REVOLUTION

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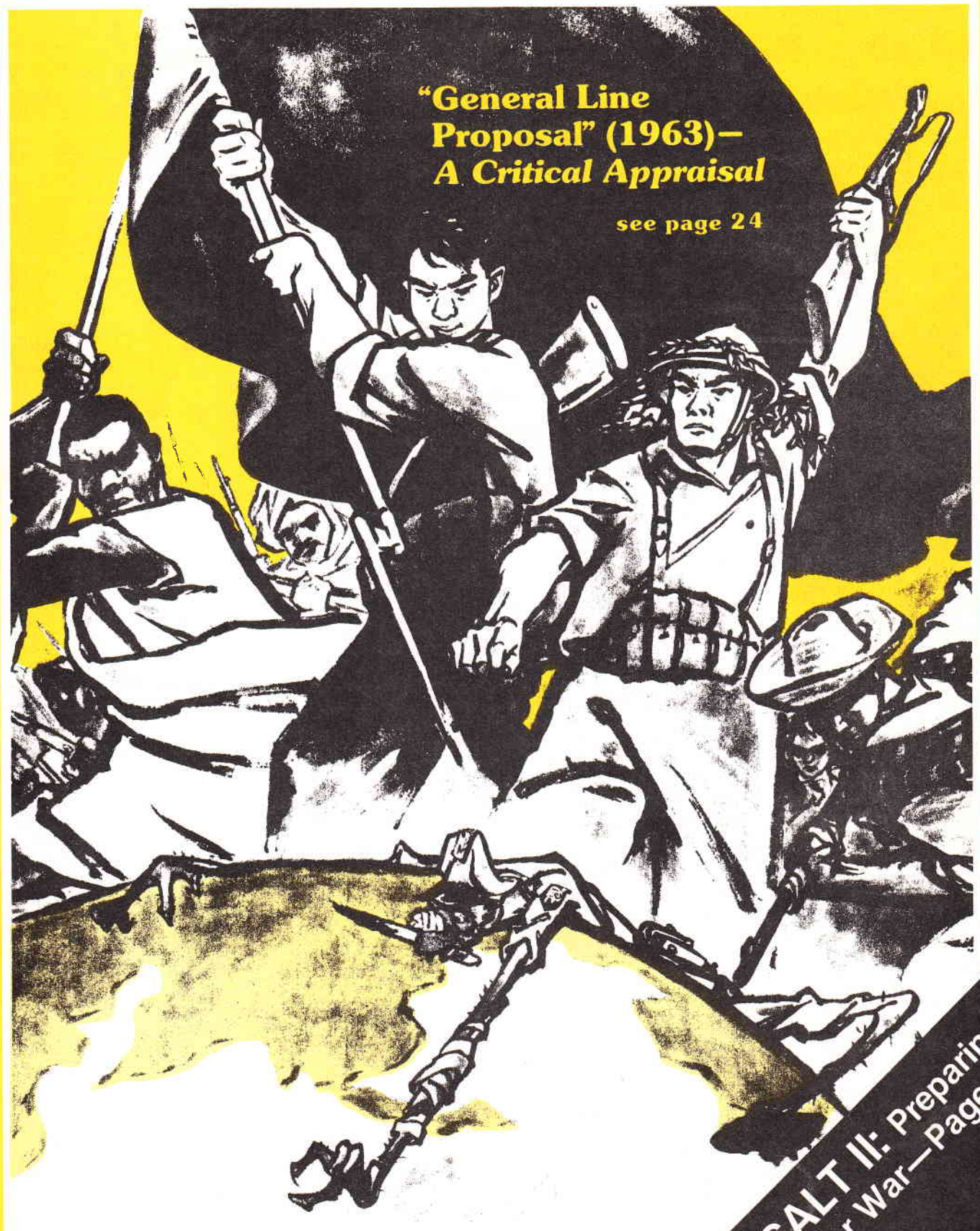
Organ of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA Vol. 4, No. 6 June 1979



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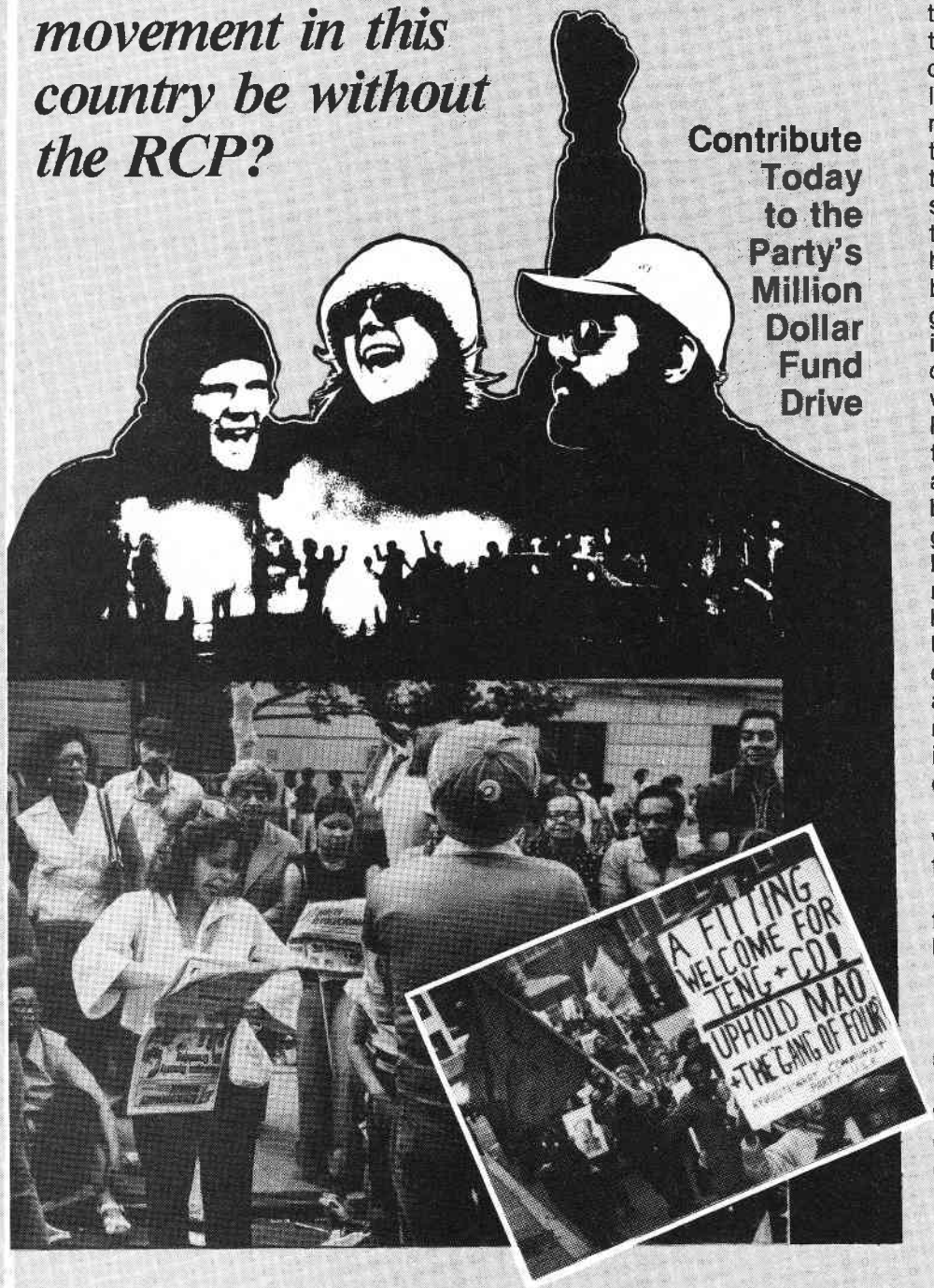
Where would the revolutionary movement in this country be without the RCP?

Contribute Today to the Party's Million Dollar Fund Drive



Step forward and join the battle the RCP is waging to raise one million dollars to carry out its work to advance the revolutionary struggle in the U.S.!

The Revolutionary Communist Party is the successful outcome of a whole series of crucial struggles waged by revolutionaries over the past decade. Without these political and ideological battles, the revolutionary movement in the U.S. would be in a state of demoralization and disarray, stuck in the quagmire of opportunism. Without the RCP, a Party representing and summing up the victories won in these struggles, that movement would not hold the promise for the future that it does—the real possibility of becoming a movement of millions which can topple the rule of capital.

Where would the revolutionary movement be in the U.S. today if in the 1960s and early '70s, amidst the tremendous turmoil and struggle that gave birth to a new generation of revolutionaries, the question of the leading role of the proletariat had not been settled? It was the forces that came together to form the RCP that played a decisive role in that struggle. Where would the revolutionary movement be today if there had been no force willing and capable of going against the tide of bourgeois nationalism posing as Marxism-Leninism and making a principle of the national divisions in the working class? Again, it was the Revolutionary Union, forerunner of the RCP, which led the struggle against this and strengthened the basis for merging the national struggle with the class struggle on a revolutionary basis. And where would the revolutionary movement and the hope for the future be today in the U.S. if the RCP had not boldly exposed and rallied revolutionary forces against the traitorous betrayal of the new revisionist rulers in China, but instead had followed the path of capitulation?

Today, at a time when other erstwhile revolutionaries have retreated to the watery grave of petty reformism and even despicably wrap themselves in the red, white and blue, it is the RCP, USA alone that is actively and boldly among the masses of people pointing the way forward to and preparing for the armed revolution of the working class.

It is with confidence and pride that we ask you to contribute to this fund drive. The next few months will be crucial. Give what you can and as much as you can. But also, and very importantly, the Party calls on you to raise funds among friends and family—funds urgently needed to prepare for revolution in this country. Write us with any ideas and suggestions. We are calling on people not only to donate money, but to send in their own statements of support for this drive that can be used to win more people to support it.

As we stated in our announcement for the one million dollar fund drive: *It all depends on whether you want to make revolution or not.*

REVOLUTION

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Cover: Chinese poster from 1960s reading "Break the Back of the U.S. Aggressors!" This and many other art works at the time reflected the line of the Communist Party of China, put forward most succinctly in *Proposal Concerning the General Line*.

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Vital Campaign Both Necessary and Possible

May Day 1980— Historic

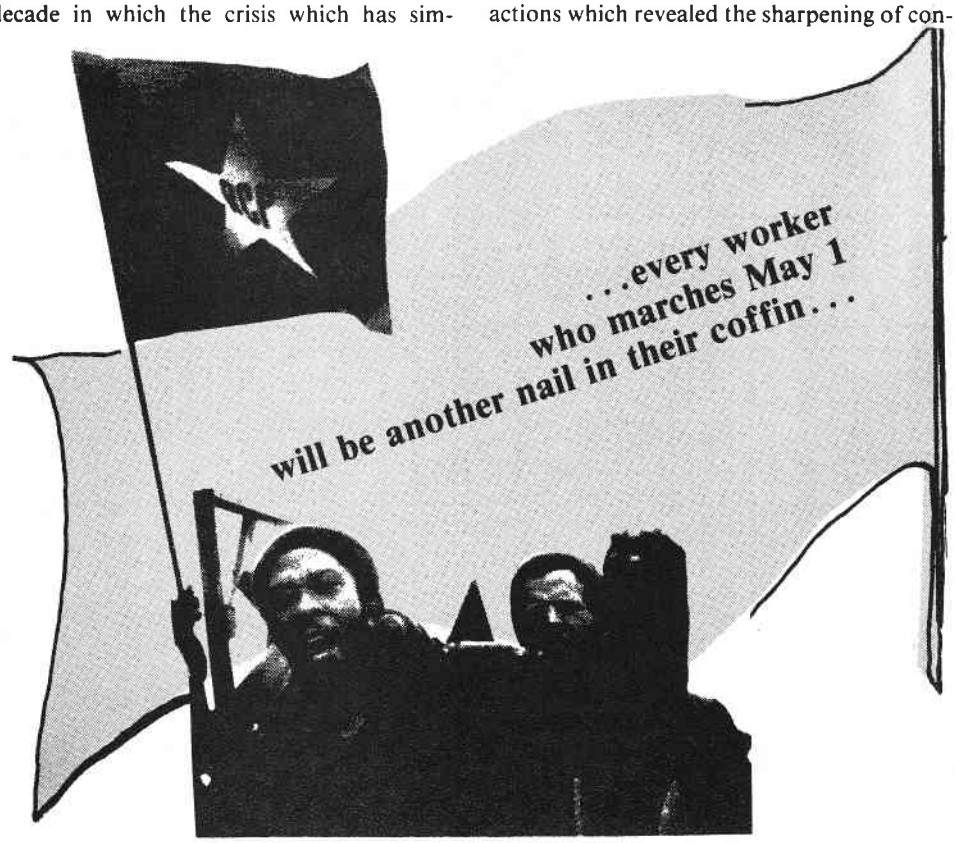
On May 1, 1980, millions of people will see or hear about something which will arouse, astonish and inspire them: On that Thursday, instead of going to work or school, or pounding the streets in search of a job, thousands of people, a significant section of the industrial workers and others among the basic masses, will march defiantly through the streets in major cities across the country in a mass revolutionary May Day.

As they march in step with the working class and revolutionary masses of the world, thousands of workers who in the past expressed general and individual agreement with the idea of revolution will be united and mobilized to carry out an action that will strike a powerful blow at the rule of the bourgeoisie, opening fire with the first round of the mass revolutionary struggle of the 1980s.

This will not be a general strike. That is still beyond the reach of our movement. Nor will it be a May Day of millions. But it will be a May Day which will affect millions, and which will lay an important part of the basis for moving millions into action under a correct, revolutionary banner as conditions ripen for revolution in the years ahead.

The chants and the sound of marching feet on May 1, 1980 will echo in the thinking and future actions of millions, as we enter a decade in which the crisis which has simmered for so long under the surface will come to a boil, a decade filled with the very real prospect of world war and the promise of revolutionary upheavals across the globe, including the possibility of a revolutionary situation arising in this country. The tempo at which events are developing—every day more rapidly—make it more and more obvious that the revolutionary movement must take the kind of qualitative leap we are talking about right now, so that the consciousness of the masses and their advanced forces can keep pace with these developments, and so that the opportunity for revolution will not be thrown away when the bourgeoisie's rule is shaken and millions are impelled into revolt against the conditions of oppression. The possibility that revolution can prevent world war—and that war can give rise to revolution, if such a war is unleashed—make this qualitative leap all the more a question of meeting the demand objectively posed by history.

This May Day 1980 will be like nothing ever seen before in recent years in this country. It will be characterized by its backbone of workers. This is what will make it different from recent political events involving thousands—such as the anti-nuke movement and the hot welcome Chicago students gave Vietnam war architect Robert McNamara, actions which revealed the sharpening of contradictions which will one day soon throw millions into motion. It will also be different from the Black liberation and anti-war movements of the 1960s which, although involving significant numbers of workers, carried the stamp and were under the influence of forces and programs which reflected the position of the petty bourgeoisie and failed to make a complete break with the old society despite their revolutionary aspects, eventually disintegrating and falling prey to outright bourgeois forces. This May Day 1980 above all will be characterized by the fact that these workers, along with other oppressed and revolutionary-minded people, will be marching consciously and proudly under the banner of the revolutionary interests of the proletariat and its Party.



Those who will come forward will be very much a minority. But the understanding this is based on—and with which the advanced must be armed in order to mobilize them into action—is an understanding of not only where things are at today, but also of the aspects of this situation which are rising and developing. Although the bourgeoisie and its agents are still able to shackle millions with backward ideas, the downward spiral that U.S. imperialism is caught in is weakening its ability to hold the workers back politically and ideologically by throwing out crumbs, promises and illusions. And although this is still the beginning of this spiral and there has been no real qualitative change in today's non-revolutionary situation, there are revolutionary elements within this situation. This includes not only underlying objective conditions which are moving towards a blow-up, but also mass struggles—among them scattered revolutionary mass struggles. These revolutionary elements also include both the thousands of more advanced elements from the masses who have begun to put things together and figure out where things are heading (often with the experience of previous political activity in the past decade), and the Party itself—as well as the effect of its revolutionary work among the masses.

Mass Working Class Political Action

This is not the first such mass political thrust, the first step onto the political stage taken by the working class in this country in the recent period. The July 4, 1976 "We've Carried the Rich for 200 Years—Let's Get Them Off Our Back" demonstration, the founding convention of the National United Workers Organization, as well as other May Day celebrations, the January actions against Teng Hsiao-ping's visit, the Moody Park Three campaign and other political events marked very important forward steps in this

Step Forward

regard. But now the work of the Party in promoting revolutionary struggles as well as other struggles, and even more in carrying out the all-around agitation and exposure of the capitalist system through the widening use of the *Revolutionary Worker* (which overall remains the main activity of our Party)—this revolutionary work is more and more creating the conditions among the masses for the revolutionary movement to take a qualitative leap forward, a leap in political level, scale and broad social impact. This bold plan for May Day 1980 is based on a revolutionary determination to take advantage of all of the possibilities for moving forward within the objective situation of today so as to prepare for the time when a new, revolutionary, situation arises. This is the materialism of Marxists, dialectical materialism, which recognizes the objective laws governing the development of things and, most importantly, recognizes the conscious dynamic role of man in changing the world in accordance with these laws.

By galvanizing thousands of the more advanced among the masses into a powerful political force, with an advanced force of class-conscious workers at the forefront, they can serve as a lever to move millions more who will themselves surge forward in struggle against the capitalist system and finally take up the revolutionary cause and carry it through to victory when a revolutionary situation does develop. How do we aim to galvanize these advanced into action? By arming them with an understanding of the importance and urgency of their taking up this call for mass revolutionary May Day 1980.

