialists headed by the United States is the principal contradic-



tion in the contemporary world. The development of this contradiction is promoting the struggle of the people of the whole world against U.S. imperialism and its lackeys. (Long Live the Victory of People's War, pp 118-9)

In 1965 when Lin wrote this, after the U.S. had gained full ascendancy in the imperialist world and the Soviet Union was only in the initial stages of its emergence onto the imperialist stage to challenge the U.S., it was true that the principal contradiction in the world was between imperialism, headed by the United States and the oppressed peoples and nations of the world. The merit of Lin's statement is that it points in this direction. However, there are weaknesses and errors in his formulation and analysis that overwhelm this correct aspect. First, he is at best imprecise in speaking of "revolutionary people" as one of the aspects of the contradiction, rather than of the oppressed peoples, nations, and revolutionary (that is, anti-imperialist) national liberation struggles. Second, his references to the "people" as a general category, those who suffer most from imperialism (second sentence of quote) and the "people of the whole world" who struggle against imperialism (first and last sentences) are vague and incorrect insofar as they are devoid of a class character.<sup>29</sup> There are people in the vast areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America who are not very oppressed by imperialism and who are not "promoted" into struggle against imperialism. These "people" are, of course, the agents of imperialism in these areas, the comprador bourgeoisie, the feudal landlords, and other reactionaries. And Lin's reference to "U.S. imperialism and its lackeys" does not help much in determining who these "lackeys" are and how these enemies of the revolution are related to the "people" and to imperialism. The "lackeys" are in fact these same whole classes, the comprador bourgeoisie, the landlords along with other reactionary elements. The vague formulation of "people", while very revolutionary sounding does not help in determining who indeed are friends or enemies of the revolution. This very vagueness in practice leads to alliances with forces opposed to the revolution. In fact, it is just this kind of formulation of world contradictions that made it easy for such organizations as the October League (now the CP-ML) to uphold such "people" as the Shah of Iran as part of the anti-imperialist, and therefore revolutionary, forces.

Lin also fails to stress the concrete relationship of the principal to the other world contradictions. His view is essentially static, fixated on this particular contradiction, and does not see its development or the development of the other contradictions. In fact, Lin tends to absolutize this contradiction, making it the sole contradiction of any importance, neglecting and underestimating the other main world contradictions. Lin's view is that "in the final analysis, the whole course of world revolution hinges on the revolutionary struggles of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples who make up the overwhelming majority of the world's population."<sup>30</sup> This kind of absolutist view of the contradictions between imperialism and the oppressed peoples and nations has been adopted by some of the "left" adventurist groups in the U.S. (for example, Weatherman/PrairieFire Organizing Committee), who have applied Lin's principal contradiction in the world as their principal contradiction for all time in every place. The failure to see the development and inter-relationship of principal and secondary contradictions, to see the mutual influence of principal and secondary, as well as the failure to recognize that what is principal in the world may not be the principal contradiction in a particular area or country, has led these groups to the abandonment of revolution-

ry practice in the U.S. working class and to only support actions for "third world struggles."<sup>31</sup> It is this abandoning of the path of revolutionary practice, along with the logic of uniting with reactionary forces, that is the anti-Marxist essence of Lin's views on the principal contradiction in the world.

\* \* \* \* \*

A brief word of conclusion before moving on. As shown in their practice, Mao and the CPC--with the major exception of Lin Piao, who used it in an anti-Marxist way--did not analyze the world situation in terms of principal and secondary contradictions. One must assume they did not find it a particularly useful tool in this area. This flies in the face of the great importance Mao himself places on the use of the principal contradiction and its principal aspect in On Contradiction. This failing on the part of Mao and the CPC is incorrect. While for the most part Mao's articles and the CPC polemics do appear to give a generally correct analysis of the world situation without reference to the principal contradiction in the world, the analysis remains at the general level. It does not fully provide the clarity and guidance so that "all problems can be readily solved."

### III Principal Contradiction and the Theory of Three Worlds

This topic is only briefly mentioned, as others have dealt rather extensively with this opportunist thesis and some of the errors of the theory of three worlds have been pointed out earlier in this paper. In their most complete presentation of the the theory of three worlds,<sup>32</sup> the Chinese revisionists do not explicitly state a principal contradiction and in general make an intentional muddle of the contradictions they do discuss. The essence of the theory of three worlds' view of basic world contradictions is, as the PLA has pointed out correctly,<sup>33</sup> the reduction of the four main contradictions into one, that between Soviet social-imperialism and the rest of the world.

### IV The PLA and World Contradictions

While Mao and the CPC under his leadership did not use a principal contradiction to analyze the world situation, the PLA has in a sense. The PLA identify one of the four main contradictions (that between socialism and capitalism) as playing the leading role in the world. Moreover, at least since 1966<sup>34</sup>, the PLA has held views at variance with those of the CPC on which of the world contradictions are in the forefront and which are secondary. It is the viewpoint of this paper that the PLA has made and continues to make serious errors in analyzing these world contradictions, particularly in assessing which is principal and which are secondary. Further, at least since 1977, there has been movement away from a correct position on and analysis of which are indeed the main world contradictions. This last area will be addressed first.