Role of the Advanced

Already there are thousands upon thousands of people all across the country who dream of revolution and in some way are willing to fight for it. For every person who is today a conscious and active revolutionary, there are countless more who in some way or another are in agreement but who have not yet been moved into action. One obstacle to this wider activity is that so many who hate this system's workings have been taken in by the bourgeoisie's propaganda and don't see how much their feelings are common to very broad sections of the people in this country. Even more important is that many of these people, knowing that they do represent advanced and a relatively small minority, see no role for themselves, no point in themselves becoming politically active at this point in the development of things. "Call me when the revolution comes and I'll be there—I don't have time for this stuff right now but when the thing goes down you can count on me." Sometimes this is just a brush-off, but far more often it's a reflection of the fact that these people just don't see how their own participation at this point would make a difference, especially since that participation is in contradiction to the daily struggle to survive.

In the campaign to build for a mass, revolutionary May Day 1980, which will be our Party's main campaign in the coming year, we aim to rally and concentrate thousands of such people, to move them forward from mere agreement to concrete action, by arming them with an understanding of just how such an action—right here and now, action building for and on May Day 1980—will create more favorable conditions for revolution in the future by today creating a political climate and raising the revolutionary flag among the broad masses in a way that only a material force from among the masses themselves can do it.

The thousands who will come forward and march on this May Day are not a group apart, they're flesh of the masses' flesh and represent merely the most advanced elements from the masses. In that sense this bold political statement of thousands marching and holding high the red banner of revolution will speak to and for millions who are themselves becoming ever more sick and tired of things under this system and its whole filthy nature.

During the coming year the Party and others will go deeply into the factories, the unemployment lines, the ghettos, barrios and other neighborhoods, the schools and the streets and the shopping centers and everywhere there is oppression and resistance, and help awaken and mobilize a growing force among the people, to instill in them not only the understanding that each and every abuse they face arises from the capitalist system and can be ended only by overthrowing that system, but also that their own action is necessary to bring about that revolution and that what they are being called upon to do here and now will make a big difference. For those who are sick of murderous jobs and deadening unemployment, of discrimination and repression, of unbearably bad schools and health care in a country with untold riches, of decay and madness and especially the growing menace of world war—each and every one of these abuses is an urgent reason for taking up the call for mass revolutionary May Day in 1980. How can anyone who hates all this and longs for a

change fail to take their place in the ranks of those who will march on May 1, 1980?

As stated by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the RCP in his dramatic announcement of this plan at last month's May Day celebrations,

"We must draw forward all those, throughout this land, who dare to dream the dream of revolution—and make them activists for the great cause of revolution. We must rally their ranks and concentrate them into a powerful force, raising an uncompromising banner, the bright banner of revolution, awakening and influencing the millions who today hate the way this system forces them to live and how it corrupts every pore of society, and the millions more in whose minds the tremors and death rattles of this system are sounding ever more serious alarms and raising ever more profound questions. We must arouse, mobilize and marshall the great potential strength of all those who say that they will agree but that it will never happen—move them from mere agreement to concrete action to expend their energy and combined force to *make* it happen! . . .class conscious workers, and together with them all who burn with rage at oppression and with the desire to tear out oppression's cause at its roots, will gather not only to proclaim this stand but to make it a living, driving force that will shake this country politically, on that day and afterward; that will echo and reverberate to the four corners of this country and beyond, and into every factory, neighborhood and home, in every region, city and town."

On the Minds of Millions

We aim to make revolution a burning question on the minds of millions—and in order for May Day 1980 to have this impact, the campaign to build it must become the focus of a raging controversy that spreads into every assembly line, field, mill, mine and shipyard, every classroom and street corner, where we can possibly bring it. It will be a measure of the success of our work on May Day if on that day not only are the advanced determined to be there at all risk, but the handful of really backward workers will be reluctant not to go to work no matter how sick they might be that day. We want the imperialists and all their ridiculous "intelligence" agencies to be out there that day counting, for every worker that marches May 1 will be another nail in their coffin. Count away, capitalists, because millions more will also be watching and counting, with their own hopes for the future awakened and made more vivid and real by the electrifying action of this mass revolutionary May Day. We welcome the challenge. We set forth on this campaign knowing full well that it will be very difficult, that it will be a step, a leap, which challenges the abilities of the revolutionary forces as never before in recent history in this country.

In the future, as millions not only question and search and clamor for a way out of this hell-hole society even more desperately, but reach the point that they are willing to die rather than endure it any longer, we are determined that there will be an answer, a direction—the red banner of proletarian revolution held up as only an advanced force of the masses themselves can hold it, so that the hatred and the aspirations of the masses of people can lead to concrete action, and their actions serve their basic interests, so that this red banner can actually lead millions into battle—into mass armed insurrection. Let them say that we are dreaming. Our dreams are based on reality. Those dreams will turn into a very real nightmare for the capitalist oppressor. On May 1, 1980 we'll start to see who's dreaming. ■

SALT II: Preparing the Missiles—and the Masses —for War

On May 10, after seven years of wrangling, the U.S. and Soviet imperialists finally reached an agreement in the latest round of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks—SALT II. On June 18, President Carter and Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev signed the treaty with great fanfare at their summit meeting in Vienna, and from there it is now being sent to the U.S. Senate for ratification and months of well-publicized debate.

Immediately after the agreement was reached, Carter went on TV to rank SALT II on a level with the second coming—"The most important single achievement that could possibly take place for our nation in my lifetime." He went on to claim that "the SALT treaty will lessen the danger of nuclear destruction, while safeguarding our military security in a more stable, predictable and peaceful world." The Soviets quickly joined in the hallelujah chorus, saying that SALT II represents "a realization by the two powers of the cardinal fact of today that there is no reasonable alternative to detente."

While these rival imperialist superpowers continue to throw up a smokescreen of "peace" and "detente," the specifics of the agreement itself demonstrate that it has nothing to do with disarmament. In fact, "the sky's the limit" best describes the outcome of the SALT II negotiations. But more fundamentally, the whole SALT II process —negotiations, the treaty and especially the public debate on ratification—is being utilized by each side to mobilize public opinion for its bloc's all-round war preparations ("defensive," of course) as world war looms on the horizon. Far from being a "framework for peace," SALT II is an integral part of the stepped-up U.S.-Soviet contention for world domination, which increasingly can only be resolved by a new redivision of the world—by imperialist war.

Even as they prepare increasingly for war, both imperialist superpowers find it necessary and useful to preserve the illusion that they are only interested in the pursuit of peace because of the genuine hatred that the masses of people have for war, and particularly for the kind of unprecedentedly destructive war that the U.S. and USSR are preparing to unleash. The imperialists have always been able to use bourgeois pacifism in many and varied ways in disarming the masses of people. Right up to the actual outbreak of war, every imperialist war power tries to wrap itself in sheep's clothing while branding its rivals "warlike" and "aggressive." Picking up on this same theme, Carter recently warned that if SALT II is not signed, "We would be looked upon as a warmongerer, not as a peace-loving nation, by many other people of the world." Deceiving the masses about the real nature of the rivalry between imperialist powers will remain an essential function of this and future "arms limitation" talks.

But despite the hypocritical talk of world peace, there was little of the exuberance in Vienna displayed at meetings between the chieftains of the two superpowers in previous years. Carter pointed out, "The threat of nuclear holocaust still hangs over us, as it has for more than 30 years." As if to emphasize this point, Carter told Brezhnev less than an hour after the treaty was signed that if the Soviets made improvements on their Backfire bomber, the U.S. would "withdraw from" (scrap) SALT II.

"Peace Through Strength"

The U.S. bourgeoisie's pious proclamations about "permanent peace" and "turning swords into plowshares" have more and more given way to slogans of "peace through strength" and dire warnings that the U.S. is in danger of falling behind the Soviets (or is already #2). Under present conditions—in which the U.S. and USSR have been roughly equal in overall military strength for most of the 1970s and in which they are actively preparing to go to war in the 1980s—neither side has had any intention of making real concessions in arriving at a SALT II agreement. Thus SALT II's principal use to both superpowers has been to supply each with propaganda (taking more or less overt forms) about how it is "peaceful" but the other one is going for "military superiority," so no real limitations could be reached.

Time magazine admitted as much—"Despite the arduous negotiations (300 meetings over almost seven years), the Treaty is a rather modest arms control agreement." This is the most praise for the "peaceful" character of the proposed treaty that the mainstream of Western journalism could muster. Instead, magazine cover after magazine cover has its special SALT II issue adorned with pictures of the giant Soviet SS-18 ICBM and the relatively small U.S. Minuteman III next to each other, with charts set up to draw attention to the Soviets' quantitative lead in some areas of strategic and conventional warfare. The message is obviously that "we'd better catch up!" (And you can bet that the Soviets dress up their own war preparations by emphasizing the fields where the U.S. presently has the "advantage.") What this indicates is that it has become increasingly necessary for the U.S. bourgeoisie to take the question of preparing to fight it out with the Soviets out to the masses of people and to do it in such a way that it only appears to be countering the "military build-up" initiated by the other side—which, as the SALT II process is so vividly demonstrating, is a time-tested means of lining up the masses of people solidly behind their "own" bourgeoisie as war approaches.

Thus, in the U.S. the debate around SALT is mainly being used by the bourgeoisie to whip up public opinion for sharply stepped-up military spending and overall preparation for war to keep up (or catch up) with their Soviet rivals—though of course continuing to insist that this is only to preserve "peace and security in the world." Carter himself is now saying that "What causes us concern is not the current balance, but the momentum of the Soviet strategic build-up...at some future point the Soviet Union could achieve a strategic advantage—unless we alter these trends." And Carter, as the current chief political representative of U.S. imperialism, is moving rapidly to "alter these trends" with support from both "pro-SALT" and "anti-SALT" forces. For instance, the first fruit of the SALT II agreement was the announcement that the U.S. is going ahead with the development and deployment of the MX mobile missile system, the launching of the first of the heavily armed Trident submarines, sharply increased efforts to reinforce U.S.-NATO forces in Western Europe

over the next five years, plans to bring back the draft in the near future, and so forth. While there are clearly some important tactical differences within the U.S. bourgeoisie over how best to contend with the Soviets and prepare the masses to go to war, the ruling class is fundamentally united on what needs to be done (more on this later).

USSR Tries to Maintain "Socialist" Cover

For the USSR, "detente" performs many of the same functions that the "peace through strength" slogan does for the U.S. imperialists—particularly since the Soviets in a certain sense have more staked on preserving their image as a peace-loving socialist country attempting to keep the bellicose U.S. imperialists from plunging the whole world into war. And this is becoming increasingly hard to preserve, since the Soviet social-imperialists must aggressively attempt to overturn the present division of the world, which still heavily favors the U.S. imperialist-led bloc—and the Soviets must increasingly rely on their military power to do so. Further, their fifth-column revisionist parties around the world, especially in Western Europe, use "detente" to weaken the U.S. imperialist bloc from within by spreading fairy tales about the "socialist fatherland" and actively promoting everything from bourgeois pacifism and illusory schemes of creating new jobs out of the military budgets, to building up their countries' national defenses outside of NATO.

Both participants to SALT II have stressed that the agreement will allow each to divert some of their resources away from war preparations and toward other, peaceful endeavors. Actually, nothing could be further from the truth.

It is certainly true that both the U.S. and the USSR face grave crises, as well as that they need to spend billions to prop up their empires in other, non-military, ways. But neither has any intention at all of reducing military spending. This can be seen for the hypocritical doubletalk that it is by placing the statements of Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, who estimated that "the U.S. will save $30 billion as a result of SALT II passage" alongside the fact that the price tag of the MX missile program (and this is before all the standard cost overruns and so forth) is, coincidentally, $30 billion for the 200-missile system alone. And it is not only, or even mainly, into strategic nuclear weapons that increased defense spending will be channeled in the years ahead.

What SALT II does allow the superpowers to do is to *concentrate* their war preparations on those areas which are most vital to their ability to fight and win a world war—and avoid a very costly and not very productive effort to stockpile certain weapons that are rapidly becoming relatively obsolete or to spend the billions in areas where there is rough parity between the two and no clear promise for one or another side being able to establish superiority.

And finally, the superpowers have a continuing interest in conducting SALT negotiations because they need to get a better idea of exactly what the other side has. In order to complement spy satellites, monitoring stations, and so forth, both the U.S. and USSR have used the long and drawn-out years of SALT negotiations to try to force each other to permit them to "verify" their rival's strategic arsenals. In addition, each is better able to gauge the importance of its rival's present and in-development weapons systems by what it's willing to trade off versus what it refuses to make any concessions on.

The Sky's the Limit

A quick review of the terms of the treaty reveals that what is taking place is not only the exact opposite of "disarmament" but that both superpowers were not about to and did not make any significant concessions around SALT II. This is evident in that the treaty places the greatest limitations on land-based stationary ICBM's (such as the U.S. Minuteman III and the Soviet SS-18 and 19), which are rapidly becoming less important parts of the nuclear arsenals. Thus, billions can be rechanneled into mobile ICBMs, new subs and SLBMs (Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles), new bombers (such as the Soviet Backfire and the upgrading of the U.S. B-52s with highly accurate Cruise missiles), more sophisticated defensive weaponry, new high-level technology systems (such as killer lasers, neutron bombs, etc.) and greater quantities of sophisticated weapons for "theater" (referring to specific areas, or military theaters, of the world) and conventional warfare. In the U.S., advocates of SALT II ratification are openly pointing to the fact that the treaty will not "prevent us from upgrading all sides of the strategic triad" (air, sea and land-based strategic delivery systems).

The final version of SALT II places a ceiling of 2250 on the number of intercontinental or strategic delivery systems. The U.S. is thereby "limited" to a total of nearly 200 more than it already has, while the Soviets, for their part, are more than willing to score a few propaganda points by junking a few aged single-warhead ICBM's to bring them within the new "limits." The utter meaninglessness of these limits is indicated by the fact that by 1985 the U.S. is not planning on deploying any more than the 2060 ICBM's, subs and strategic bombers it already has. The U.S. surpassed 1000 ICBM's some 12 years ago, when then Defense Secretary McNamara shifted U.S. emphasis from increasing quantity to improving quality. As he reasoned then, "...the most meaningful and realistic measurement of nuclear capability is neither gross megatonnage, nor the number of available missile launchers, but the number of separate warheads that are capable of being delivered with accuracy." This computerized dealer-of-death added that in a second strike the delivery of even one fifth of the U.S.'s surviving missiles on Soviet cities would destroy one third of the population and half the industrial capacity of the USSR.

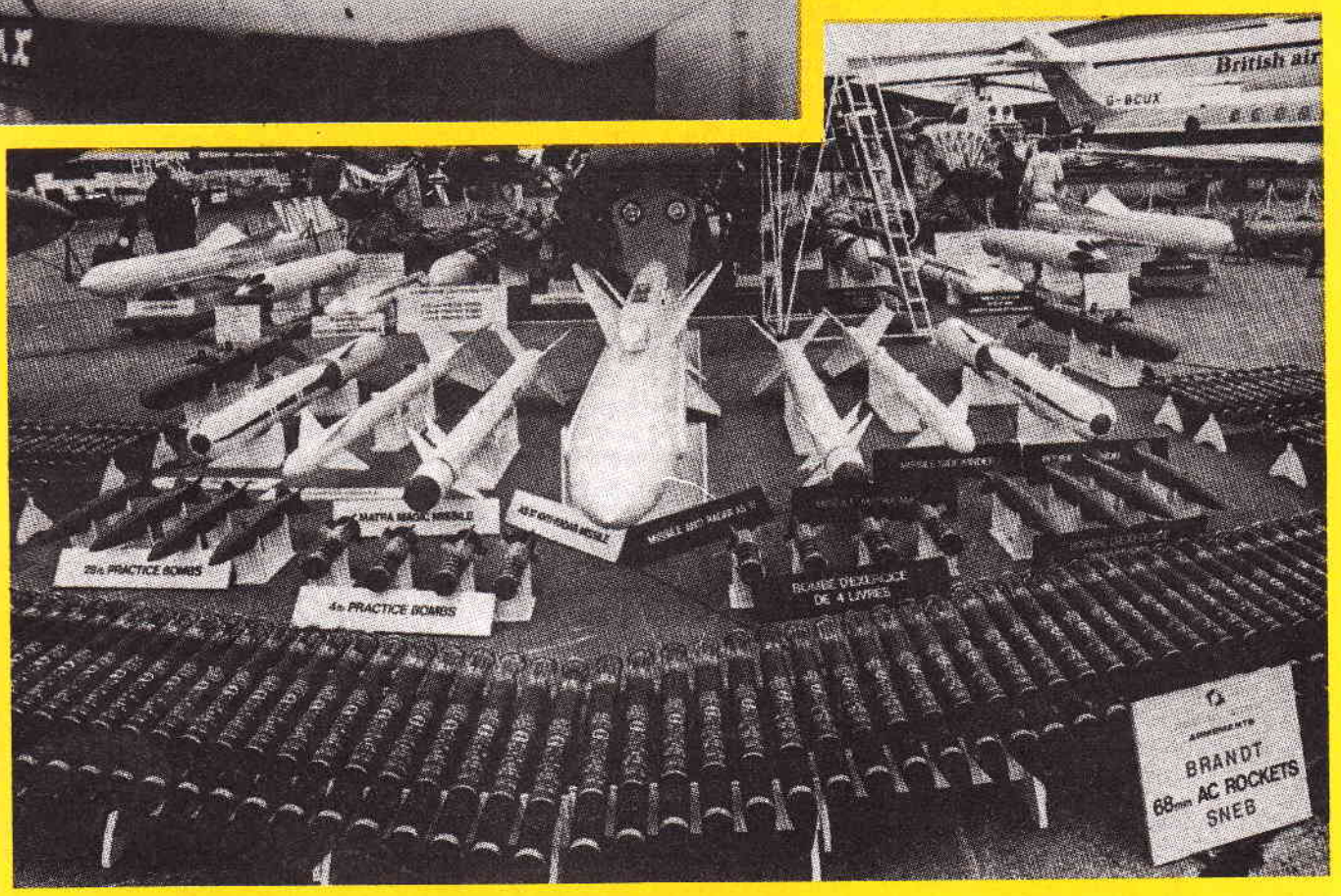
This drives home the point that the strategic nuclear arsenals of the superpowers have long since reached the point of "overkill" and that the main area of competition is the qualitative advances in strategic nuclear weaponry—particularly those that offer the possibilities of giving them a viable first strike capability and a capability of surviving counter-strikes and being able to continue to pursue the war through to a victorious conclusion.