(1) The PLA does not begin each discussion of the international situation with a presentation of their view of the main contradictions of imperialism, and one would not expect them to. Therefore, their view of these contradictions must be extracted from the context of their various documents. Given the whole-hearted endorsement the PLA gave to "A Proposal" where four main world contradictions are explicitly discussed, it must be assumed the PLA agreed with and upheld these also. This is indeed the stated position of the PLA in 1977:



The Marxist-Leninists have always based their definition of the present epoch and their revolutionary strategy on the analysis of the major social contradictions which characterize this epoch... Lenin and Stalin spoke about four such contradictions: the contradiction between two opposing systems--socialist and capitalist, the contradiction between labor and capital in the capitalist countries, the contradiction between the oppressed peoples and nations and imperialism, and the contradiction between the imperialist powers... All present-day world development confirms that since the time of Lenin these contradictions have not waned and disappeared but have become more acute and more clearly obvious than ever before. Therefore, the recognition and admission of the existence of these contradictions constitute the basis for defining a correct revolutionary path.<sup>35</sup>

To correctly uphold this viewpoint, it is important to see the development and mutual interrelationship of these contradictions. In the words of "A Proposal": "These contradictions and the struggles to which they give rise are interrelated and influence each other. Nobody can obliterate any of these contradictions or substitute one for all the rest." (p 7) But this is just what the PLA does. Even while stating "these contradictions have not waned and disappeared," the PLA makes the error of "obliterating" one of the contradictions, that "between (among?) the imperialist powers."<sup>36</sup> The other three contradictions are viewed as basic class contradictions, while this one is not. Later in the same article:

Not only does the theory of the 'three worlds' not take account of the contradiction between the two opposing social systems--socialism and capitalism, or the great contradiction between labor and capital, but neither does it analyse the other major contradiction (note the singular), that between the oppressed peoples and world imperialism...(p 18, editors' parentheses)

This is a view of three major contradictions instead of four. Hoxha, in 1978, further expounds this viewpoint:

If Mao Tsetung and the other Chinese leaders have had and still have a good deal to say about contradictions 'in theory', then they ought to speak of the fundamental contradictions of our epoch, the contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the contradictions between the oppressed peoples and countries, on the one hand, and the two superpowers and the whole of world imperialism, on the other, the contradictions between socialism and capitalism.<sup>37</sup> (emphasis added)

Note Hoxha does not speak of the "other" "fundamental" contradictions; he does not include the inter-imperialist contradictions as one of these major ones. Rather, he speaks of three contradictions, excluding this fourth. What is his rationale? Basically it is this: the "three" contradictions are main ones because they reflect basic class antagonisms, the inter-imperialist contradictions are not because they merely reflect contradictions "among exploiters, amongst classes with common fundamental interests". Two quotes:

Marxist-Leninist class analysis and the facts show that the existence of contradictions and rifts among the imperialist powers and groupings in no way overrides or displaces to a position of secondary importance the contradiction between labor and capital in the capitalist and imper-

ialist countries, or the contradiction between the oppressed peoples and their imperialist oppressors. Precisely these, the contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between the oppressed peoples and imperialism, between socialism and capitalism are the most profound, they are permanent, irreconcilable contradictions.

(Imperialism, p 82)

By implication, therefore, the interimperialist contradictions are the opposite: temporary and reconcilable.

Marxism-Leninism teaches us that the contradictions between a socialist country and capitalist and revisionist countries, which reflect contradictions between two classes with diametrically opposed interests, the working class and the bourgeoisie, are permanent, fundamental, irreconcilable. They run like a red thread through the entire epoch of the transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale. On the other hand, the contradictions between the imperialist powers are expressions of contradictions amongst exploiters, amongst classes with common fundamental interests. Therefore, however severe the contradictions and conflicts between the imperialist powers may be, the danger of aggressive actions by world imperialism or various sections of it against the socialist country remains a permanent real danger at any moment. Rifts between imperialists, inter-imperialist quarrels and conflicts may, at the most, weaken or temporarily postpone the danger of the actions of imperialism against the socialist country... (Imperialism, p 83)

Several things are going on here: first, in stressing the fundamental class interests of the various imperialist powers, Hoxha is one-sided, and this one-sidedness leads him to deviate in an anti-Leninist direction, toward a Kautskyist stand, on the nature of imperialism. The overall class unity of the imperialists supposedly makes it possible for them to unite, to form alliances and blocs, so that they can form a world front against socialism. Hoxha tends to see this as their primary nature.<sup>38</sup> The possibility of a "permanent" alliance of the imperialists is Kautsky's view, not Lenin's. Kautsky argued that imperialism could unite into a new form ("ultra-imperialism") where the mutual national imperialist rivalries would be replaced by the "joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital"<sup>39</sup> For Lenin, this is dead wrong. In Lenin's view, it was the contention and rivalry among the imperialist that is primary: "An essential feature of imperialism is the rivalry between several Great Powers, in the striving for hegemony..." (Imperialism, the Highest Stage). In this vein, compare a quote from Lenin with the above quotes from Hoxha.

...(I)n the realities of the capitalist system... 'inter-imperialist' or 'ultra-imperialist' alliances, no matter what form they may assume, whether of one imperialist coalition against another, or of a general alliance embracing all the imperialist powers, are inevitably nothing more than a 'truce' in periods between wars. Peaceful alliances prepare the ground for wars, and in their turn grow out of wars; the one conditions the other, giving rise to alternating forms of peaceful and non-peaceful struggle out of one and the same basis of imperialist connections and relations within world economics and politics. (Imperialism, the Highest Stage, pp 144-145, Lenin's emphasis)

Second, Hoxha here tends to ignore the imperialists strivings for hegemony, the economic basis for imperialist rivalries, etc., and pushes into the primary spot their opposition to revolution and socialism:

"...(I)mperialism and social-imperialism have always been terrified of genuine communism and they will be even more terrified of it. It is this fear and dread that are driving the imperialists and the revisionists into each others' arms, to co-ordinate their plans and seek the most appropriate forms in order to prolong the existence of their rule of oppression and exploitation." (Imperialism, p 9)

In other words, collusion among the imperialists is the primary aspect of imperialist relations. While admitting that contradictions, rivalries and contention do exist, these Hoxha sees as taking the back seat to their "unified" opposition to revolution.<sup>40</sup>

(2) This whole erroneous view is intertwined with a second serious error, the PLA's analysis of the principal world contradiction. For the PLA, the contradiction between imperialism and socialism takes this foremost place. In 1977, the PLA wrote:

By ignoring socialism as a social system, the so-called 'theory of the three worlds' ignores the greatest historic victory of the international proletariat, ignores the fundamental contradiction of the time, that between socialism and capitalism. ("Theory and Practice of the Revolution", p 9)<sup>41</sup>

This is not at all a new position of the PLA, but is one, as discussed below, that takes on an increasingly dangerous character today as inter-imperialist contradictions intensify.

In 1966, Hysni Kapo, a leading member of the PLA, put the party's position forward this way:

In the contradiction between socialism and capitalism--the foundation for the development of the whole world at present--the socialist forces are the principal aspect of the contradiction which determines the trend of the course of contemporary history.<sup>42</sup>

This "principal" contradiction is between socialism and capitalism (imperialism). It is clear the form of exposition of the nature of this contradiction conforms with Mao's formulation of what constitutes a principal contradiction. The other world contradictions Kapo discussed were not described with such "intensity" and are viewed by him as secondary:

In the contradiction between imperialism headed by U. S. imperialism and the oppressed peoples--one of the sharpest contemporary contradictions--the forces of the people of all countries who oppose imperialism and colonialism represent the principal aspect of the contradiction...

The further, continual weakening and deterioration of imperialist positions is also clearly shown in the increasingly acute contradictions within the imperialist camp itself... The current international situation shows that the collapse and disintegration of imperialist alliances is developing precipitously... The contradictions among the imperialists are deepening with each passing day. (pp 120-1)<sup>43</sup>

The fourth contradiction, that between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries is not discussed at all here, a serious omission for a discussion of the international situation.

Where did this analysis lead the PLA? To an incorrect understanding of imperialist strategy. In 1966 and the years afterward, the reactionary, predatory imperialist war the U. S. imperialists were waging in Vietnam was increasing in intensity and scope. The PLA was able to point out some of the nature of this war quite correctly:

...(I)t is in Vietnam that the weakness of imperialism and the invincible power of the peoples in their struggle for freedom and independence are being demonstrated most clearly... Our party regards the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people as a struggle of great international significance. It is not only a sacred struggle to defeat foreign aggressors, but also a great internationalist struggle in support of the world liberation movement against imperialism and in defense of the interests of socialism throughout the world. (p 128)<sup>44</sup>

In this regard the PLA stated its unreserved support for the Vietnamese struggle. But in viewing U. S. aggression in Vietnam, the PLA saw imperialist objectives in a broader context:

The barbarous aggression against Vietnam is the clearest expression of the current target of U. S. imperialism. What it pursues is not simply to stifle the liberation movement of the heroic south Vietnamese people and to perpetuate U. S. rule over there, but, in so doing, it also attempts to show its strength to the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America who have risen in struggle against imperialism, and to intimidate them and force them to give up. This aggression also is a means of intimidation to test the strength of the socialist countries and force them to give up their support for the revolutionary liberation struggle of the people of the enslaved countries. Finally, this aggression is a component part and a link of the whole project of U. S. imperialism against the People's Republic of China. U. S. imperialism regards the People's Republic of China as its main enemy and is directing its main blow today against it. (pp 127-8, emphasis added)

For the PLA, China was the main enemy of U. S. imperialism and the U. S. imperialists were directing its main blow at it. In a fundamental sense it is true that China and socialism were the main enemies of U. S. imperialism, but there is only a small degree of truth in the assertion that U. S. imperialism directed its main blow at China. At the time, the imperialists openly talked about China as their main enemy in their war in Vietnam, of the need to contain China and communist expansionism, of Vietnam being merely a Chinese satellite, etc. But behind this position, which had a very real aspect, were the stronger facts of the contention of old and new colonialists for areas of domination and exploitation, and the very real prospect that the rising national liberation struggles in opposition to imperialism, headed by U. S. imperialism, would end the ability of imperialism to exploit these areas. These facts, representing the economic and political necessities of U. S. imperialism made it direct its main blow, not at China, but at the Vietnamese and other national liberation struggles. In the realm of

imperialist propaganda, the need to whip up support for their aggression in Vietnam made it imperative for the U. S. imperialists to portray this war as a holy war against China and communism. Again, there is some truth in this, but not the whole truth or even the main truth.