Within this framework, then, it can be seen that the U.S. and the USSR have "conceded" nothing to each other by agreeing to the 2250 ceiling or to the 1320 ceiling on MIRV'ed strategic delivery systems (those fitted with multiple independently-targeted reentry vehicle warheads). Even with this ceiling, the U.S. is "allowed" to go from its present 8,500 deliverable warheads to over 12,000. The Soviet Union can double its 4,000-plus warheads. And more importantly, both can do everything technically possible to boost the blast power of each warhead and increase the sophistication and accuracy of its delivery system. It was no surprise that the Soviets adamantly refused to give up their fleet of "heavy" missiles (particularly the SS-18, which is more than twice as big and powerful as the U.S. Minuteman III and has the potential of carrying up to 40 MIRV'ed warheads) since these missiles are the cornerstone of the Soviet strategic arsenal. However, since they've got enough SS-18's deployed for their present purposes, the Soviets agreed to "freeze" the number at the existing level of 308 and thus concentrate on hardening the silos they're launched from and improving the accuracy of their warheads.

On the U.S. side, SALT II provides ample opportunity to upgrade the land-based ICBM's. While it substitutes more powerful warheads on the Minuteman III and improves its accuracy over the next several years, the U.S. is going ahead with development of the MX missiles—another ICBM that is twice as big as anything the U.S. currently has in its strategic arsenal and will carry ten separate warheads. The Soviets have already test-fired the mobile SS-16 (which has both strategic and theater capability), which they have set on approximately the same schedule of deployment as the U.S. MX by agreeing not to further develop and deploy it during the course of SALT II.

Though generally with these weapons systems there isn't a one-to-one equivalence, and thus they tend to be negotiated on as part of the overall package, the Soviet Backfire bomber and the U.S. Cruise missile are paired together in arms limitation talks. This is a case of sophisticated new weapons already coming off the assembly lines that neither side is willing to give up or limit in any significant way. Thus the Backfire and the U.S.-launched Cruise missiles are not even

DISARMAMENT— SALT II STYLE



covered in SALT II. (The Cruise is a particularly effective weapon for U.S. and NATO planners, since it has the ability to elude Soviet radar defenses by traveling at extremely low altitudes and then being able to hit targets within 30 meters of accuracy.) While going full-steam ahead with the air-launched Cruise missiles (which will eventually be placed—28 missiles per each B-52—on nearly half of the U.S. strategic bomber force), the U.S. agreed in the protocol of SALT II to only develop and test, but stop short of deploying, sea and ground-based Cruise missiles before 1981. This suits the U.S. just fine, since it won't be ready to deploy them before 1981 anyway.

Nuclear Diplomacy

Ever since the U.S. imperialists first exploded the atom bomb, "nuclear diplomacy" on the part of all the imperialist nuclear powers has been nothing more than a way to bully and intimidate the people of the world, spread illusions about the imperialists' "peaceful" intentions even as they gear up for war, use their negotiations to carve up spheres of influence—or any combination of the above, depending on their particular needs at the time. In short, nuclear diplomacy is imperialist diplomacy.

As Marx first pointed out, the politics of a given state reflects the nature of the class that rules it. To understand their diplomacy, the position and class objectives of those who are pursuing it must be understood. Lenin pointed out, "To substitute the question of the form of struggle and agreements (today, peaceful, tomorrow warlike, the next day warlike again), for the question of the *substance* of the struggle and agreements... is to sink into the role of a sophist." (*Collected Works,* Vol. 22, p. 252) Thus it is not surprising that nuclear diplomacy has gone through various phases since World War 2 as the world situation has changed and as the tactics and the relative strength of the contending imperialist powers have also changed.

Nuclear diplomacy had its horrible beginning in 1945 when the U.S. imperialists incinerated the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As Mao pointed out at the time, this barbaric act had little to do with forcing the surrender of Japan, which was ready to do so anyway (especially because of the Soviets' entry into the war against Japan). Instead, it was meant as an object lesson to the peoples of all countries, to prevent the then-socialist Soviet Union from participating in Japan's surrender and as a clear statement by the U.S. imperialists of their intentions to achieve world domination. But even this naked act of slaughter was accompanied by the U.S. ruling class's pious proclamations that the A bomb had "saved countless American and Japanese lives" and would be a factor for world peace. The "peace" that the A bomb was to preserve was the Pax Americana which, like the Pax Romana it was named after, was based on the strength of the imperial army, and the control of a host of vassal states to whom it offered protection

against the "barbarians" (read: communists) outside of the realm of civilization, prosperity and "peace."

But as Mao Tsetung was to point out so brilliantly, the atom bomb was a paper tiger. The Marxist principle that people, not weapons, decide the outcome of the war, remained valid. The victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949 and the war to beat back U.S. aggression in Korea was testimony to this thesis.

Further, the monopoly of the U.S. imperialists on the atom bomb was soon broken, as the Soviet Union developed its own nuclear weapons in 1949. Still, the U.S. imperialists, puffed up by their dominant position in the world and their still overwhelming nuclear superiority, followed the policy of nuclear blackmail termed "brinksmanship," which was expounded by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles during the Eisenhower administration. The basic philosophy of "brinksmanship" was to threaten a massive nuclear assault against the Soviet Union, China and other countries of what then constituted the socialist camp if they threatened vital U.S. interests.

The emergence of Khrushchevite revisionism in 1956, coupled with the further growth of the Soviet Union's military might, combined to create a new world situation in which "brinksmanship" was gradually replaced with talk of "peaceful coexistence." This was chiefly a result of the change in the nature of the USSR, which ceased to represent the iron barrier to U.S. world domination it had been under Stalin, and the U.S. rulers were anxious to make use of Khrushchev's cowardly capitulation to U.S. imperialism. All of a sudden, nuclear war became "unthinkable" and, instead, the world entered a period of growing peace and understanding—the lynchpin of which was to be the enlightened and responsible actions of the U.S. and Soviet rulers.

This new policy of the U.S. bourgeoisie was sealed in 1963 following several developments. First, Khrushchev had been forced to back down in the famous Cuba missile crisis the year before. Second, the struggle between the Soviet revisionists and the genuine communists in the world, with the Communist Party of China and its leader Mao Tsetung in the forefront, reached an open breaking point. Further, the increasingly more massive nuclear weapons being tested in the atmosphere were creating a worldwide opposition to nuclear weapons.

The Soviet Union was anxious to end its openly hostile relationship with the U.S. (at least for a time) and concentrate on expanding its own influence in the world through "peaceful competition." As an offering to U.S. imperialism, the Soviet revisionists provided assistance in trying to put out the flames of revolutionary war then beginning to flare up in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Khrushchev preached that a local war could spark a nuclear conflagration. In particular, the U.S. and the Soviet Union (and also to a lesser extent Great Britain) wanted to maintain a monopoly on nuclear weapons and, especially, to keep the People's Republic of China from being armed with them. This was the heart of the policy that led to the 1963 limited test ban treaty which banned nuclear explosions in the atmosphere.

Militarily, atmospheric tests of nuclear weapons had already been rendered superfluous. More to the point, the test ban was a way to make the nuclear powers look "peaceful" and reasonable while they continued to develop new and more powerful nuclear weapons and tried to label China (and all genuine communists) as warmongerers endangering world peace. (The actual position of China was to call for the complete destruction of nuclear weapons, but to point out that until such a thing could be accomplished it would be sheer folly for revolutionary states not to develop nuclear weapons.) After 1963, nuclear testing actually increased fourfold—but safely away from public view.

The same policy continued throughout the 1960s and led to another imperialist-sponsored treaty, the 1968 nuclear nonproliferation treaty, in which most states agreed not to develop nuclear weapons while the "nuclear club" was to show restraint and not arm their dependent states with these weapons. China, having successfully developed its own nuclear capabilities in 1964, again refused to have anything to do with this sham pact advertised as a step towards a more "peaceful" world.

But, of course, the 1960s were anything but a period of peace and, in fact, were marked by a tremendous upsurge of revolutionary struggle throughout the world, aimed principally at the U.S. and not able to be sabotaged by the Soviet revisionists. Also, the Soviet Union—having been completely transformed into a monopoly capitalist, imperialist state—was increasingly compelled by the capitalist dictum "expand or die" to step out and challenge the U.S. for hegemony in different areas of the world. To back up their predatory policy the Soviets feverishly promoted their nuclear program, throwing an immense chunk of their national wealth into its development—again, under the signboard of peace.

This was the backdrop for the beginning of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I) in 1969. The Soviet Union had been transformed completely into an imperialist superpower. Contention between the U.S. and the USSR had necessarily become principal over collusion. The U.S. imperialists were also more desperate to shore up and expand their own empire, which had been dealt serious blows as a result of the people's revolutionary struggles (most notably in Indochina) and the sharpening contradictions with other imperialist members of its own camp. By 1969-72, the very years of the SALT I negotiations, the Soviet Union was clearly headed towards achieving rough parity with the U.S. in the field of strategic nuclear weapons.

The initial SALT treaty was accompanied by a great ballyhoo of "detente" between the two superpowers. But, unlike the nuclear agreements of the '60s, it was much more clearly within the context of preparations for a new imperialist war. While the U.S. did make a few "concessions" to the Soviets to come to an agreement (which mainly constituted the recognition that the Soviets were rapidly catching up with the U.S. in strategic forces), neither side gave up anything vital, and the SALT agreement was mainly window dressing for both superpowers.

During the SALT negotiations and before, the "MAD" doctrine ("Mutually Assured Destruction") was promoted for a while. MAD was supposed to insure that there could be no strategic nuclear war because it would lead to the incineration of both sides. Although the contention between the two superpowers was uppermost on their mind, each had an interest in deceiving the masses of people about the class content of their rivalry, and each felt that they could best pursue their economic, political and military aims within the framework of "detente." It was just as Stalin had described the various "disarmament" moves between World War 1 and World War 2: "Imperialist pacifism is an instrument for the preparation of war and for disguising this preparation by hypocritical talk of peace."

All the talk about "detente" and "peace" since SALT I has been clearly aimed at preparing the conditions for the opposite. Henry Kissinger said as much in defending the policy of "detente" in a speech to the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London on June 25, 1976:

> ...the concept of "detente" has been applicable only to an adversary relationship...only a demonstrated commitment to peace can sustain domestic support for an adequate defense and vigilant foreign policy. Our public and Congress will not back policies which appear to invite crisis; nor will they support firmness in a crisis unless they are convinced that peaceful and honorable alternatives have been exhausted.

The Soviet Union found the "detente" smokescreen useful as well. Not only for the reasons that Kissinger ran down (which apply with equal force to the masses in the Soviet Union), but also because they continued to wear the mask of the peace-loving "socialist" state in their dealings with the rest of the world.

The U.S. bourgeoisie was quite united that the Salt I "detente" policy was serving their interests well—especially in light of the tremendous opposition they faced at home to their military adventures and aggression as a result of the Vietnam War and the struggle

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Advance Through Criticism of Past Errors

Busing and the Fight Against National Oppression and for Revolution

Few questions have provoked so much division within the ranks of the people—or so many instances of workers acting against their own class interests—as the question of busing school children in the name of achieving integration. In city after city federally ordered busing plans have generated turmoil and confusion, vicious mob action aimed at Black people, and a marked tendency for Black people and others opposed to the actions of the racist neanderthals to land in the arms of the liberal bourgeoisie. Of course, the basis for the intense feelings and struggle that busing has generated has never been an abstract concern over the merits or demerits of children taking a bus to school. Rather, busing and the movements that have developed in response to it have highlighted and exacerbated one of the central features of U.S. society—the inequality and oppression of Black people and other minority nationalities, and the corresponding reflection of this oppression in the sphere of ideology and politics.

It would be comforting to suggest that in the face of one of the bourgeoisie's most successful tactics to whip up reaction, divide the ranks of the people and strengthen their bourgeois rule the revolutionary movment in this country had been able to provide a clear, proletarian alternative to various forms of poison that have come to the fore around the busing question. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. Within the ranks of Marxist-Leninists and would-be Marxists, the busing question has led to confusion and, overwhelmingly, left revolutionaries (genuine or professed) tailing bourgeois ideology and bourgeois politics in one or another form.

The Revolutionary Communist Party and the organization that played the key role in its formation, the Revolutionary Union, has committed serious errors around the "busing question" going back to 1974 when the Boston busing plan and the reactionary movement it engendered first catapulted this question to national prominence. Although there was struggle around this question in the RCP and the RU before it and efforts were made to correct some of the glaring errors associated with the Party and the RU's line on busing, it was only following the defeat of the Jarvis-Bergman revisionist clique and the holding of the Second Congress of the Party in 1978 that it has been possible to thoroughly break with past errors on this question and sum up and fight to root out the basis for these serious errors.

What follows is a slightly edited internal document of the Party, circulated and discussed within the RCP within the past several months, which systematically examines the busing question and the Party's errors in relation to it. This document is being made public to assist class conscious workers and other revolutionary-minded people in learning from the mainly negative experience of our Party around this question and to help create a situation in which similar errors will be less likely to be repeated. At the same time, the document should help acquaint the reader with how a genuine communist party, a party whose sole reason for existence is to lead the working class and the masses in making revolution and advancing to socialism and ultimately communism, is able to use the science of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought to rectify its errors and has no interest in concealing or perpetuating its mistakes, particularly when basic principles are involved.

As Lenin put it:

> The attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it *in practice* fulfills its obligations towards its *class* and the toiling *masses*. Frankly admitting a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analyzing the conditions which led to it, and thoroughly discussing the means of correcting it—that is the earmark of a serious party; that is the way it should perform its duties, that is the way it should educate and train the *class*, and then the *masses*. (*"Left-Wing" Communism, An Infantile Disorder*, Peking FLP, pp. 50-51, Lenin's emphasis.)

No doubt there will be various opportunist groupings, some decked out in "communist" garb, who will try to use this self-criticism of the RCP to try to fling mud at the Party and reverse verdicts on their own opportunist positions of the past—and present. It seems to be a law of history that those whose very political existence is a colossal error will try to seize upon the errors of Marxist-Leninists to try to confound Marxism and revisionism. Thus it is necessary, by way of introduction to the document, to review the way in which, and the times during which, the busing question first became a point of controversy in the revolutionary movement. The theses of the opportunists must be criticized, not to justify or minimize the errors of the communists, but so that the reader will understand in an all-round way "the conditions which led" to the mistakes of the Party (and the RU) and so that, in addition, in correcting one deviation one does not fall into others.

Busing and the Opportunists

The Boston busing plan came on the scene in the midst of a major struggle that was going on within what could at the time be referred to as the communist movement in the U.S. In particular the struggle was centered around the question of *Bundism*, or the political tendency to adapt Marxism to nationalism (so named after the Jewish Bund or league in Tsarist Russia which had argued that Jewish workers had to be organized into a political organization separate from other class conscious workers in Russia.) This deviation was very strong in the U.S. at that time, growing out of the objective fact that the national struggle of Black people and other oppressed nationalities had, in the period of the '60s and early '70s, outstripped the struggle of the multi-national working class as a whole. This fact had led some revolutionaries to believe that the development of a multi-national party was conditional on organizations of Black and other oppressed nationalities *first* establishing a certain degree of influence among the masses

of their nationalities and that only *then* could a multi-national party be established. It was also linked to the view that within the working class "Black workers must take the lead" and that Black and other minority nationality communists should be guaranteed a special place (and special organizational forms) within the multi-national party.

This Bundist view also dovetailed closely with plain old fashioned liberalism which had always been a strong current among white communists coming out of the anti-imperialist movements centered in the petty bourgeoisie. This liberalism trailed the Bundism prevalent in the movement. Both views had in common an underestimation of and a contempt for the revolutionary potential of the workers as a *class*, particularly of the white workers. Both views raised the national question *above* the class question.

The Revolutionary Union distinguished itself by forthrightly struggling against this deviation in the movement, a deviation which, it is safe to say, was dominant at that time and had significant influence in the RU itself in its five years or so of existence. Because of this, the RU and later the RCP was blasted as "racist" and "national chauvinist" for failing to buckle under to nationalist and liberal deviations.

These charges were levelled because, instead of a slogan like "Black workers take the lead," the RU stressed the need for the multi-national proletariat to take the lead of all the struggles of the masses in the U.S., including the fight against national oppression. With this understanding, the RU, for example, led campaigns against various stark examples of national oppression (such as police killings, and Operation Zebra in San Francisco when Blacks were forced to carry I.D. cards as part of a so-called police "investigation" into a series of murders.) These struggles were taken up among the workers of all nationalities, as well as among the oppressed Black masses, and many white workers came forward in them.

When the Boston busing plan was first implemented in 1974, there was a well organized reactionary and chauvinist movement that developed in opposition to it. Reactionaries succeeded in winning over some sections of the white masses (including workers) to try to attack school buses carrying Black children, beat up Blacks who happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, and so forth. The plan itself was neither the outgrowth of mass struggle nor of any particular benefit to the Black masses. Ordered by the federal government with the excuse of a lawsuit by the NAACP, the busing plan aimed to accomplish exactly what it did accomplish—the intensification of national divisions among the people. While the reactionaries were busy trying to organize pogroms against Blacks, other bourgeoisie forces were trying to mobilize Black people behind their banner (making use of the services of the NAACP and the like) and to convince them that the white masses, not the capitalist ruling class, are the enemy of Black people.

The attitude of most of the "communist" forces at the time was to tail completely behind the actions of the liberal bourgeoisie. The busing plan was hailed as a great concession to Black people. The federal government was called upon to send troops into the city to protect (!) Blacks against attacks by racist whites. Efforts were consistently made by such "communists" to paint the entire white working class community of South Boston (where resistance to the busing plan was the strongest) as hopeless reactionaries. In other words, a situation was being presented where the federal government, and the mainstream of the bourgeoisie, were presented as implementing a progressive reform while the masses of the white workers were, on the other hand, the enemy— one reactionary mass or mob.

Among some "communist" forces at that time—most notably the notorious October League (now called the CPML) and the *Guardian*, two groups who at that time were politically very close to each other—this view was linked to an analysis that the U.S. bourgeoisie was divided into a "fascist" section (Nixon, etc.) and a "democratic" section (Kennedy, and the people that supported busing or other "democratic" measures). Thus OL's calls for the *government* to "break up the fascist gangs" were directed at the "anti-fascist" section of the bourgeoisie to come to the aid of the masses of Black people.

In the face of this, the RU correctly analyzed what the bourgeoisie was trying to accomplish through its "busing plan," which was anything *but* bettering the condition of Black people or promoting real integration. The experience in the U.S. over the past few years has borne this out completely. The RU emphasized that the white workers were not enemies of the revolution, but had to be won to be a key component in it. The RU set out to find a middle ground ("break through the middle" was one of the slogans issued at the time) between the reactionary mobs and the liberal bourgeoisie and the Black bourgeois reformists on their payroll (or parrotting their line without pay) who were masquerading as the saviors of Black people and trying to direct the movement for equality against the white masses. It was because the RU refused to tail behind the bourgeoisie, refused to support the Boston busing plan, and refused to write off the white workers to the camp of reaction that it incurred the wrath of the opportunists. And all the while, in fact, it was only the RU that was actually organizing in South Boston against the racist attacks on Black people.

At the same time, as the document below spells out in some detail, the line the RU took at the time, and which continued to plague the Party for quite awhile, was not correct. While the Boston busing plan was not something that should be supported, the RU's opposition to it was not based on a correct analysis of the overall situation. This took its most crude expression in the slogan "People Unite to Smash the Boston Busing Plan!," although the RU quickly repudiated this slogan and summed up some of the errors associated with it, in its own ranks and publicly in its press. However, the RU's work around this continued to be characterized by trying to find a common ground among Blacks and whites in opposing the busing plan, at a time when the busing plan was not really the actual question at all. Rather the central question was defending Black people against racist attacks, and building real unity of the working class—not by trying "to call a halt" in the abstract to divisions in the working class but by uniting the working class to attack the real source of those divisions, the inequality and the oppression of the minority nationalities fostered and promoted by the capitalist system.

It is essential to note here that the struggle within the Party to correct these errors on the busing question has been linked closely with the struggle against pragmatism and economism—trends which have had influence in the ranks of the RCP (and the RU before it) and which was crystallized in the revisionist political line of the Jarvis-Berman headquarters inside the Party. These Mensheviks judged everything in relation to building the economic struggle and the trade union unity of the workers—and thus downplayed and increasingly liquidated the fight against national oppression. (At the same time, it should be noted that the underlying pragmatism of the Mensheviks make it quite possible for them to flip over to tailing narrow nationalism and bourgeois liberalism.) Thus, with the defeat and repudiation of the economist, reformist and all-around revisionist line of the Mensheviks in 1978, the ground was laid for the RCP to more thoroughly sum up and root out the underlying political basis for the Party's errors on the busing question.

In sum, then, the RU (and later the Party) made a number of important and correct criticisms of the positions of the opportunists but failed to formulate a correct line which could lead the masses forward in the midst of an extremely difficult and complex situation. The criticism of these past errors summed up in the internal document below has not only corrected the Party's previous stand on the busing question, but also, by going into the basis for those errors, helps to minimize the possibility that similar errors around other questions will arise in the future.

Text of Party document follows

For several years now our Party has been involved in work around various busing plans ordered by the courts in several major cities of the country. In practically every one of these situations the bourgeoisie has made considerable headway in deepening the divisions within the working class—mistrust, violence and deep-seated cynicism have been fueled by these plans. Even where such plans are not immediately on the agenda, the bourgeoisie has made ideological capital out of situations like Boston and Louisville, raising the specter of howling mobs and people at each other's throats to demoralize the workers. And to some extent this is even reflected in our own ranks where the prospect of having to deal with this question is more than likely regarded as a thankless task. Not that it's all been cringing or that good work has not been done in some situations, but the brutal and undeniable fact is that we have not—to any significant measure—been able to decisively influence the masses around this question.

This is not to argue for pragmatism, i.e. let's cast about for something that will work; rather the point is to examine the assumptions that have guided and the framework within which this work has been carried out. The latest Central Committee document lays the basis to do this. It points out that while it has been correct generally not to support the recent busing plans (or almost all of them), "there has been a general tendency to put too much emphasis on opposing the plans and not enough on raising and finding the ways to build struggle around demands that are in the interests of the working class as a whole, including equality as a central part of this." More specifically that document emphasizes that "we should be more against the attacks on Black people—and certainly more *for* the fight against national oppression and inequality in all forms—than we are against the busing plans." Yet the thread that has run through much of the work that has been done is that anti-busing sentiment is largely progressive (except for the most chauvinist expressions of it) and that our task was, or implicitly became, to build off of it. But before this is scrutinized further it is necessary to review what the bourgeoisie has been up to with these plans.

Long and drawn out litigation in the courts—for the most part initiated by the NAACP—has resulted in city-wide desegregation plans involving extensive busing. These suits were not the product of nor a concession to mass struggle, but represented a conscious initiative taken by the bourgeoisie. That these plans were launched in rapid succession in 1974-75 only underscores this. Clearly, the bourgeoisie, having summed up earlier experiments and episodes around busing (the most noteworthy perhaps in Pontiac, Michigan some years back), decided to unsheathe its sword. These plans in so far as they were implemented were generally accompanied by school closings, personnel and program cuts, especially affecting minorities, and in many instances their actual effect (where already integrated schools were among those closed or broken up and where whites pulled out of the school system) was to bring about further segregation.

But these things, though an integral part and result of many such plans, were not the essence of the bourgeoisie's offensive. The principal objective of these busing plans has been a political one—to intensify divisions within the working class by playing upon and inflaming national antagonisms. It was more than coincidental that the most controversial plan—the opening shot, as it were—was in Boston in the fall of 1974 when the economy was entering into its deepest post-war contraction. These plans were launched exactly at a time of crisis, the further development of which was bound to stiffen the resistance of the working class. These plans therefore were not simply engineered out of cunning or conspiracy. They flowed from the needs of the ruling class to stem and derail the struggle of the working class, to cripple its ability to forge unity in the face of stepped up attacks, and to place a major stumbling block in the way of the working class' ability to develop a larger, more politically conscious movement.

. . .if we are going to resist this divide-and-conquer scheme we have got to attack the basis on which it is launched—which means fighting inequality and opposing its ideological reflections and reinforcements, particularly white chauvinism.

This political attack has centered on the schools because they can be made a convenient focus for national antagonisms—given the degree of segregation that exists in most cities, the generally more rotten conditions in the Black and minority schools and the emotional hysteria that can be whipped up around children. The bourgeoisie initiates these plans fully aware that they will arouse a reactionary response among some sections of white workers and petty bourgeoisie. Groups like ROAR, the KKK, the Nazis, as well as other scum with a more respectable veneer, are promoted for the express purpose of welding this resistance into a reactionary and chauvinist movement which can influence and sweep up significant numbers of whites who might oppose these plans for reasons of inconvenience, fear and so forth. Once these forces gain the upper hand and threaten or actually launch attacks on Black people, the bourgeoisie—posing as the champion of Black people's rights and pointing to the sentiments and actions it has deliberately provoked among white people—will seek to rally Black people around its agents and opportunist forces. And significant numbers of Black people who may have been luke-warm toward or even opposed to these plans at their inception can now be won to them as a matter of principle on account of these attacks. The NAACP and the nationalists run amuck.

This in a nutshell has been the kind of situation that has developed—and to this point we have not made much progress in the way of countering this offensive. But the fundamental problem has not been the bourgeoisie's ability to maneuver or that the balance of forces is initially—or even for an extended time—an unfavorable one. All this may be true; yet what has limited the freedom of the Party to truly raise the banner of our class and revolution is that our approach to the question has been basically wrong. To put it bluntly, we've opposed busing largely for the wrong reasons and made opposing busing the main aspect of our work.

As indicated, these busing plans are political attacks and cannot—at least in most cases—be supported. The perceptual understanding of most people is that children are being shuttled from one basically bad school to another and that people are less united through the course of all this. But this divides into two because for many people this gets translated as "leave well enough alone" and also feeds a certain cynicism that Black and white people really *can't* get along. But beyond this, the main issue involved in these situations is the national question. And the only real meaning opposition to busing can have outside of working to make the fight against national oppression the pivotal concern is to sanction inequality—whether we intend it or not.

Why is it that the fight against inequality and discrimination is the crux of the fight against this divide-and-conquer scheme? Well, on one level the bourgeoisie pushes this question to the fore. By making a phony pretense of concern over segregation, the bourgeoisie attempts to channel Black people's hatred for segregation and discrimination into dead-end reformism and nationalism. Among the masses of white people, the bourgeoisie tries to whip up a reactionary and chauvinist movement in opposition to the struggle of Black people and to maintain the unequal status quo. And quite obviously what is happening is that the masses are being polarized and organized along national lines. But even here we are only looking at the surface of things.

If we say—as we correctly do—that busing is a divide-and-conquer scheme, then we have to ask ourselves how is it that the bourgeoisie can get over with this attack? By capriciously fomenting divisions? By simply exploiting popular prejudices? No, there is a basis for the bourgeoisie to divide the class politically and that resides in the real material inequalities that exist between Black and white people. What the bourgeoisie is doing is exacerbating existing antagonisms which are rooted in the structure of national oppression

and reinforced in the superstructure. White workers do have access to relatively better job opportunities and do live in relatively better neighborhoods, etc. Through its ideological apparatus the bourgeoisie bends every effort to convince white workers that Black people are unwilling to work hard enough to escape their misery or are even the cause of it. Of course, compared to the suffering that workers of all nationalities have in common these differences are far secondary. But they are real, nonetheless, and provide the material basis for the bourgeoisie to further divide the class. So it's not just out of nowhere that the bourgeoisie can coax whites to "protect what they have from the encroachments of Blacks" or to tell Blacks that "whites have all the goods or, at least, where whites are the goods will follow, so getting a better education depends on breaking their stranglehold on opportunity."

What all this means, then, is that if we are going to resist this divide-and-conquer scheme we have got to attack the basis on which it is launched—which means fighting inequality and opposing its ideological reflections and reinforcements, particularly white chauvinism. In the past our approach has been something like this: "Busing is a tool to divide the class, it's being cooked up by the rich to turn us on each other, so let's unite—Black and white—to stop busing." But how can this possibly strike at the root of the problem, unless we believe that busing, itself, is the cause of discrimination and national antagonisms—which is not the case. So we have wound up issuing hollow calls not to be divided or appealed to people by means of a circular argument—busing is a trap, and how do we deal with it? By not falling for it. This has really been not at all effectual or inspiring.

But it's worse than that because concentrating attention on busing and focusing on opposing it objectively conciliates with the backward sentiment that things ought to be left the way they are when, in fact, what we want to do is turn things upside down. In particular, with regard to busing, our aim should not be to hold the line against it. We should be striving to fill people with a hatred for the status quo and the bourgeoisie that benefits from it. We should be exposing the mechanisms through which the bourgeoisie fosters and perpetrates national oppression, and we must develop the appropriate forms of struggle against it—and on this basis forge unity.

In sum, the great majority of these busing plans are political attacks, but *busing is not really the issue.* Every last one of these plans could be scrapped tomorrow, yet this would be no reason to breathe a sigh of relief, since inequality still exists and is worsening. Actually, in those cities where busing plans have been delayed, the rulers use the fall-out from or prospect of busing to continue stirring up divisions, and this emphasizes that the issue is not whether the buses roll. And, by the same token, it is not necessarily an unmitigated disaster for these plans to actually take effect, for kids to be bused, if in the course of this, deeper political understanding and unity is built exactly by doing what has been talked about here.

A previous bulletin issued in 1976 drew attention to the error of not giving any real meaning to the demand for equality in the busing work, and the 1976 Central Committee Report went to great lengths to caution against liquidating the national question and underestimating the potential of these battles. Nevertheless the work was still infected with economism and eclecticism—and the Mensheviks were none too subtle in their disdain for winning workers to take up the fight against national oppression, which is why they sabotaged the march at the founding convention of the National United Workers Organization held in Chicago in September 1977], whose thrust was supposed to be against attacks on Black people in connection with the busing into Marquette Part (and we supported that particular busing). The Mensheviks attempted to turn this demonstration into an anti-busing extravaganza. But as the latest CC document also points out, this by no means suggests that such influences were solely due to them, nor that those errors have been thoroughly rooted out.

What characterized the busing work was the view that we had to unite broadly (as opposed to struggling sharply) with the white workers who opposed busing and to link up with Blacks who wanted to fight inequality—though usually we sought out Blacks who opposed the plans. The idea that we had to "break through the middle" became sort of a doctrine of the mean—being all things to all people. Developing the struggle "on the terms most favorable to the working class" came to mean finding the lowest common denominator—and this was usually some variant of better education for everyone and no busing. "You don't like busing because your kids will be forced to travel long distances; fine, join with us." It was as though we were searching far and wide for every conceivable anti-busing concern to unite with and striving not to create any waves.

This was indeed paradoxical. Here was one of the sharpest attacks and most volatile situations that was faced in many cities, and we either left people unchallenged or confused as to our stand, except for some murky impression that we were against busing—but for Blacks and whites to oppose it together. This was not the totality of the Party's work, but this work was at best marked by certain conflicting trends. For example, in one city people would chase down every anti-busing group or meeting to "check them out." On the other hand the same comrades linked up with a determined struggle to keep open one of the few integrated schools in the city that was being shut as part of the busing program. A number of Black and white workers did come forward on a more revolutionary basis. But still, it was a matter of throwing everything into the anti-busing hopper.

This attempt to avoid controversy, to avoid having to offend and challenge (in particular the white workers) had a lot to do with a sort of goody-goody negation of the Trotskyites and other opportunists. They saw in the white workers an undifferentiated racist mass and saw in busing a weapon to chastise them for their neanderthal ways. These opportunists went so far as to call for the state to more forcefully intervene to protect Black people from this undifferentiated mass of racist whites—even when it was clear in practice (even if you lacked Marxist theory) that the police, etc. viciously attacked Black people and alternated between egging whites on to attack Blacks and clubbing and arresting whites themselves—and through all this protecting nothing but the interests of the capitalists while intensifying national antagonisms among the people. From our perspective the white workers were basically "good," their opposition to busing just, and our job was to wean them away from the reactionaries by essentially calling for united resistance to busing. Typically, comrades would get up at some of these anti-busing meetings and make a speech to the effect that "none of us likes busing and what's really needed is better education for everyone." The response more often than not was benign neglect or a sort of "hmm, where are these people coming from?"

Even when we began to break out of this orientation—or take the first real steps in doing so—there remained serious confusion in our ranks besides outright opposition from the Mensheviks. This came out sharply, for example, in the response within the Party to the article on the (limited and voluntary) busing in Chicago in September 1977, around the time of the NUWO convention. In particular, this response focused on the description of the hard-core reactionary whites organizing opposition to this busing—specifically women from the white neighborhood involved—who were called "hatchet-faced hussies" and the description "vicious pragmatism" applied to the line of those who know it's the banks, etc. who are responsible for the deteriorating neighborhoods, etc. but find it easier to fight Black people (see *Revolution,* October 1977, p. 2). Both of these descriptions were considered by many in the Party to be "an attack on the masses." This reflected within the Party a strong tendency to tail behind the masses—the white masses in particular—and actually, "through the back door" (so to speak), identify their interests with those championed by the reactionaries, rather than struggling with these whites to grasp their real and highest interests and leading them to forge unity with the masses of Black people on the basis of their real common interests—including, as a central part, the fight against national oppression—while of course also struggling against nationalism and other backward tendencies among the Black masses.

The reason we became largely irrelevant around this struggle was our failure to make the central focus of our work targetting and combatting the bourgeoisie's efforts to organize a reactionary and chauvinist movement among white workers around the busing issue. Yes, the bourgeoisie promotes nationalism among Blacks and this must be struggled with, but the principal danger lies in the other direction. The point is that we have to draw a clear line of demarcation between the interests of the working class and these reactionary forces and find the means to expose and attack them in a mass and bold way. In fact, only by our drawing this line and bringing to the fore the centrality of fighting national oppression—while putting forward our stand on these plans and why and how they're an attack—will the white workers who detest this bullshit be emboldened to go against the tide and those honest masses who have been swept up into it be broken from it.