The role of revisionism in this was to join in a "Holy Alliance" with U. S. imperialism to jointly plot against China, socialism and revolution.<sup>45</sup> That this also had a real aspect is true, but it certainly was not the main aspect of U. S.-Soviet collusion at the time as the PLA asserted.

The PLA view continued to mature on these points after 1966. The two aspects of imperialist strategy--the main blow of imperialism directed at socialism and the "Holy Alliance" (the collusion of imperialism and social-imperialism against socialism and revolution)--have come together. At the 6th Congress of the PLA in 1971, Enver Hoxha made this analysis:

The greatest counter-revolutionary force opposed to the struggle of the nations for freedom and socialism is the Soviet-U. S. alliance. In all fields--economic, political and military--the imperialist courses of the U. S. and the Soviet Union are continuously drawing nearer to and embracing each other. In order to realize their aims of hegemony and domination, the two superpowers need each other, therefore they synchronize their watches, and continually coordinate their plans and concrete activity.

Their strategic objective is to destroy socialism, to strangle the revolution, to establish their rule over the whole world. The edge of this alliance is directed against the People's Republic of China, which is the main obstacle to the realization of their counter-revolutionary schemes. The United States and the Soviet Union are doing their utmost, although it is only daydreaming on their part, to encircle and isolate China with the aim of going over afterwards to the suppression of the revolution and the destruction of the People's Republic of China. All their activities in the field of international relations in Europe, Asia, Africa and Oceania have been subordinated to this joint counter-revolutionary strategy.

The weight of this reactionary alliance makes its presence felt in all the international conflicts and problems.<sup>46</sup> (emphasis added)

All U. S. and Soviet international activity (everything outside the Americas, that is) is subordinated to the attack on socialism, then headed by China. But now that socialism has been destroyed in China--indeed, it never was a socialist country according to the new position of the PLA--all imperialist/social-imperialist activity must be aimed at socialism<sup>47</sup> with Albania at its head. This too is the current view of the PLA, expressed in Imperialism and the Revolution, discussed earlier: "Therefore...the danger of aggressive actions by world imperialism or various sections of it against the socialist country, remains a permanent real danger at any moment." (p 83) It should be noted that for the PLA, Albania is the only socialist country. In this, the PLA errors on the question of world contradictions converge: the temporary, non-fundamental inter-imperialist contradictions allows the formation of a world imperialist front--or at least a partnership of the blocs headed by the U. S. and the U.S.S.R.--against the revolution, against socialist Albania. World imperialism against Albania, this is the sharpest, the principal, the fundamental contradiction.

This view, that underestimates inter-imperialist contradictions and overestimates the contradiction between imperialism and socialism, is wrong. It is an analysis correctly opposed by Mao (see p 58), and explicitly opposed by Stalin:

Some comrades hold that, owing to the development of new international conditions since the Second World War, wars between capitalist countries have ceased to be inevitable. They consider that the contradictions between the socialist camp and the capitalist camp are more acute than the contradictions among the capitalist countries; that the USA has brought the other capitalist countries sufficiently under its sway to be able to prevent them from going to war among themselves and weakening one another; that the foremost capitalist minds have been sufficiently taught by the two world wars and the severe damage they have caused to the whole capitalist world not to venture to involve the capitalist countries in war with one another again--and that, because of all this, war between capitalist countries are no longer inevitable.

These comrades are mistaken.<sup>48</sup>

Further:

It is said that the contradictions between capitalism and socialism are stronger than the contradictions among the capitalist countries. Theoretically, of course, that is true. It is not only true now, today; it was true before the Second World War. And it was more or less realized by the leaders of the capitalist countries. Yet the Second World War began not as a war with the USSR, but as a war among the capitalist countries. Why? Firstly, because war with the USSR as a socialist land, is more dangerous to capitalism than war between capitalist countries; for whereas war between capitalist countries puts in question only the supremacy of certain capitalist countries over others, war with the USSR must certainly put in question the existence of capitalism itself. Secondly, because the capitalists, although they clamour, for propaganda purposes, about the aggressiveness of the Soviet Union, do not themselves believe it is aggressive, because they are aware of the Soviet Union's peaceful policy and know that it will not itself attack capitalist countries. ... (T)he struggle of the capitalist countries for markets and their desire to crush their competitors proved in practice to be stronger than the contradictions between the capitalist camp and the socialist camp. (Economic Problems, pp 34-5)

Hoxha's and the PLA's arguments are diametrically opposed to Stalin's essentially correct ones. This is not just an abstract matter. At a time when imperialism and social-imperialism are solidifying their war blocs, when their mutual rivalry and contention is intensifying, when this contention is greatly increasing the danger and advent of a third imperialist world war, an incorrect view of the contradictions in the world is fraught with danger for the international communist movement. The questions of line and policy, based on a correct analysis of the world situation and the major world contradictions, is important to us all. Those holding the PLA's incorrect position on these matters will be led by its logic to view this war not as an inter-imperialist war for the redivision of the world, but as a war between imperialism on the one hand and revolution and socialism on the other.

One speculative conclusion in this regard would imply that defence of socialist Albania and questions of alliances with those imperialists who are the enemies of the other imperialists who have attacked Albania will be the central feature of the strategy and tactics of the forces holding this position. This strategy and tactics will be counter-revolutionary and those holding them will indeed find it impossible to fight imperialism.

\* \* \* \* \*

A concluding note about the scope of this paper and of the importance of the errors discussed here made by Mao and the CPC under his leadership, and Hoxha and the PLA: the line of these two parties on the international situation constitutes a very broad topic, that to be covered in a fully adequate way would demand a considerable amount of study and analysis. This kind of project was outside the scope of this working paper, which set as its goal a much narrower topic: an investigation of how these parties utilized an analysis of the main world contradictions and the principal world contradiction. To this extent this study is very limited and narrow, and many important topics are not discussed. Furthermore, the time considerations of the NJS also placed limitations on the depth and breadth of the analysis presented here so that, again, a number of important topics have only been touched on or not dealt with at all. The result has been a certain shallowness and perhaps one-sidedness in this paper, problems which hopefully will be corrected by further study and analysis.

As to the errors of Mao and Hoxha, of the CPC and PLA, discussed in this paper: they are different in form. In relationship to the principal contradiction, for Mao and the CPC these errors are basically ones of "omission", ones where the international communist movement was left to flounder because clear guidance and direction in analyzing the international situation was not given. These "omissions" need further study and explanation, both in regard to answering questions about why such a concept as principal contradiction, which was rightly given much importance by Mao, was not used, and to the possible role this error played in allowing the relatively unchallenged development of the "theory of three worlds" by the Chinese revisionists. (That the CPC and Mao made errors of "commission", such as seeing the Soviet Union as the "main danger" in the development of world war, is recognized but analysis of these were not a part of this study and demand future attention.)

For the PLA, the errors discussed here are basically ones of "commission", confusion in matters of world contradictions, and the upholding of an analysis and line based on this confusion which was wrong. These errors were not as visible and perhaps not as dangerous to the international communist movement in the years before Mao's death, because the PLA deferred leadership of this movement and world revolution to Mao and the CPC. In this regard, it was the CPC line with its strengths and weaknesses, that was of major importance. However, with the victory of revisionism in China following Mao's death, many parties and organizations around the world have turned to the PLA and Enver Hoxha for political and ideological leadership. The effect and potential influence of the PLA's incorrect analysis and line has therefore been multiplied. The errors have become more important, more serious, more dangerous, especially in this period of intensification of imperialist contention and contradictions, and they must be strongly opposed.



Footnotes

1. The Polemic On The General Line of the International Communist Movement, (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965; reprint by Red Star Press LTD, London, 1976), p 6. (in these footnotes hereafter referred to as 'The Polemic')
2. A word about terminology in discussing world contradictions. There is no common usage of terms among various writers and the CPC and PLA when discussing these contradictions. Terms such as fundamental, major, main, basic, etc., are used somewhat interchangeably. This leads often to a good deal of vagueness and confusion in trying to understand what is being discussed. In this paper, therefore, the terms "main" and "major" are used only in reference to the world contradictions of imperialism. "Basic" or "fundamental" is used to denote only the underlying contradiction of the epoch of capitalism.
3. The wording of these major world contradictions has undergone some change from time to time but the general sense to Marxist-Leninists has remained the same. For example, with the rise of the socialist camp following WWII, the contradiction between imperialism and socialism was correctly called a contradiction between the imperialist and socialist camps.
4. The Polemic, p 7.
5. Interestingly, Enver Hoxha does not comment on "A Proposal" in his published diary, Reflections on China, where there are no entries for the whole first half of 1963. This is somewhat striking given the interest he was showing in how the Chinese were opposing Soviet revisionism. One speculation is that some comments favorable to the Chinese have been edited out of his diary, which if true, would say something about Hoxha's approach to criticisms of the CPC.
6. The Polemic, p 7.
7. *ibid.*
8. *ibid.*
9. *ibid.*, p 8.
10. Mao Tse-tung, Four Essays in Philosophy, "On Contradiction" (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1968), p 51.
11. *ibid.*, p 53.
12. *ibid.*
13. J. V. Stalin, The Foundations of Leninism (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1970), chapter I.
14. The Polemic, p 13.
15. A. P. Sheptulin, Marxist-Leninist Philosophy (Progress Publishers), p 270.

16. The stress "A Proposal" puts on the national democratic revolutionary movement in the areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America lends credence to the view that the contradiction between imperialism and oppressed nations was indeed the principal one in 1963.

The national democratic revolutionary movement in these areas of the international socialist revolutionary movement are the two great historical currents of our time.

The national democratic revolution in these areas is an important component of the contemporary proletarian world revolution.

The anti-imperialist revolutionary struggles of the people in Asia, Africa and Latin America are pounding and undermining the foundations of the rule of imperialism and colonialism, old and new, and are now a mighty force in defense of world peace.

In a sense, therefore, the whole cause of the international proletarian revolution hinges on the outcome of these revolutionary struggles of the people of these areas, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the world's population. ("A Proposal", p 13)

Several in the study felt this was an implicit statement about the principal world contradiction, while others did not take a stand one way or the other for lack of study or information. Whether it is or not implicit, the argument still holds that an explicit statement indicating the principal contradiction was necessary.