What distinguishes us from the Trotskyites is not that they think whites have no good reason to oppose busing and we think they do—because to be perfectly honest, much of this opposition is either backward or narrow (since when is the concern over the complications of your kid getting sick at a school on the other end of town on a par with the fact that the conditions in the Black schools and in the Black community generally are what they are!). While some of the reasons many whites oppose busing involve legitimate concerns, nevertheless we have to struggle with people to see the more basic problems we face as a class and unite with people on this basis. What differentiates us from the opportunists is that we understand that the workers

of all nationalities can grasp their class interests and that white workers can be won to take up the fight against national oppression and all oppression.

How many times have we run into people who have told us that they're not racist, but oppose busing? How many times have we come into contact with honest white workers who have said they'd go to jail before their children get bused? Why can't we challenge these people and tell them "look, this busing plan sucks, but it's not the most important thing—what is, is the discrimination, segregation and inequality and the fact that this

> ...a big part of what the bourgeoisie is trying to do with these plans is to organize a reactionary and chauvinist movement among white workers—and we have a special task in combatting it.

whole system, its schools, hospitals, and so on are crumbling. And why in the world is it wrong, anyway, for Black and white kids to be in the same school? What's wrong is this cheap attempt by the ruling class to stir up hatred and this hell-hole they call education. If these kids get bused then they ought to be welcomed into the schools and we must turn this to our advantage to unite to fight all the rot we have to contend with. And we'll be damned if we're going to stand by and let some reactionary dinosaurs attack any of these kids. If it means going at them with 2 x 4's—then *that's* worth going to jail for!" Doesn't this concentrate the aspirations—the loftier aspirations and the actual class interests—of the multi-national working class? And won't this cause a bit more commotion at these anti-busing meetings?

Tailing after the spontaneous resistance of white people to these busing plans has led to an accommodation with all kinds of petty bourgeois ideology. The Mensheviks in Milwaukee raised the slogan "no forced busing," as though the problem was that something was being forced on the masses. This goes right along with the idea that the government is nibbling away at people's individual rights. But communists don't uphold some abstract freedom of choice. We don't think that homeowners have the right to sell their houses "to the buyer of their choice" if this means keeping Blacks out, for instance. And our vision of the future is certainly not defined by freedom from all compulsion—there is no such condition.

Another line that would often come up is "why should I pay, why should I give up what I've earned and worked for?" This was reflected in some of our agitation where we would assert that whites were being forced to bear the brunt of these plans or at least implied that there was something to unite with when this sentiment was raised. The problem with this was that on the one hand it fed some economism and reformism—as though the essential thing was that people were righteously defending themselves against attempts by the bourgeoisie to lower their living standards, in particular to protect themselves against deteriorating education. This was a strange twist because we were at the same time proclaiming that the bourgeoisie was trying to get us fighting over crumbs. Nonetheless there was this tendency to make too much of protecting these crumbs rather than raising people's sights to fight for bigger things which would necessarily involve hardship and sacrifice.

On the other hand, and closely related, this notion that whites were being forced to bear the brunt of this attack smacked of chauvinism. Because to the extent that whites are better off, it is obviously not merely because they've worked overtime, held down two jobs, etc.; after all, minority workers sacrifice no less for their families. Rather, the situation faced by minority nationalities involves the entire network of institutions and practices which effectively keeps them in a subordinate position, whether it's the FHA or tracking policies in the schools. In other words, there are the real inequalities whose cause is the capitalist system and whose most basic form is super-exploitation of the minority workers, and if opposition to busing turns on some idealized view that somehow inequality can be fought without causing disruptions and dislocations and without individuals sacrificing short-term gains for higher interests (as would be the case, for example, in fighting for plant-wide seniority in a steel mill which would "inconvenience" those workers who were the "beneficiaries" of department-wide seniority), then we're not

> What we cannot accept is the political and ideological inroads the bourgeoisie tries to make out of these situations.

talking about waging revolutionary class struggle.

We do not believe in sharing out misery or in reshuffling the deck of oppression under capitalism. But neither do we believe in taking refuge in the status quo which, as has been emphasized, is an unequal one. For this reason we cannot endorse or accept as a principle the idea of neighborhood schools or simply oppose busing with the demand to fix up the schools in the neighborhoods instead. We would of course raise specific demands around programs and schools in the minority communities, and struggles do rage all the time around the conditions in particular schools in all neighborhoods. But "neighborhood schools" as such are a specific prop of inequality. The neighborhood schools in the Black and other minority communities are overcrowded, drug-plagued and crime-ridden. There is nothing quaint about these schools; they exist because of segregation. There is nothing sacrosanct about neighborhood schools, generally, unless there is comfort to be derived from the fact that our children can go to a bad school—close to home.

And, as a rallying cry, "neighborhood schools" is a call to preserve the fabric of the status quo. To suggest that neighborhoods belong to the people who live in them not only leads to and reinforces insular and reactionary bullshit such as occurred in Carson Beach in Boston when ROAR organized whites to keep Blacks off of "their" turf, but it's a big myth—people do not choose, much less control, the neighborhoods they live in.

> ...as a rallying cry "neighborhood schools" is a call to preserve the fabric of the status-quo.

This is determined by the workings of capitalism in the final analysis. Again this is not to negate particular struggles around specific schools; however, it does mean that we cannot put forward better neighborhood schools as the programmatic alternative to busing. In fact, we might support a specific busing or desegregation plan if it would actually advance the interests of the working class—and specifically the fight against national oppression—despite the consequences to the neighborhood schools.

So what can be summed up in light of these observations? To begin with, the key link in this work is the fight against national oppression. That we were beginning to move in this direction was indicated in our criticism of the "Smash the Busing Plan" slogan and the view that the fight for decent and equal education ought to be the lynchpin of our work. But this formulation was basically eclectic. Not that the fight for decent and equal education is unimportant or unrelated to these struggles, just that there is on the one hand the fight against inequality (which is not solely a question of unequal schooling) and national oppression overall, and on the other hand there is the fight against the attacks on education. In this regard we should consider the demand for "decent" education misleading. While equality cannot be attained under capitalism, it can indicate a direction for struggle. "Decent" education under capitalism has no meaning—except socialist revolution and a whole new educational system. The basic problem with this focus was that it tended to melt into the "better schools for everyone" line and more than this kept us from seeing the situation for what it was in many instances—where in fact the main question became attacks on Black people or when perhaps at earlier stages large numbers of whites were being swept up into this kind of knee-jerk resistance to busing. And, besides, we must consistently expose the *ideological content* of education in this

society—which is thoroughly *indecent* and reactionary.

With regard to the actual implementation of the busing plans, it is neither our intention nor objective to keep children from going to the schools to which they will be bused. The mainly white boycotts that have been organized in many cities where busing has been ordered cannot be supported. They are—objectively, if not on everyone's part subjectively—aimed at Blacks. And, needless to say, we must vigorously organize resistance to violence directed against Blacks, whether it's the stoning of buses, direct attacks on Black kids or other attacks on Black people. In a certain sense we can live with these plans —people usually adapt to them. What we cannot accept are the political and ideological inroads the bourgeoisie tries to make out of these situations. This means being prepared to go into the South Bostons, the West Sides of Cleveland, and the Marquette Parks of Chicago to struggle with people to raise their sights and against bourgeois ideology and organized reaction. It means taking an unpopular position—and undoubtedly some licks as well. But how else can the grip of the bourgeoisie be broken? And since when is progress a painless experience?

It is possible to identify three phases that these busing plans as a rule pass through and to give some sense of how we ought to proceed. The first is the time between the court decisions and the actual start of the plans. Particularly as the implementation date approaches, some of the local politicians start talking about the law is the law and must be upheld, signifying that the police will be ready to bust heads and make a show of protecting Black people (actually of course they will viciously attack and incite attacks against, Black people, while also beating and arresting whites, further fanning up national antagonisms among the people). Other politicians make their bids to be the "voice of the white people." Black officials demand guarantees of protection for Black school children, the NAACP warns that busing is here to stay, you've got to live with it, and the KKK and Nazi types start crawling out of the sewers. The School Board officials portray themselves as victims of outside interference, ad nauseam.

In this period as the social forces are beginning to gel and hysteria and fear are being whipped up, we should aim to expose the busing plan—why it's being pushed, who's behind it, what's at stake for the working class—through agitation and propaganda. But we should mainly put forward and emphasize our principled stand against national oppression and inequality and for integration—though not in a liberal reformist way as if integration is some sort of antidote to hatred in the world or is the solution to national oppression. (In short, integration can be a blow against inequality and discrimination—though at times the bourgeoisie's version of integration has been used as a bludgeon against the struggle in the form of transferring Black teachers who have been linked with community struggles or in shutting and busting up schools that have figured prominently in such struggles. But generally integration puts the working class in a stronger position to fight national oppression, all other oppression and its source—the capitalist system.) We should not, in our agitation, be sucked into coming up with better plans, but we should raise specific demands that speak to the issues raised by these busing plans, such as no cuts in special programs in minority schools, new schools to be built in areas accessible to Blacks and whites, opposing red-lining by the banks and segregation in housing, and upgrading the schools in the minority communities.

And not only should these outrages be exposed, but we must find the means to build concrete struggle around these and related questions. For instance, in one city in the months prior to the scheduled start of a busing plan, militant struggle jumped off in the Black community where students were crammed 60 into a classroom and where bathrooms didn't even have toilet paper. Students and parents confronted School Board officials and the struggle extended to the threatened shutdown of the only vocational school in the Black community. At the same time this was going on, anti-busing groups were going into the white schools getting kids to wear "no bus for us" buttons. Here was an important opportunity to drive a wedge between these reactionary forces and the volatile masses by struggling with the latter to get up off this anti-busing shit and unite with and help build this fight that was going on in the Black community, pointing out what a powerful blow it would be if white and Black people closed ranks behind this struggle.

In this connection, a few of the neighborhoods where violent anti-busing reaction is likely should be singled out, and extensive agitation carried on exposing the political essence of the anti-busing movement and laying bare the nature of the bourgeoisie's attack. And there is no reason that in these neighborhoods it should be conceded to liberal and church groups to set up welcoming committees for bused students. We should be organizing house meetings and going out to students (and others) to form militant groups to welcome and defend bused students—not because merely by sitting in the same classrooms our problems will be solved, but because only through building unity around our real common interests will we be able to take on this vicious system. It should be quite obvious that besides the Party itself, there is a major role for the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade and the National United Workers Organization to play here in helping to turn these schools and neighborhoods into battlegrounds against the bourgeoisie and its agents.

Our approach, then, should actually be to *expose* these busing plans as opposed to organizing resistance to them; we should link up with battles which typify the abuses most sharply felt like the deterioration of the Black schools, the shutdown of integrated schools, etc. and build struggles which point the road forward; and we should be developing a backbone force of Black and white people who can exert a revolutionary influence through the twists and turns of these situations instead of trying to assemble some motley anti-busing coalition.

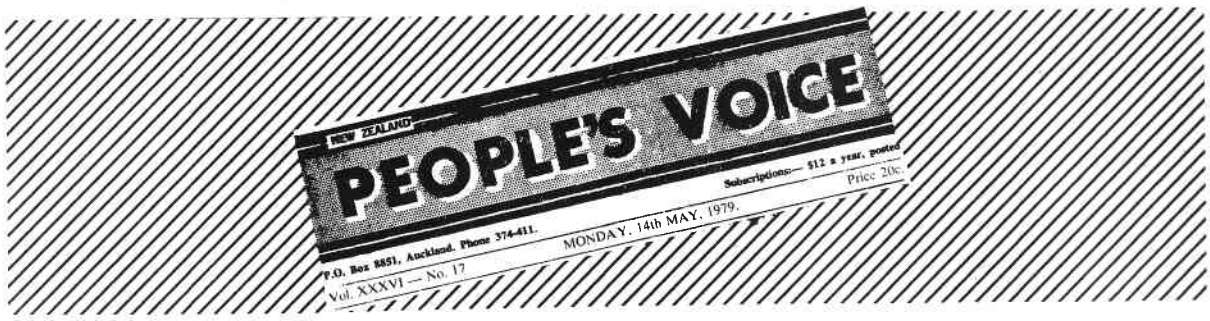
This will lay the strongest basis to deal with the next phase of the first day or weeks of busing when the question of mobilizing to defend Black people from attacks and taking on the force of the police and the vigilantes may come to the fore. On the first days of these busing plans, should we be setting up picket lines at the School Boards in opposition to busing, or should we be where the contradictions will be sharpest? If the thrust of this document is grasped, the answer is obvious—the latter, with particular emphasis on welcoming, and defending, Black school kids and actively opposing all attacks on Black people.

. . .we should aim to expose the busing plan—why it's being pushed, who's behind it, what's at stake for the working class—through our agitation and propaganda. But we should mainly put forward and emphasize our principled stand against national oppression and inequality and for integration. . .

Finally, there is the phase of the continued struggle against discrimination and lousy education in the context of established busing programs. A more correct formulation of general slogans with respect to all of this would be: Down with Segregation, Discrimination, Inequality and All Attacks on Black People and All Minorities; No School Shutdowns, Layoffs or Cutbacks; and Oppose the Rulers' Divide and Conquer Schemes—Unite to Fight for Our Higher Interests!

Implicit in what has been said is the recognition of the specific tasks of white and Black communists. In other words, there is a necessary division of labor here. White comrades must be out among the white workers, combatting the chauvinism that the bourgeoisie is wildly—and sometimes more subtly or indirectly—fanning, and must be building

New Chinese Leaders Paving Way to Shelve Mao to Justify Their Policies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Editor's Note: The following article appeared in the May 14 issue of People's Voice, *the weekly organ of the Communist Party of New Zealand. It responds to accounts in the New Zealand press regarding the possible rehabilitation of Liu Shao-chi. The subheads appeared in the original article.*

Over the recent past the Communist Party and the People's Voice have been consistently exposing the betrayal of socialism in China by its present leaders, headed by Deng Xiaoping and Hua Guofeng (Teng Hsiaoping and Hua Kuo-feng).

This betrayal has been made evident to the world by China's honeymoon with US imperialism and the agreements made with scores of giant foreign monopolies for the exploitation of China's people and natural resources.

There are no doubt some people who still think that Deng Xiaoping and Co. are following the policies of Mao Tsetung, despite the evidence to the contrary. They shut their eyes to what everyone knows, for instance that under Mao, China kicked out the imperialist monopolies in 1949 and pursued a policy of self-reliance until Mao's death in 1976, when the present leading clique seized power, a policy now completely reversed.

"Rehabilitating" Mao's Arch-Foe

One of the clearest indications of how the new "leaders" are actually restoring all that Mao opposed comes from a news item in the NZ Herald of April 30, datelined Peking and headed: "What About You, Mr. Liu?"

According to "diplomatic sources" quoted in the item, the "rehabilitation is imminent of the main 'capitalist roader' in the Communist Party of China," Liu Shao-chi (now spelt Liu Shaoqi). "It is no longer a question of if" says the news item, "merely a question of when he will be formally rehabilitated, although his reputation by implication already has been." The article also referred to Liu as "Chairman Mao's arch-foe," and to "hundreds of people purged or disgraced during China's Cultural Revolution" being "rehabilitated last week."

Once the People's Voice would have looked with suspicion on any capitalist press report on China. However, in view of the present "we love China now" attitude of US imperialism and its followers in NZ, including the Herald, we see no reason to doubt the correctness of the quoted item.

In Khrushchov's Footsteps

The process of "rehabilitation" has not just begun—it has been going on for months, during which thousands of counter-

Busing

support for the fight against inequality and national oppression and for the defense of Black kids. Black comrades must go out among the Black masses to bring communist leadership to the fight against national oppression and bring forward the common class interests of the Black and white masses, struggling against nationalism and specifically in this context against illusions that equality means fighting the whites for a "piece of the pie," that integration is some sort of a cure-all, etc. Among the masses of other oppressed nationalities the situation is often very complicated, because the bourgeoisie generally attempts to fan antagonisms between them and *both* the whites and Blacks—stirring up chauvinism in connection with busing among whites against all oppressed nationalities, while also coupling busing plans with attacks on language programs, etc. in schools, is a typical trick of the bourgeoisie. Comrades of these nationalities must bring forward among them the common class interests they have with whites and Blacks, with the masses of all nationalities, and here too give proletarian leadership to the fight against their national oppression while linking this with the overall fight against the capitalist system and struggling against the nationalist line that pits each nationality against the others in a fight for crumbs.

Again, the overall key to uniting with the masses of different nationalities in the face of these busing plans is to build and give central place to the fight against national oppression and inequality—with regard to all oppressed nationalities—and to bring forward and struggle to unite the masses of all nationalities around their highest interests, their common class interests in fighting against all oppression of the people and its source, the capitalists and their man-eating system. And this work must be infused overall with revolutionary sweep, raising people's sights to the fundamental questions: why in the world would the bourgeoisie be compelled to launch these divide-and-conquer attacks if their system were not in such a deep crisis, what do the thousand and one ways they attack the people and attempt to set us at each other's throats say about their whole system, what are the interests of our class and how do they require us as a class to be the vanguard fighter against national oppression and all oppression—and against the whole capitalist system? And most of all, what does all this say about the future they offer us—and can only offer us—and the future that we can and must forge ourselves by putting them and their system in their graves and destroying the basis for such a system root and branch? ■

revolutionaries, capitalists and landlords have been released from jail and given money and positions, just as was done by Khrushchov in Russia when he was restoring capitalism.

But on top of this, many former Party and state officials, who were disgraced as capitalist roaders and revisionists during the 1960s and before, have been restored to office. Let us mention a few of these "rehabilitations"; they include some who died in obscurity after their removal from office.

—Peng Teh-huai, a former Minister of Defence who wrote an open letter to the Party denouncing Mao and his policies and who was removed from his post in 1959 for revisionism.

—Peng Chen, a former top leader and Mayor of Peking closely associated with Liu Shaoqi, and who was dismissed for revisionism and attempting to block the development of the Cultural Revolution.

—Tao Chu, an appointee of Deng's who was removed during the Cultural Revolution for carrying on a line of denouncing everyone and everything, a line condemned by the central leadership and which Deng and Co. now try to assert was the line of the so-called "Gang of Four."

—Liu Shaoqi's wife, Wang Kuang-mei, one of those also in support of blocking the development of the Cultural Revolution.

These are only a few of the so-called "victims" who have recently been rehabilitated.

What the "rehabilitators" don't mention at any time is the fact that all expulsions and removals from posts of leading figures during the period were carried out by decisions of the central leadership which was headed by Mao himself!

The top figure among them all was undoubtedly Liu Shaoqi, who became known as "China's Khrushchov".

Why Liu Was Thrown Out

Liu was branded by the 9th Party Congress held in 1969 (under the chairmanship of Mao Tsetung) as a "hidden traitor, renegade and scab," expelled from the Party and removed from all posts.

He was shown to have established, with the connivance of the then Secretary-General of the Party, Deng Xiaoping, a privileged Party bureaucracy which lorded over the people, suppressed criticism, put technology before class struggle and politics, and was turning China towards a restoration of capitalism similar to that which Khrushchov and Co. had carried out in the Soviet Union.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (to give it its full title) was personally initiated and led throughout by Mao who rallied the Marxist-Leninists precisely in order to prevent such a thing happening in China. The unassailable fact was that "capitalist roaders" had virtually seized power in the Party and state, and could not be exposed and shifted from this power by the ordinary processes of inner-Party struggle, but only through arousing the masses to a knowledge of what was happening and developing a mass movement to prevent it.

During the period of the 9th Congress Deng Xiaoping was also stripped of all Party and state posts, but not expelled.

Why the Revisionists Want to Rehabilitate Liu

Anyone with eyes to see can recognise now why Deng and the rest of the Chinese leaders want to "rehabilitate" Liu Shaoqi. It is because "rehabilitating" him would mean (they hope) putting the last nail in the coffin of the Cultural Revolution which exposed them and led to the disgrace of so many of them as revisionists, renegades and scabs.

Of course, concurrently, it would also mean completing the work of discrediting Mao Tsetung and his revolutionary policies by all means short of direct denunciation of the type Khrushchov carried out against Stalin—after his death.

In practice this work has been going on ever since the coup d'etat of 1976 during which the revisionist clique of Deng and Hua usurped power.

The present leaders have disguised their attacks on Mao's policies by attacks on the so-called "Gang of Four", who came to the front during the mass struggles against the capitalist roaders in the 1960s and who were their principal opponents after Mao's death. The Four they attack are named: Jiang Qing (Mao Tsetung's wife Chiang Ching), Yao Wenyuan, Zhang Chunqiao (Chang Chun-chiao), and Wang Hungwen.

How the Trick is Turned

Let us illustrate from recent issues of the Peking Review how the work of discrediting Mao goes on.

In Peking Review No. 10 for March 9, there is an article entitled "A Reappraisal of Hai Rui Dismissed from Office." In this article it is said: "In the Cultural Revolution that followed, Jiang Qing (Chiang Ching) and company used the power they had seized and enforced a fascist dictatorship on the people, bringing disastrous losses to the whole Party and the whole nation." (Keep in mind those words, fascist dictatorship.)

In Peking Review No. 6, of 9-2-79, there is an article entitled "Commission for Inspection of Discipline Meets." It says: "Lin Biao (Lin Piao) and the 'gang of four' aggravated the situation when they threw overboard Party rules and regulations and replaced democratic centralism with fascist dictatorship." (Keep in mind those words, fascist dictatorship.)

In Peking Review No. 14 of 6-4-79, an article entitled "Social Sciences: A Hundred Schools of Thought Contend" says: "During the Great Cultural Revolution Lin Biao and the 'gang of four' crudely trampled the 'Two Hundreds' policy underfoot and imposed a fascist dictatorship on the intellectuals." (Keep in mind those words, fascist dictatorship.)

Now, China and the world well know that Mao personally led and directed the Cultural Revolution, and that he remained Chairman of the Party and head of the central leadership throughout, constantly directing the struggle against the bourgeois elements in the Party and state organisations.

What then is meant by the repeated declaration in the official publications of the present leadership that a "fascist dictatorship" was established? Everyone in China—if not outside—must know that this so-called fascist dictatorship could have had at its head only one person—Chairman Mao!

Thus, under the flimsiest of disguises, the present leaders of the Party and state in China are branding Mao as a fascist dictator. And, under the pretext of opposing the "gang of four," they have suppressed all Mao's writings after 1962 except for a few isolated remarks taken out of context. The suppressed material includes all the polemical writings of the Central Committee—drawn up under Mao's supervision—against Soviet revisionism; all Mao's writings during the Cultural Revolution; and all the documents of the 10th Party Congress, the last Congress before Mao's death.

Thus, the ground for the rehabilitation of Liu Shaoqi is being well prepared. In this connection, the previously quoted Herald news report said: "But the snag is that bringing Liu back raises awkward questions about Chairman Mao, and maybe they are not yet ready for them."

All this does, of course, present a puzzle to the local revisionist groupings such as Wilcox and company, "Struggle", and the Wellington Marxist-Leninist Organisation (Milo), and as well to the arch-revisionist E.F. Hill and his Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist).

So far they have all supported the Deng revisionists all along the line. Are they going now to support the claims that there was a fascist dictatorship in China from 1966, with the inescapable conclusion that Mao himself was a fascist dictator? And do they now support the "rehabilitation" of all Mao's former enemies, including Liu Shaoqi, thereby publicly placing themselves in total opposition to Mao?

Of course, having already swallowed without complaint the Chinese revisionists' prescription for turning the country into an imperialist superpower (the 3-worlds theory, the 'four modernisations', alliance with US imperialism, and full restoration of capitalism) what's a little thing like Liu's rehabilitation, or Mao being virtually labelled a fascist?

Still, while the leaders of these groups may have consciences supple enough to accommodate anything, their followers may have more than a few qualms. It will be interesting to see how many will refuse to be conned into denouncing Mao in the name of upholding Mao's ideas and policies, the position into which they are being inexorably pushed by the modern Chinese revisionist leaders. ■

WVO's Peculiar Position on China

Closet "Maoists" Expose Themselves

Today, as the U.S. and the USSR move more closely toward inter-imperialist world war, as revisionism in China flaunts itself blatantly and rushes to restore capitalism, as the revolution in Iran moves forward and begins to reach a decisive point, as the ideological and political line struggle in the ranks of revolutionaries worldwide intensifies, as the contradictions within the system of U.S. imperialism sharpen—in other words, with the world in tremendous ferment and history moving rapidly forward, even the leaders of a dogmatist sect have to take their minds off phrase-mongering for an instant and stare in fear and bewilderment at the swiftly changing world, and even reformists have to find some way of dealing with the broader questions about the world.

Such is the case with the Workers Viewpoint Organization (WVO), whose leadership has suddenly realized that perhaps there has been some sort of qualitative change in China since Mao's death and—more to the point—that those in and around WVO demand some sort of stand on the question. And so, some seven months after the Revolutionary Communist Party had publicly denounced and exposed the revisionist coup in China and analyzed it in depth, WVO, in the course of an article on "Where Is China's Foreign Policy Headed?", reveals that, by the way, "Teng and Hua and their cliques have usurped state power and are proceeding on the all-round restoration of capitalism in China."[1]

Actually, WVO has realized this fact about China at least for some months. But where were these valiant foes of revisionism then, in January, when that arch-traitor and reactionary Teng Hsiao-ping came to tie China to the U.S. war chariot? Why, they were right out there, of course—hanging onto the coattails of both U.S. imperialism and Chinese revisionism at once, publicly holding that China was a socialist country and that "...those who oppose the state-to-state ties, like the Revolutionary Communist Party...can never understand how Lenin and Stalin skillfully used the state-to-state front as one way to undermine imperialism, play off inter-imperialist rivalries, and consolidate socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat."[2]

"Support *All* Diplomatic Relations"

Did they think, then, that the normalization of relations between China and the U.S. was "consolidating socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat"? Well, they carefully, and with great guile, refrain from saying this outright, although they do *insinuate* that normalization is somehow "strengthening socialism" in China. But when it comes to making a direct argument for state-to-state ties, they "ascend" to the level of empty and fatuous generalization:

> Full diplomatic relations between different countries such as those between the U.S. and China are good and must be supported. Why? Although different classes will try to use it differently, in all cases they help to increase people-to-people contact among the peoples of the world. Through exchanges of various kinds, such as movies, publications, and sports and visits to each others' countries, which are aided by full diplomatic relations, people from different countries can expand the bonds of friendship. This promotes proletarian internationalism....This is why we support state-to-state relations between, say even France, Yugoslavia or even the Soviet Union and the United States.[3]

There are many interesting questions, of course, raised by this great discovery of WVO's. For instance, is support for full diplomatic relations between France and Yugoslavia of greater or lesser importance than support for the maintenance of state-to-state ties between the U.S. and the USSR? And, in the case of China, which is the more staunch fighter for proletarian internationalism, the U.S.-China Peoples Friendship Association or the U.S. Chamber of Commerce?

But leaving all such questions aside, what is notable about WVO's attempt to explain their spineless passivity when the chief and most loathsome representative of the new bourgeoisie in China came parading through the U.S. is its total *abstraction* from the concrete situation. What was the *concrete meaning* of normalization and Teng's visit at this particular moment in history? Didn't it signify the fact that the revisionists are selling out China to U.S. imperialism and tying it to the U.S. war bloc? WVO does not even *attempt* to analyze the concrete situation, but instead warbles this ludicrous little song about how diplomatic ties always mean people-to-people friendship, love and peace (oh yes, and proletarian internationalism too).

Trying *Not* to Face Up to the Situation

But of course the reason for all this stupid song and dance by WVO is quite clear. They knew very well in January that there had been a revisionist coup in China and that capitalism was being restored in this once-proud bastion of socialism. But they had a whole worked-out policy of privately letting a few people in on the "secret" that revisionism had triumphed in China, while publicly upholding China as a socialist country—because they thought that the exposure of Chinese revisionism would demoralize the masses, making them lose faith in the viability of socialism.[4] So, since their leadership was afraid to face up to the blatant revisionist takeover in China (a fear which they disgustingly *project* onto the masses of people), they had to wrap themselves in the liberal tinsel of "people-to-people contact" and so forth.

But now all that has changed, hasn't it? Now WVO is bravely marching out of the closet to expose Chinese revisionism! Well, not exactly. Their announcement that China is ruled by revisionists is by no means front page news, but is buried in an article on the future direction of Chinese foreign policy. (Perhaps if World War 3 breaks out WVO will sneak an announcement of the fact into their sports page—so as not to demoralize the masses too much!)

How can WVO possibly justify this method of treating the question of what has happened in China? They might appeal to the way in which the Communist Party of China dealt with the triumph of revisionism and the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union, waiting several years before launching public polemics. But this analogy wouldn't justify their actions, for several reasons. The CPC was a large party holding state power, and this gave rise to certain necessities in its relations with other parties. But much more importantly, even while refraining from openly criticizing the Soviet Union by name, the CPC was fighting to defend Marxist-Leninist principles and prepare so that the inevitable split in the international communist movement would take place on the most favorable basis. When China did come out with public polemics, the issue was not treated as a brief aside. The CPC, having politically laid the groundwork and having forged unity with other Marxist-Leninist forces, organized a fierce and protracted struggle against Khrushchevite revisionism.

But look at the way WVO has dealt with the revisionist coup in China. First they attacked the RCP for bringing up the matter; then they actively tried to mislead the masses as to what had really happened, publicly upholding China as a "socialist country"; and finally, when they were forced to admit that there had been a revisionist coup, they tossed it out in an offhand manner, as if hop-

ing that no one would notice. Is this how communists deal with an issue of overwhelming importance to the world situation and the revolutionary movement? Basically WVO tries *not* to deal with it.

Could WVO claim that they weren't misleading anyone when they said that China was socialist because it takes some time for capitalism to be restored, and until then a country is still socialist? Well, certainly it does take time for capitalism to be restored. "Capitalism" and "socialism" refer to relations of production, and these cannot be changed overnight. But the qualitative change takes place when revisionists seize power, i.e. when a new bourgeoisie seizes control of the state. Unless they are overthrown, they will *inevitably* change the production relations and fully restore capitalism. Moreover, in the meantime their *politics* (and the politics and actions of the state) will be thoroughly bourgeois. In this situation, especially when the usurpers have consolidated their grip on the party and state, does it make any sense to continue to hail a country as socialist after a revisionist coup? Obviously this is nothing but sophistry. Rather than seeking to prepare people to recognize the fact that capitalism was being restored in China, WVO went out of their way to disorient and disarm the masses.

Rather than seeking to prepare people to recognize the fact that capitalism was being restored in China, WVO went out of their way to disorient and disarm the masses.

This is certainly very far from the course of action which Mao recommended when he said in 1965:

> If China's leadership is usurped by revisionists in the future, the Marxist-Leninists of all countries should resolutely expose and fight them and help the working class and the masses of China to combat such revisionism.

And then, compounding the flagrancy of their opportunism, we find that the article in which their tardy announcement is contained is one whose *main* point is to reaffirm WVO's *support* for the Chinese invasion of Vietnam! In fact, with "critics" like WVO, the Chinese revisionists hardly need supporters. For as we shall see, WVO *likes* a lot of the revisionist line coming out of China. They positively embrace the "three worlds" strategy and the proposition that the Soviet Union is the main danger to the people of the world. They certainly have no objections to economism, which drips from the pages of their newspaper, or reformism, which permeates their practice. No, the only thing which current Chinese revisionism offends is WVO's *dogmatism*. WVO does not like to have liberalism so openly proclaimed, and Marxism so explicitly attacked, as by today's Chinese rulers. For WVO, above all, the "correct" phrases must be mongered in the course of carrying out thoroughly reformist practice and revisionist theoretical justifications.

Snuggling Up to U.S. Imperialism

First let us look at WVO's "profound" justification for China's invasion of Vietnam. The "principal aspect" of this invasion, they inform us, is that it "clearly is against imperialism." How is this? It's very simple:

> China's tactically sharp armed rebuttal of Soviet aggression has the effect of showing the world's peoples and oppressed countries that Soviet social-imperialism can be stopped. It served to puncture the Soviet social-imperialists' arrogance, and show that it cannot carry on aggression unopposed.
>
> The revisionists in China, however, see their action's significance in terms of "boosting the U.S. courage", on whom they rely, to beat off the Soviet social-imperialists. But given the objective balance of forces today (that China is a third world country and the Soviet Union is an imperialist superpower) China's action, aside from revisionist intentions, is objectively to strengthen third world peoples and countries to stand up against the rising superpower—the Soviet Union.[5]

Sound familiar? Of course—it's the old tired October League-CPML line: every blow against the "more dangerous" USSR must be supported as anti-imperialist. The only new twist is that for WVO, China can no longer be supported as a socialist country, but rather, now, because it's part of the "third world".

What somehow disappears from view in this analysis (just like for the CPML) is U.S. imperialism. The end result is uniting with the U.S. imperialists against their superpower rivals. The only place that the U.S. appears in WVO's picture is in the intentions and wishes of the Chinese rulers. But the connections between the U.S. and Chinese rulers are not merely ideal, they are not in the mind alone, but are real and material. Why does WVO think that China's attack on Vietnam was launched only after Teng returned from his U.S. tour? Does WVO really think that the actions of Vietnam (also a "third world" country!) are closely connected with Soviet social-imperialist aggression, but that China's acts have no material connection with U.S. imperialism? Do they really not see that China's new bourgeois rulers are placing their country within the orbit of U.S. imperialism? Or do they simply prefer not to bring these unpleasant facts out, so as not to "demoralize" the masses?

With regard to China's Vietnam invasion, as we stated a few months ago:

> In reality the Chinese are acting on behalf of the U.S. imperialists, allowing the latter to deal a proxy blow to Soviet political and military positions in the area, yet officially disclaim any responsibility and pose as the only legitimate arbiter of the conflict. The U.S. plays a gentle lamb while "communist" powers fight it out. This appearance, built up by Carter and the press, obscures the *essence* of the situation—the rivalry of imperialist blocs—in which the U.S. is hardly a disinterested observer.[6]

The Workers Viewpoint Organization promotes the same surface appearance as does the U.S. bourgeoisie. For them, too, the U.S. imperialists are uninvolved in all this, peaceable lambs—except that China is trying to *lure* these poor passive imperialists into conflict with the Soviet warmongers. U.S. imperialism as a shrinking violet—a picture not only out of touch with reality, but also very much in line with the interests of the U.S. bourgeoisie.

But this pattern of sticking to the surface appearance of things while covering over the role of U.S. imperialism is very much part of WVO's line. Look, for instance, at their pushing of the Soviet-main-danger line and the "three worlds" theory. On the one hand, it is obvious how this covers for U.S. imperialism, as just illustrated. On the other hand, it shows the extremely shallow and dogmatic nature of their "criticism" of Chinese revisionism. For in fact these theories, pushed by today's Chinese rulers and their flunkies around the world, are precisely a manifestation of Chinese revisionism.[7] For WVO wants to claim that, despite the revisionist coup, China still is, after all, part of the third world, the unity of which must be preserved as the main force against imperialism (especially against the main danger, the USSR). This is again illustrated by WVO's stand on the China-Vietnam conflict which, they say, "...is determined by the fact that the Soviet Union is a superpower and China a third world country..."[8] After all, any third world country taking action against the main danger USSR must be justified—even if it's acting on behalf of the U.S. The fact that this

theory is nothing but a rationalization for uniting with U.S. imperialism against the USSR is illustrated by the fact that China's third world status is said to be a determining factor, whereas Vietnam's equally valid status as a member of the same "world" is ignored.