17. The author of this paper had some doubts about the correctness of the formulation used by Mao of the contradiction between "the U.S. reactionaries and the American people." Did he mean between the U.S. bourgeoisie and the rest of the U.S. people? Or some "reactionary" ruling circles within the bourgeoisie, on the one hand, opposed to other "progressive, democratic" forces within the bourgeoisie who were allied with everyone else? The class content of this formulation is somewhat muddled and seems to fall perilously close to that of the revisionist views of the CPUSA at that time, and today.

18. Mao Tse-tung, Selected Works, vol. IV: "Talk with the American Correspondent Anna Louise Strong" (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1969), p 98.

19. ibid., p 100.

20. Mao, Selected Works, vol. V, pp 361-2.

21. ibid., pp 361-2

22. Peking Review, 45, 1977, p 16.

23. In other periods, such as during the imperialist intervention in the Soviet Union following the October Revolution, or during the Korean War, the contradiction between imperialism and socialism would have greater importance and indeed may have been the principal contradiction at the time.

24. Whence the Differences? (Bath: New Era), pp 161-360.

25. Workers Congress (M-L) makes this error of confusing the focus of contradictions with the principal contradiction in their defense of the "theory of three worlds", A Great Strategic Concept (Workers Congress (M-L), P.O. Box 1297, Chicago, IL 60690, not dated) see p 16, for example.

26. Lin Piao, Report to the Ninth Party Congress of the Communist Party of China (Peking, FLP, 1969), "Red Book" edition, pp 83-4.

27. Peking Review, 24, 1972. (Also in the collection On Studying World History, Berkeley: Yen-an Books, 1975), p 5.

28. Lin Piao, Long Live the Victory of People's War (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), "Red Book" edition, pp 23-4.

29. Lin, of course, is not the only one to use the term "people" in this loose and incorrect way. The Chinese and Albanian documents are full of references to these "classless" "people of the whole world", and like statements. A Proposal, as one example, contains a mixture of correct and incorrect usages of this term. For instance:

The U.S. imperialists have thus placed themselves in opposition to the people of the whole world and have become encircled by them. (p 12)

World peace can only be effectively defended by relying on the development of the forces of the socialist camp, on the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat and working people of all countries, on the liberation struggles of the proletariat and working people of all countries, on the liberation struggles of the oppressed nations and on the struggles of all peace-loving peoples and countries. (p 28)

In the first sentence, "people" is "classless" and could include all the people of all the classes. In the second, the formulation is precise, clearly explaining who are the forces on the side of peace. Marx, Engels and Lenin also used the word "people", but meant by this the world proletariat and working masses.

30. Long Live the Victory of People's War, p. 108. Also compare Lin's formulation with that in the A Proposal:

The national democratic revolution in these areas is an important component of the contemporary proletarian world revolution.

The anti-imperialist revolutionary struggles of the people in Asia, Africa and Latin America are pounding and undermining the foundations of the rule of imperialism and colonialism, old and new, and are now a mighty force in defence of world peace.

In a sense, therefore, the whole cause of the international proletarian revolution hinges on the outcome of the revolutionary struggles of the people of these areas, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the world's population. (p 13)

Lin's "In the final analysis" changed the whole essence of the basically correct position in A Proposal, absolutizing the importance of these revolutionary struggles and making them the only thing of importance in the world. So for Lin the other components of the proletarian world revolution didn't really amount to much.

31. Lin's analysis feeds this line. His overall view of the world situation is an expanded version of his views on people's war, that of cities surrounded by the countryside. "In a sense, the contemporary world revolution also presents a picture of the encirclement of the cities by the rural areas." (Long Live..., p 108) North American and Western Europe are the cities of the world, while Asia, Africa and Latin America are the rural areas. Lin reasons that the proletarian revolution in these "cities" has been held back for various reasons, so therefore, the world revolution is wholly located in the "rural areas." He makes the concept universal:

...the encirclement of the cities from the countryside is of outstanding and universal practical importance for the present revolutionary struggles of all oppressed nations and peoples, and particularly for the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed nations and peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin American against imperialism and its lackeys. (p 106, emphasis added)

Lin said his "strategy applied to all oppressed peoples and nations. This world also means, then, Black people (and the possible Black Nation) in the U.S. The practical significance of this line, as it was adopted by various Black nationalist and white "radical" groups in the 1960's, was a movement away from involvement in proletarian struggle or efforts to unite the multi-national working class, toward exclusively nationalist struggles and support for them.

Enver Hoxha also criticizes this strategy of "the countryside surrounding the city" in a different way. He says this strategy plays up the hegemony of the peasantry in the revolution at the expense of the proletariat. While Hoxha's criticisms in this regard are wrong, he also lays these errors at Mao's feet, rather than on Lin where they correctly belong. (see Imperialism, pp 65, 105-6, 115)

32. see Peking Review, 45, 1977.

33. ~~Enver Hoxha~~, Imperialism and the Revolution (COUSM-L edition, 1979), p 82. (Referred to in the report as Imperialism for brevity.)

34. The study of PLA documents has not been at all comprehensive. The various published speeches, articles and discussions by Enver Hoxha, various PLA pamphlets and articles, Hoxha's reports to the 6th and 7th PLA congresses, volume II of his selected works, and his more recent works Imperialism and the Revolution, and part 1 of Reflections on China were reviewed. A major source of PLA documents, Albania Today, unfortunately was only partially reviewed.