This is apparently supposed to be justified

> . . .does it make any sense to continue to hail a country as socialist after a revisionist coup?

by their claim that "Teng represents the class interests of the national bourgeoisie and the new bourgeoisie in China. . ."[9] By saying national *and* new bourgeoisie, WVO must mean by "national bourgeoisie" the *old* national capitalists of China. But in fact the old national bourgeoisie is a weak social force in China and is a very secondary aspect of the revisionists' social base there. On the other hand, the *new* bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie which arises under socialism, which is concentrated within the communist party itself, and which seized power in China in 1976 and rules today—this new bourgeoisie is predominantly *comprador* in character, sell-outs to imperialism, as has been glaringly demonstrated by the "opening up" of China to imperialism, especially the U.S. bloc, over the past year.

But WVO seems not to see any comprador character at all in China's new rulers. Just another third world country ruled by a national bourgeoisie—that's how they paint China. Of course this is a notch down from being a socialist country; but on the other hand (a fact which WVO often brings up), the national bourgeoisie *does* have contradictions with imperialism, and though it tends to vacillate a lot, it will take actions against imperialism. By pretending that China is now ruled by a national bourgeoisie with sharp contradictions with imperialism, WVO can slither into a position of critical support for China and its traitor-rulers.

So it ends up that their stand on China is almost a carbon copy of the stand of the *Guardian,* that "independent radical" newspaper, with regard to the Soviet Union. In both cases the stand is that the country in question is admittedly revisionist but nonetheless "objectively" manages often to play a progressive role.

In fact, it becomes clear that WVO's "criticism" of revisionism in China is a sham. They claim to uphold Mao and the Four against Teng and Hua in the midst of an article devoted to supporting Teng's theory of the "three worlds" and the "main danger." They try to pretend that this strategy can be attributed to the revolutionaries in China, but this is *only* a pretense. As was pointed out in an article on the "three worlds" strategy in *Revolution*:

> It is interesting to note that the "three worlds" was never presented as a *strategy,* and still less attributed to Mao, during his lifetime. Teng Hsiao-ping's speech to the UN in 1974 (which stops short of openly proclaiming the "three worlds" as the international strategy for "revolution") makes no attempt to attribute the "three worlds" theory to Mao. Following Mao's death, neither the Central Committee statement which enumerated Mao's many contributions to Marxism-Leninism and the revolution nor, for that matter, Hua Kuo-feng's memorial speech (obviously the product of struggle on the Central Committee and in the main reflecting Mao's line, not Hua's) mentioned the "three worlds" theory.
>
> Similarly, the state Constitution adopted in 1975 (before the coup) stresses proletarian internationalism and support for the struggles of oppressed nations and peoples and does not mention the "three worlds," while the recent constitution, adopted by the revisionists, makes the "three worlds" line the *basis* for "proletarian internationalism" and relations with others in the world.[10]

The new bourgeois rulers of China have only been able to come up with two quotations in which Mao even refers to the "three worlds," and in neither does he in any way make it some global strategy. And the reason is clear. This "theory" propounded by the current Chinese rulers is nothing more than a strategy for capitulation to imperialism. (See the above-mentioned article, which shows how this is so in detail.)

Metaphysics

What WVO wants to do is just change one "little" fact in their view of the world ("revisionist coup in China") and have everything else remain the same. This is impossible and is a good illustration of their metaphysical

> . . .their stand on China is almost a carbon copy of the stand of the *Guardian* with regard to the Soviet Union.

outlook. Wasn't the coup the outcome of very sharp class struggle in China? How could this momentous struggle not have been reflected in the area of foreign policy?

In fact WVO's whole approach to the China question is a good illustration of the dogmatism and metaphysics of the leaders of this sect. Essentially they adopt a theoretical position on the coup, but this has no relation to anything else. As Engels said,

> To the metaphysician, things and their mental images, ideas, are isolated, to be considered one after the other and apart from each other, fixed, rigid objects of investigation given once for all.[11]

One of the characteristics of metaphysics is not grasping the relationship and interconnection between things and ideas. Dogmatism is a form of metaphysics which severs the real relationship between theory and practice. And the Workers Viewpoint Organization, throughout its career, has been a prime example of a dogmatist sect. For a certain period several years ago, WVO carved out a niche for themselves as ultra-"left" dogmatists. Now, as we shall see below, they have flipped over into rightism—but they remain dogmatists, for in both phases they put emphasis on the "purity" of their theory, but at the same time neither apply the theory to guide practice, nor sum up practice theoretically.

WVO, then, does *not* in fact criticize revisionism in China in any fundamental way at all. And in fact they cover for it. Even the little feint towards criticism that they have made has been forced upon them—first because the Revolutionary Communist Party has analyzed the situation in China and brought it forcefully to the fore, making it impossible for WVO to continue to sidestep the issue. On the other hand, the leaders of WVO could not afford to throw in their lot with Chinese revisionism. First, the CPML already had that concession tied up and WVO couldn't see a careerist future in it. Second, there is the influence of WVO's dogmatism. WVO likes its theory pure (so pure, in fact, as to be "uncontaminated" with practice), and the explicit and open revisionism coming out of China over the last year offends their taste for purity. (It's not that they hate revisionism, but they do hate it being so theoretically explicit.) At the same time, again because they are dogmatists, they can safely adopt the stance of theoretically criticizing Chinese revisionism, without any "danger" of its having an effect on their practice, especially so since their "support" for Mao and the Four is low-key (enough to appease the advanced, they hope, but not so much as to challenge the thinking of the masses).

Reformism and Economism

But throughout the attempt of these opportunists to make the pretense of coming around to a correct line on China, their underlying rightism comes shining through, as we have seen. And in fact it comes glaring through in every area of their practice, in every subject they take up.

On what question would you like to see a sickeningly reformist and economist line illustrated? Just name an area, and WVO will speedily oblige!

Is it the woman question? WVO will leap to inform you:

> The most advanced gains for women that were seized in the mass upsurges of the '60s and '70s were the jobs won for working women in steel, auto, chemical and other heavy industries.[12]

So therefore the struggle of women must be confined within the narrowest bounds:

The fight of women to maintain and move beyond the inroads they've already made in heavy industry is the fight for women's equality in the concrete![13]

Classic economism is the guiding thread of much of WVO's recent practice, with their paper coming to resemble the Mensheviks' *Workers Voice,* filled with page after page of local shop struggles, strike news and sum-ups, trade union battles, etc. Here is the *real* heart and soul of the struggle of the working class, WVO seems clearly to be saying. And within the trade union struggles, they display the selfsame narrowness and reformism, as often as not uniting with the hacks and traitors of the trade union movement. In March of this year, for instance, these opportunists managed to write a fairly lengthy article on the United Farmworkers strike which contains not one word of criticism or exposure of Chavez—an article in which they sum up the significance of the strike as follows: "And most important, it's a milestone battle for all oppressed nationalities in the struggle to assume their rightful place in the mainstream of the U.S. trade union movement."[14] Chavez himself could hardly have said it better. (Not until 2½ months later did WVO finally voice a criticism of Chavez—no doubt after they found that the hacks in the UFW were not nearly so anxious for unity with WVO as WVO was with them.)

The list could go on and on. There is WVO's response to the "energy crisis": Nationalize Big Oil!—a "concrete" demand which, they explain,

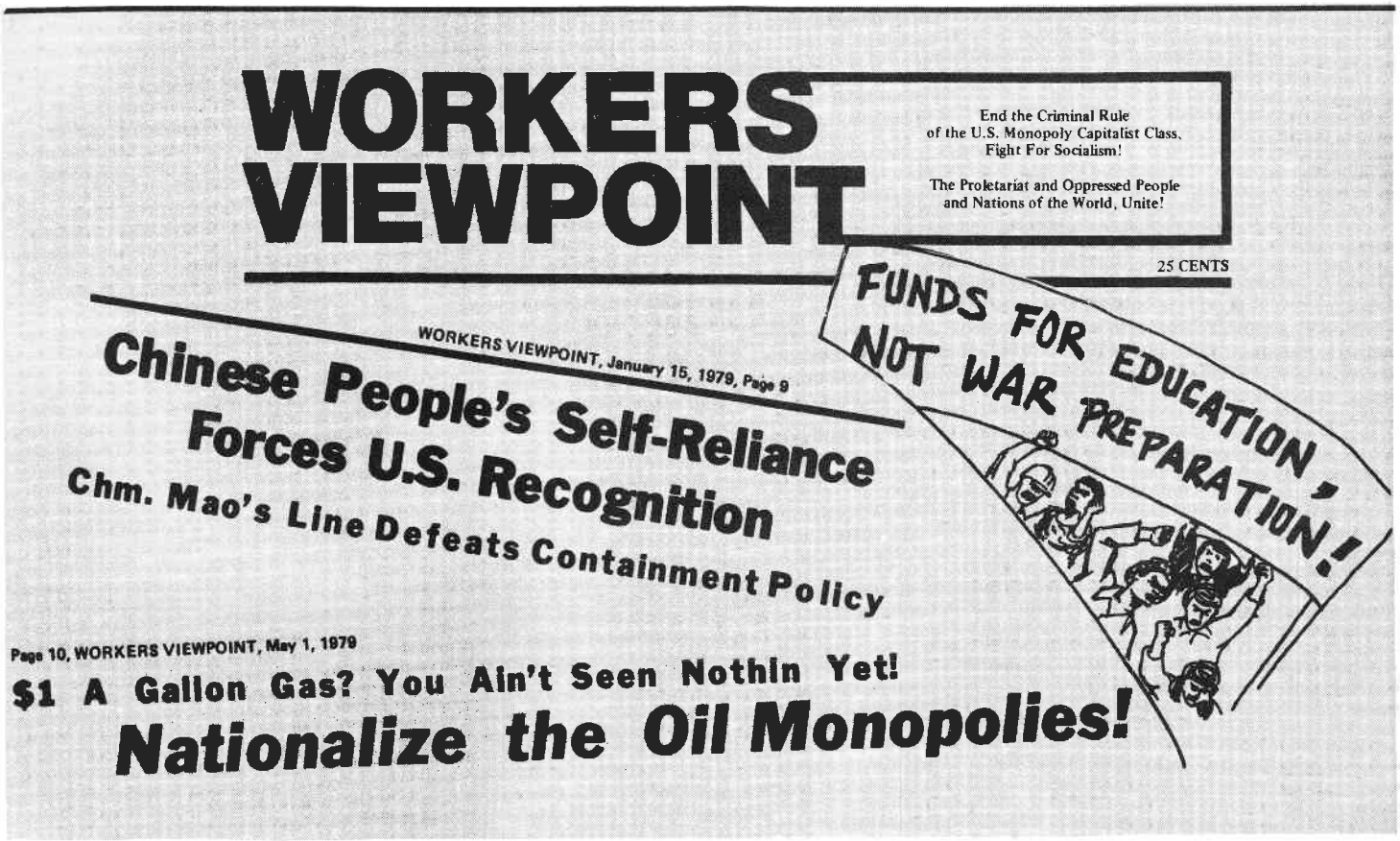
> ...would expose the "Communist" Party USA's nationalization plan, which views the road to socialism peacefully paved by a series of nationalizations of various industries. On the other hand, this program of nationalization would benefit workers by diverting billions of energy profits into programs for workers.[15]

How exactly does this *differentiate* WVO from the CPUSA, one might well ask? This is where the tricky part comes in. Apparently the difference is that the WVO doesn't really believe in the demand they raise:

> Of course, we must have no illusions that the state apparatus is anything but the agents of the monopoly capitalists. But the demand for nationalization would help raise economic demands (for lower gas prices, utility bills, etc.) into political demands directed at the state itself.[16]

This is another variant on the Trotskyite tactic of "transitional demands" (workers aren't ready to hear about socialism, so raise some reasonable-sounding demands that the capitalists will definitely not give in to, and then when the workers can't win these demands, tell them this shows how the only solution is revolution, etc.) and also a classic case of economism. Talk about "lending the economic struggle itself a political character"!

In their analysis of and work around the liberation struggles in Africa, WVO goes in for reformism mixed with hypocrisy. With regard to South Africa, this organization holds that the central task for the people of the U.S. has to be getting the U.S. government to sever state-to-state ties with the South African government. Besides fostering reformist illusions (making it seem like the basic task of the people is to make the U.S. government behave better), this also testifies to the inordinate importance which WVO for some reason attaches to state-to-state ties (compare their line on U.S.-China normalization). Meanwhile in connection with Zimbabwe, WVO is content to call for uncritical support for the Patriotic Front, somehow "forgetting" the fact that especially Nkomo of ZAPU (one of the two organizations in the Patriotic Front) has been rather close to the "main danger" Soviet social-imperialists, who have plans to do in Zimbabwe something like what they did in



The brave "leftists" of the Workers Viewpoint Organization reveal their true colors in a collection of typically rightist headlines.

Angola. WVO has no hesitation in tiptoeing around their "main danger" line when it interferes with their tailing of Pan Africanists and narrow Black nationalists.

Examples could be multiplied further in disgusting profusion, but enough (and more than enough) has been brought out to show the rightism, reformism and economism of this sect. But, as mentioned above, the leaders of this organization at the same time actually pride themselves on being great upholders of Marxist theory. In an article written last summer on the Revolutionary Communist Party, they claim that "the essence of the line difference between the RCP and the WVO" has to do with "the role of revolutionary theory in building the Party"[17]—billing themselves as upholders of the centrality of theory and the RCP as downgraders of it.

Cannot Understand Marxist Theory

In fact WVO has never been an exponent of Marxist theory. They have always been consistently dogmatist in their understanding of Marxism, metaphysically separating theory and practice. This not only has the result that they do not apply *Marxism* to their practice (so that they fall into reformism and economism, as we've seen), but it also means that they cannot actually reach a correct understanding of the theory of Marxism, either—for Marxist theory is the summation of revolutionary practice. Of course this does not mean that Marxism is the summation of one's own immediate practice; it sums up the revolutionary practice of the proletariat and on this basis man's historical practice in the struggle for production, scientific experiment and the class struggle, and this theoretical summing-up can (and must) be studied *in its own right* as well as in connection with particular struggles and events. But the purpose of studying it is in order to apply it, and thereby to change the world—and those who are not engaged overall in revolutionary practice, in changing the world in a revolutionary way, cannot fully understand the theory itself, because of the dialectical link between theory and practice.

Thus what WVO calls "theory" is nothing but stale phrases and long quotations, bits and pieces torn out of context and bombastically displayed. And even beyond this, WVO has developed a neat trick of writing long polemics in which they flay their opponents with dogmatist phrases—but carefully avoid actually laying out their own position. Take the Black national question, for instance. Here WVO used to say that it had a "partial position" which did not include a line on the "Black Belt nation." Then suddenly they began to proclaim that adherence to the existence of a "Black Belt nation," and upholding its right to self-determination as central to the struggle of Black people in this country, is a line of demarcation for communists. Not only was this done without a word of explanation as to why or how they had suddenly come to this conclusion, but they have up to the present day not published one piece of serious theoretical analysis of the Black national question.

But then, on the other hand, WVO has also published not one piece of theoretical analysis of *any* important question facing U.S. revolutionaries. Their performance around the China question is typical—one day they uphold China as socialist, the next they announce that a revisionist coup had actually taken place some time ago, without any explanation or analysis of what happened. For them, a few dogmatic phrases on the subject suffice—in fact that's what they *mean* by theory.

Thus the WVO leaders have always been consistent dogmatists. They used to have disdain for the struggles of the masses, and just run their dogma, with lots of "left" phrasemongering; then they decided that they had become such master Marxists that they could "bite into the spontaneous struggles." Here they tail whatever spontaneously arises, promote reformism among the masses, and dole out some dogma to an inner circle. In fact this rightism, this bowing to spontaneity, was inevitable once WVO turned to work among the masses, precisely because their "pure" theory was always divorced from practice. They have always been consistently dogmatist in their understanding of Marxism, since metaphysically separating theory and practice means not applying Marxism to the concrete situation—and therefore not actually understanding the theory of Marxism, either.

WVO's leadership hopes that their tip of the hat to Mao and the Four will allow them to maintain the torn vestiges of their "left" cover, to appease the revolutionary-minded people in and around their ranks, while not interfering with their increasingly right-wing line on domestic and international questions. Actually, their latest move only heightens the contradiction between their professing Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought, but their insisting that it has no meaning for action. ■

Footnotes

1. *Workers Viewpoint*, April 1-15, 1979, p. 19.
2. *Workers Viewpoint*, January 15, 1979, p. 17.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
4. See "Former Member Denounces WVO," *Revolution*, January 1979, p. 8.
5. *Workers Viewpoint*, April 1-15, 1979, p. 18..
6. *Revolution*, February/March 1979, p. 2.
7. See " 'Three Worlds' Strategy: Apology for Capitulation," *Revolution*, November 1978, p. 3.
8. *Workers Viewpoint*, April 1-15, 1979, p. 18.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Revolution*, November 1978, p. 13.
11. *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (Peking, FLP), p. 65.
12. *Workers Viewpont*, March 1, 1979, p. 16.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 14.
15. *Workers Viewpoint*, May 1, 1979, p. 10.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Workers Viewpoint Journal 5* (August 1978), p. 27.

Salt

(Continued from page 8)

against it. The SALT I treaty passed the Senate with relatively little debate and only two dissenting votes. The U.S. ruling class could then announce to the people of this country and the world: "We've laid down our swords. We've mended our ways and become peace-loving. From now on, if anything goes wrong, the Russians made us do it." This was the main message and object of SALT I diplomacy by the U.S. imperialists. But it wasn't the main thing going on overall.