35. PLA, The Theory and Practice of the Revolution (Tirana: The "3 Nentori" Publishing House, 1977), p 6.

36. At various points prior to 1977, the PLA tended to drop one or another of the main world contradictions when discussing the world situation. For example, in 1966, Hyoni Kapo, a member of the Political Bureau of the CC of the PLA, in a speech on the international situation at the Higher Party School of the CPC, does not discuss at all the contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the capitalist and revisionist countries. This while discussing the three other contradictions in some detail. This is a rather important omission given the great upsurge of working class struggles in France and elsewhere in the following years.

37. Imperialism, p 82.

38. There has been some shift in Hoxha's views on this question. In 1974 he stated: "The two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, are aggressive imperialist powers. They are dividing the world into spheres of influence and proceeding to the division and occupation of world markets. Their ultimate aim is to dominate over the whole world, to rule over all nations and states. Hence, their irreconcilable contradictions which may lead them to another world war. Their hegemonism, their reckless arms race do not take place in a quiet atmosphere, but through great upheavals that our world is seething with." ("Our Policy is an Open Policy, the Policy of Proletarian Principles," 1974, Tirana, emphasis added.)

In Imperialism, this view is reiterated:

No one, least of all the Party of Labour of Albania, can deny the existence of profound contradictions between the two greatest imperialist powers of our time--American imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism. We have continually stressed that the contradictions between the two superpowers not only exist, but are becoming deeper. Parallel with this, the superpowers, on their part, are making efforts to reach agreement over certain questions. ... But why are there irreconcilable contradictions and antagonisms between the two superpowers? Because, since they are big imperialist powers, each of them is fighting for world hegemony, to create new spheres of influence, for the enslavement and exploitation of peoples. The appetite and greed which each of them has, is the source of bickering and severe friction between them. This friction may lead to war between them and even to a bloody world war. (p 77)

But there is a change in the direction of eclecticism, adding to this view, the opposing one of the primacy of collusion, that together, "The two superpowers, the United States of America and the revisionist Soviet Union, have the suppression of the revolution and socialism as the first point on their program." (p 77).

That Hoxha's positions are capable of change should no longer be of great surprise. In this article, for instance, he advances the thesis that Mao is "the great and beloved leader not only of the Chinese people and communists, but also the dear and respected leader of all the peoples and communists of the world." (p 40). Four years later, Hoxha's view is that Mao was never a Marxist-Leninist.

39. V. I. Lenin, Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, (Peking: FLP, 1975), p 142.

40. In an article entitled "Report on Foreign Policy" in Lenin's CW, vol 27, he talks about the world contradictions of 1918. He seems to view the inter-imperialist contradictions in a similar way as Hoxha does. Since Hoxha refers to this article in Imperialism and the Revolution, it should be analyzed in more detail.

41. The position on the relationship of fundamental contradiction to the major social contradictions is confused and their view of the nature of the fundamental contradiction is dialectically wrong. In the first instance, they tend to make little distinction between the basic underlying contradiction of the whole epoch of capitalism--that between the social character of production and the private character of ownership--and the various other



major world contradictions which are determined and influenced by the basic contradiction. This basic contradiction is manifested in class terms as the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, on a world scale. One of the main contradictions in the world is that between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries; this contradiction is the particular reflection in the capitalist countries of the basic, fundamental contradiction in the world. Also, in the course of development of world contradictions, at any particular stage of development of the revolution in the epoch of capitalism, of imperialism, one or another of these contradictions will be the principal contradiction of that stage, the contradiction "whose existence and development determines or influences the existence and development" of the other major world contradictions ("On Contradiction, p 51). Thus while the basic contradictions in the epoch of capitalism remain the same, until capitalism is overthrown on a world scale, the principal contradiction in each stage changes. The PLA does not appear to understand this relationship of basic to major world contradictions, or fundamental to principal, confusing the one with the other, so that when they speak of "fundamental" contradiction it is often impossible to figure out what they are speaking of: basic, fundamental, underlying, or principal.

This confusion leads the PLA to take an "inflexible" stand on the principal contradiction which they tend to equate with the basic, fundamental contradiction, described by them as between imperialism and socialism. Therefore, for the PLA, since the basic/fundamental contradiction of capitalism does not change, the "principal/fundamental" contradiction does not change. The outcome is a dogmatic approach on the PLA's part to analysis of the international situation. The general features of the development of the world situation, based on some understanding of the basic contradictions of capitalism, can at times be put forward; but in general many of the specific features of particular stages of development will not be correctly analyzed.

In the second instance, this confusion is even more compounded by their incorrect thesis on the nature of the "basic, fundamental" contradictions of capitalism itself. The PLA view is of two contradictions collapsed into one. These two contradictions are that between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and between capitalism and socialism. Somehow for the PLA the basic contradiction of the epoch of imperialism, rather than being manifested in these two contradictions, or expressed as one or another, is a combining of these two contradictions. One must ask, then, how does the PLA derive much clarity out of such confusion and error? Obviously, in an overall way it will not be able to; a correct analysis will be mainly a hit or miss thing.

There is one recent example of the PLA view of the "fundamental" contradiction of imperialism. In a discussion of the Chinese revisionists and the theory of three worlds, Professor Sofokli Kazri has this to say:

Their aim is to negate the class struggle and national oppression, and as a consequence, the need for the revolution and national liberation, to compel the workers and the peoples to resign themselves to the situation in which they live, as inevitable.

According to the Chinese theoreticians, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and the contradiction between imperialism and socialism, do not exist.

That this is a case of flagrant deviation from the analysis made by Marx and Lenin, from Marxist dialectics, from class criteria in analysing and appraising contradictions, is abundantly clear. But, lurking behind

the anti-Marxist formulations there is also a pragmatic political line aimed at achieving definite counterrevolutionary objectives.

Recognition of the existence of these contradictions naturally entails recognition of the need for the revolution, recognition of the necessity for the struggle against the bourgeoisie and imperialism. When the fundamental contradiction of our epoch is "displaced" or "altered", the need for the "setting up of a united front" with the bourgeoisie and U.S. imperialism is automatically accepted. In a word, the claims about the development and alternation of the fundamental contradictions of our epoch are "theoretical" justification of the great power imperialist policy that China is following today.

When Lenin says that ours is the epoch of the collapse of imperialism, the epoch of the proletarian revolution, he means that the fundamental contradiction of our epoch is that between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between capitalism and the triumphant proletariat--socialism, that the proletariat and its struggle for the overthrow of bourgeois society stand at the hub of this epoch. (Sofokli Lazri, "The Foreign Policy of the PLA and the Albanian Socialist State is the Policy of Proletarian Principles", printed in Problems of Current World Development, The "8 Nentori" Publishing House, Tirana, 1979, pp 123-24.) (Also reprinted in Albania Today, no. 6 (43), 1978, p 71.)

42. Struggle Against Imperialism and Revisionism to the Very End, "Speech by Comrade Hysni Kapo at the Higher Party School of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, (May 9, 1966", (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1966), pp 119-20.

43. There is a certain amount of eclecticism in the views expressed here by the PLA about the deepening of contradictions among the imperialists. At the time this article was written, 1966, the PLA did not view the Soviet Union as an imperialist power but as a "revisionist" country, and saw the relationship between U.S. imperialism and Soviet revisionism as mainly one of collusion. At the same time, the relationship among the Western imperialists (including Japan) were becoming increasingly strained. U.S. imperialist rule was being increasingly challenged as some of the other imperialists had recovered from the war and were beginning to contend with U.S. imperialism in a stronger way. This was the period when Gaullist France had broken to some extent with the NATO alliance and was plotting its own "independent" imperialist course. This is what the PLA is referring to as the deepening contradictions. The eclecticism of these views comes with the PLA's tendency to see these contradictions within the Western imperialist camp as primary and somewhat irreconcilable, but to view those between U.S. imperialism and Soviet revisionism as secondary (collusion being primary). This view of the primacy of collusion of U.S. imperialism with the Soviet Union continues into the period where Soviet revisionism has matured into Soviet social-imperialism, after the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia. These two opposing views on the nature of inter-imperialist contradictions--contention is primary, collusion is primary--are often found side by side in the PLA literature.

There are two issues here. First, the PLA is not clear that there are periods in which collusion can be the primary aspect of inter-imperialist relations--such as the imperialist intervention in Russia following WWI, or between the U. S.-USSR in the period 1957 to approximately 1974--and periods where contention is the primary aspect. The PLA tends to maintain a static view and not see movement from one period to another. Second, the PLA tends to maintain that collusion is primary overall and in the end.



44. The last part of this formulation (that is, "a great internationalist struggle"), is somewhat vague and clumsy at best. It is more correct to speak of the national liberation struggles and to see them as a component part of the world proletarian revolution.

45. See "Struggle Against", p 129; and also Enver Hoxha, Speeches Conversations Articles 1965-1966 (Tirana: The "Naim Frasheri" Publishing House, 1977), p 186.

46. Enver Hoxha, Report Submitted to the 6th Congress of the Party of Labor of Albania (Tirana: The "Naim Frasheri" Publishing House, 1971), p26-7. The stress in Hoxha's analysis here is also put on the collusion of the superpowers rather than their contention, although he does recognize to some extent that "deep contradictions" between these "two partners" keep them from acting in "complete harmon and unity always and everywhere." In all, the contention is not seen clearly as an essential feature of imperialism:

Naturally it would be incomprehensible and unrealistic if in the Soviet--U.S. alliance we were to see only the rapprochement and collaboration of the two superpowers, their common interests and actions. As imperialist powers, the United States and the revisionist Soviet Union also have discord, rivalry, and deep contradictions which hinder them from acting in complete harmony and unity always and everywhere. The existence and the sharpening of contradictions lies at the very foundations of this alliance, in the capitalist social system of the two countries, in their imperialist aims. The two partners, while preparing for war, are planning to seize each other by the throat. (p 29)

47. The PLA's use of the term "socialism" is quite confusing because it's used in a number of ways with different meanings. It is used correctly to mean socialism, the economic system, the triumphant proletariat, the socialist country of Albania. But also at times it is used in a broader incorrect way to mean all the revolutionary forces or all the forces fighting for "socialism:, that is, the proletariat, national liberation struggles, socialist countries, working masses, etc.

48. J. V. Stalin, Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972), pp 32-3.