No sooner was the treaty signed than Defense Secretary Laird presented Congress with a list of "SALT-related adjustments to strategic programs." An arms cut? Hardly. The U.S. accelerated nine programs and completed those already underway. Since Salt I was signed the U.S. has completed MIRV'ing 1046 ICBM's and SLBM's, developed the neutron bomb and the Trident I and II missiles, and gone a long way toward perfecting the Cruise missile and the MX mobile missile system. These are only some of their "peaceful" strategic nuclear accomplishments.

For their part, the Soviets did not waste time in church praying for a peaceful division of the world in their favor. Since SALT I began, they have deployed 900 ICBM's, including more powerful and deadly types, MIRV'ed 600 of them, and developed and produced the Backfire bomber and a whole new generation of submarine-launched missiles.

Debate in the Ruling Class

The greatly accelerated military build-up of both superpowers that took place in the seven years after the signing of SALT I underlines the essential similarity between SALT I and II—the necessity of each imperialist power to step up its war preparations behind a facade of "peace" and "limiting the arms race." The main differences between the two treaties are largely a reflection of the fact that the momentum hurling the U.S. and USSR towards World War 3 has picked up greatly in the last several years. The vey real prospect of war in the 1980s dictates that both superpowers begin dropping their hypocritical talk of "jointly working towards world peace" and theories of "mutual deterrence"—to be replaced with the noble goal of achieving "peace through strength" and sharply escalating war preparations and an even more critical race for hitching world public opinion to their own war wagons.

In 1972 it would have interfered with the principal political aims of the U.S. bourgeoisie (to defuse the anti-war movement in the U.S. and try to recoup some of the political and strategic losses it suffered internally as a result of Vietnam, and to reorganize its imperialist bloc within the "detente" framework) to have engaged in a big finger-pointing contest with the Soviets. (In addition, the U.S. still retained an edge over the Soviets in most areas of strategic weapons, particularly in such crucial areas as MIRV'ed warheads and accuracy of delivery systems.) But with the changed situation today—including the superpowers' sharpening contention all over the globe and the fact that the U.S. and USSR now have overall equivalent strategic forces—it has become a practical necessity for the U.S. ruling class to stage a big SALT II debate in order to greatly accelerate military spending, cement its imperialist bloc, galvanize the "national will" and recruit its armies. As an important part of this, the U.S. bourgeoisie must go all-out to bury once and for all the legacy of the massive opposition to the Vietnam War that continues to seriously hamper its efforts to line up the masses behind the national flag and whatever it says must be done to meet the "Soviet threat."

With the constant raising of the stakes, it is inevitable that significant and even very sharp tactical differences are arising within the U.S. bourgeoisie over how best to contend with the Soviets and how to most effectively convince the masses of people of the necessity to fight and die for their "own" bourgeoisie. And indeed, the debate around SALT II has already gotten very sharp—with the "hardliners" accusing the "moderates" of appeasing the Soviets and "allowing" them to gain military superiority, and the "moderates" in turn accusing the "hardliners" of being "warmongerers" out to provoke a premature confrontation with the Soviets that cannot be effectively sold to the American people.

But beneath the appearance of serious differences within the bourgeoisie (which can also be accounted for in part by the time-honored tradition of bourgeois political bickering in the U.S. and by the role of "critics" assumed by a party out of power) lies the essential and fundamental unity of the opposing positions, working to line up the masses behind the U.S. military machine (though utilizing somewhat different tactics to do so.) They complement each other in another sense, as well, since the presently smaller camp of "hardliners" actually eases the task the main-line "moderates" face in winning the American people's support for greater war preparations, by spreading horror stories of Kremlin power and U.S. "vulnerability." These dual tactics have already had effect as the "great SALT debate" comes up before the U.S. Congress—as indicated in a recent CBS News/*New York Times* poll in which 43% of the people polled said they thought that the U.S. was "not as strong" militarily as the Soviet Union, 30% thought they were roughly equal and only 11% thought the U.S. had the lead.

Quite a bit of effort is being put into turning the Senate debate on SALT II into a real protracted public showpiece—and for good reason. Operating within the common framework of the need to rally round the flag, the imperialists are using the debate to actively synthesize their increasingly explicit war program for the '80s—which can only be successfully accomplished by drawing the masses into the debate on how to meet the Soviet challenge.

The televised congressional hearings and Senate debate and the thousands of pro-and-con articles in the bourgeois press will not be all there is. The State Department is setting up briefing brunches for hundreds of women's and religious groups, and the Democratic Party is planning to draw as many people as they can into pro-SALT II rallies this summer. Meanwhile, all kinds of "anti-SALT" infrastructure is being set up by such groups as the "Coalition for Peace Through Strength" (which already claims among its members 173 congressmen), and the Committee on the Present Danger is mobilizing all the old cold warriors and substantial parts of the JFK-LBJ and Nixon teams. The imperialists are definitely going out big among the masses to try to form public opinion for their *wehrmacht*."

There are still certainly "hawks" and "doves" but their tune is merging "in the national interest"—the bourgeoisie requires different tactics to rally the masses around the flag—in particular pacifist deception must continue to be used along with bald faced national chauvinism to unite the masses behind their necessity of arming and intensifying the struggle for world domination with their Soviet rivals. (There are some similarities here with the recent Panama Canal treaty debate, through which the bourgeoisie united around a basic goal of strengthening the U.S.'s actual control over the Canal through neo-colonial mechanisms, while whipping up jingoist hysteria during the debate.)

A brief look at the main positions taken by the pro-SALT and anti-SALT forces underscores the unity of the two "opposing" camps on all major questions and demonstrates how they are constructing a new "national consensus" through the course of the debate. The stripped down version of the mainstream "moderate" line represented most by the Carter administration is that "in order to keep the peace we must have a strong military and be second to none." Leaving aside the political demagogy and selling techniques of Carter and Co. (such as his bloated claim that he was able to place important limits on the Soviets' strategic arms buildup—thus adding to the U.S.' national security—this line atempts to draw on the masses' desire for peace to advocate "stronger military, stronger alliances and a stronger national will." (Carter's SALT speech to Congress) Thus, SALT is presented as explicitly allowing the U.S. to modernize its strategic arsenal, while "saving money" to allow it to beef up its NATO and

(Continued on page 46)


国際共産主義運動の
総路線についての提案
BẢN KIẾN NGHỊ
VỀ ĐƯỜNG LỐI CHUNG
CỦA PHONG TRÀO
CỘNG SẢN QUỐC TẾ
PROPOSICION ACERCA DE
LA LINEA GENERAL DEL
MOVIMIENTO COMUNISTA
INTERNACIONAL
ZUR GENERALLINIE
DER INTERNATIONALEN
KOMMUNISTISCHEN BEWEGUNG
PROPOSITION
CONCERNANT LA LIGNE GENERALE
DU MOUVEMENT
COMMUNISTE INTERNATIONAL
ПРЕДЛОЖЕНИЕ
О ГЕНЕРАЛЬНОЙ ЛИНИИ
МЕЖДУНАРОДНОГО
КОММУНИСТИЧЕСКОГО
ДВИЖЕНИЯ
A PROPOSAL CONCERNING
THE GENERAL LINE
OF THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

A Critical Appraisal of the Chinese Communist Party's "Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement" (1963)

"Hoist the Red Flag!" said Mao Tsetung in his concluding remarks to the Second Session of the Eighth Party Congress in May of 1958. "...If you do not hoist the flag, others will. On a big mountain or small hill, on the field, hoist it wherever there is no flag, and uproot the white flag wherever it is found. The grey ones must also be uprooted...The grey ones are no good; they must be uprooted ...On any big mountain, any small hill, the red flag must be hoisted after debates!"[1]

Five years later, amidst the smoke and ashes of the most violent and protracted life-and-death struggle in the history of the communist movement, the Communist Party of China led by Mao Tsetung "hoisted the red flag" on an international scale with the publication of the historic *Proposal Concerning The General Line of the International Communist Movement.*[2]

The *Proposal Concerning the General Line,* issued on June 14, 1963 in the form of a "Letter of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in Reply to the Letter of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of March 30, 1963," represented at that time the most developed and systematic Marxist-Leninist line on all the fundamental questions facing the world revolutionary movement. It was both a thorough critique of the theories of Khrushchevite revisionism and a strategic analysis of the revolutionary tasks confronting the people of the world.

The "Proposal," together with the series of major articles which followed and elucidated it in depth, did not simply constitute a "fixed defense" of Marxism-Leninism, "holding the line" where things stood prior to the opening salvo of the revisionist offensive at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956. Nikita Khrushchev's speech to the Twentieth Congress is most infamous for its slanderous attack on Joseph Stalin. But Khrushchev's objective was not limited to attempting to destroy the prestige and bury the contributions of Stalin. In striking at Stalin, Khrushchev was striking at Marxism-Leninism as a whole, which Stalin, despite his serious errors, represented.

Khrushchev represented the interests, not of the proletariat in the Soviet Union and worldwide, but of the new Soviet bourgeoisie. The program he put forward at the Twentieth Congress was a program for the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and capitulation to imperialism worldwide.

Under the guise of attacking the Stalin "cult of the personality," Khrushchev launched an attack on the Leninist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. His aim (soon realized) was to destroy the dictatorship of the proletariat and replace it with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Claiming that the existence of nuclear weapons marked a "fundamentally new epoch," an epoch in which war had become unthinkable because it would mean the "destruction of mankind," Khrushchev sought to condemn revolutionary war as "reckless adventurism," the irresponsible acts of madmen who were bent on provoking a thermonuclear holocaust. Claiming that the Leninist theses on the necessity for violent revolution were "out of date," Khrushchev advanced a "new" theory of "peaceful transition to socialism" via the parliamentary process—simply a refurbished version of the trash left behind by the opportunists of the Second International.

Khrushchev claimed that since it was no longer possible or permissible for the oppressed to take up arms against their oppressor, the struggle between capitalism and socialism would be decided by "peaceful competition" between the Soviet Union and the United States in the economic field—and that, at the same time, all the problems of the world would be solved by consultations between the Soviet Union and what Khrushchev termed the "more reasonable" imperialists.

Khrushchev intended not only to drive the genuine revolutionaries out of the CPSU and turn it into an instrument of bourgeois rule in the Soviet Union; he wished to subordinate the interests of the world working class to Soviet great-power aspirations and impose his counter-revolutionary line of capitulation to imperialism on the entire international communist movement. Khrushchev and his counter-revolutionary followers all over the world sought to hurl Marxism into the darkest dungeon, and perhaps for a time actually imagined that they could extinguish the flame of revolution from the earth forever.

It is not only not surprising, but inevitable, that Marxism-Leninism emerged from this bitter struggle more brilliant and vigorous than ever before. The *Proposal* represented not a step backward to a "happier time," the time of Stalin, but a step forward. In essence, the hoisting of this red flag was a call to arms, a call which genuine communists all over the world answered; it was a strategic battle plan for waging the revolutionary struggle against imperialism; it laid the foundations for a new international communist movement united around the "general line ...of resolute revolutionary struggle by the people of all countries and of carrying the proletarian world revolution forward to the end."[3]

The *Proposal Concerning the General Line* not only defended, but deepened, the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism in the face of Khrushchevite revisionism. It hailed and upheld the storm of national liberation struggles that was sweeping Asia, Africa and Latin America, at the same time pointing to the necessity for the revolutionary proletariat to lead these struggles to victory and to forge ahead into the socialist revolution. It affirmed the Leninist line on war and revolution, upholding the right and duty of the oppressed classes to use violence against their oppressors, and refuting the view that the masses should simply cower and grovel before the nuclear arsenals of the great powers.

It called for the re-establishment of genuine Marxist-Leninist revolutionary parties in those countries where revisionism had rotted out the heart of the party of the working class. It exposed and condemned the widespread reformism, tailism and great-nation chauvinism of the revisionist parties in the capitalist countries, and stressed that the communists in the capitalist countries should "educate the masses in a Marxist-Leninist revolutionary spirit, ceaselessly raise their

political consciousness and undertake the task of the proletarian revolution."[4] It took great strides in summing up the historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the lessons of the capitalist restoration which at that time was consolidating itself in the Soviet Union, thus helping to lay the theoretical basis for the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution that was to sweep China in a few short years. The *Proposal Concerning the General Line* represented, in short, a scientific summation of the line struggle then raging in the international communist movement and pointed out the revolutionary road that the revisionists were trying to block.

The 16 years since the publication of the *Proposal* have been eventful, and both the international situation as a whole and the situation within the international communist movement are qualitatively different today. But the revolutionary communists of today share this, at least, with the communists of 1963: We are in the midst of a grave crisis in the world revolutionary movement (due, this time, to the revisionist *coup d'etat* which has temporarily seated counter-revolution on the throne in China); we are at a critical juncture in the international situation (due, this time, to the rapid intensification of the imperialist crisis and the looming prospect of a third world war as well as developments toward revolution, most strikingly in Iran over the past two years); and, learning from Mao Tsetung and the genuine communists all over the world of 16 years ago, communists are determined to defeat revisionism, unite our ranks, hoist high the red flag, rally the masses around that flag, rise up, make revolution, and carry forward the revolution until the final burial of imperialism and all exploiting systems and the final victory of communism usher in a new world for mankind.

Both the similarities and the differences between the situations of 1963 and 1979 argue for a study and analysis of the theoretical contributions of the *Proposal,* as well as of its limitations, in the light of the accumulated experience since that time. It is the purpose of this article to touch on these questions. In order to place the *Proposal* in its historical context, an appendix is included at the end of the article, which reviews (through 1963) the struggle within the international communist movement that began with the 20th Congress of the CPSU.

The Question of the Socialist Camp and World Revolution

The starting point of the *Proposal Concerning the General Line* is "the concrete analysis of world politics and economics as a whole and of actual world conditions, that is to say, of the fundamental contradictions in the contemporary world."[5]

Combatting the revisionist line of Khrushchev, which tended to liquidate all contradictions except the contradiction between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp (and in actuality to liquidate that contradiction as well, through the theory of "peaceful coexistence") the *Proposal* advances four "fundamental contradictions":

> the contradiction between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp;
>
> the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries;
>
> the contradiction between the oppressed nations and imperialism; and
>
> the contradiction among imperialist countries and among monopoly capitalist groups.[6]

The question of how to evaluate the "socialist camp" and its significance and historical role is treated at some length in the proposal. 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"[7] is sharply opposed. And this serves as a foundation for attacking the line which liquidates class contradictions and class struggle all down the line. The *Proposal* condemns:

> the view which recognizes only the contradiction between the socialist and imperialist camps, while neglecting or underestimating [the other three contradictions] and the struggles to which these contradictions give rise;
>
> the view which maintains...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;
>
> the view which denies that the development of the inherent contradictions in the contemporary capitalist world inevitably lead to a new situation in which the imperialist countries are locked in an intense struggle...
>
> 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" and "new world of all-round cooperation," will appear.[8]

Essentially, the *Proposal* not only refuted the view that the *only* contradiction in the world is that between imperialism and the socialist camp; it also denied that the contradiction between the two camps is the *sharpest*, or principal, contradiction in the world. In assessing the fundamental change in the balance of forces since World War II, the *Proposal* states that:

> The main indication of this change is that the world now has not just one socialist country but a number of socialist countries forming the mighty socialist camp, and that the people who have taken the socialist road now number not two hundred million but a thousand million, or a third of the world's population.[9]

It is then stressed that "The Socialist camp is the outcome of the struggles of the international proletariat and working people. It belongs to the international proletariat and working people as well as to the people of the socialist countries."[10] This is significant, because the point is that the socialist countries, created by the revolutionary struggle of the international working class, must fundamentally rely on the working class, and not, fundamentally, the other way around (that is, not the international working class relying on the socialist countries). This is why the tasks of the socialist camp are presented as "demands" on the part of the workers and oppressed people of the world:

> The main common demands of the people in the socialist camp and the international proletariat and working people are that all the Communist and Workers' Parties in the socialist camp should:
>
> adhere to the Marxist-Leninist line and pursue correct Marxist-Leninist domestic and foreign policies;
>
> consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat...;
>
> promote the initiative and creativeness of the broad masses...;
>
> strengthen the unity of the socialist camp on the basis of Marxism-Leninism...
>
> and help the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed classes and nations of the world.

"By fulfilling these demands," the *Proposal* concludes, "the socialist camp will exert a decisive influence on the course of human history."[11]

The question of the role of the "socialist camp" is a significant one today—precisely because the events since 1963 have in fact brought about the liquidation of the socialist camp, due basically to the complete transformation of the Soviet Union into a social-imperialist power ringed by a series of satellite states. And following this, China itself has come under the rule of reactionaries through a revisionist coup in October 1976. Nor is it correct or useful to try to redefine the "socialist camp" to include within it not only socialist countries but also the strivings of the working class of every country for socialism. Such an argument, which holds that the "socialist camp" exists even if it is reduced to one small country (or even, according to this logic, to no country at all), makes the "socialist camp" an ideal conception rather than an expression of a material, world-political reality.

What does the lack of a socialist camp mean for the world struggle? It is obvious that the loss of these powerful bastions of proletarian rule is a severe blow to the cause of the world revolution; the loss in China was especially painful, since Mao Tsetung had led the Chinese people through many heroic battles to prevent just such a restoration of capitalism. However, can it be said that these defeats, important though they are, mean that now the "balance of forces" in the world is overwhelmingly in favor of imperialism, that there is no reliable bulwark to prevent wholesale imperialist depredation and exploitation, that the cause of revolution has suffered such a staggering setback that the question of its recovery is one for the distant future?

Absolutely not. It is clear that the temporary loss of proletarian rule in a series of countries has not abated the deepening world imperialist crisis; in fact that crisis is now approaching a breaking point. Neither have these temporary setbacks served to quench the thirst of the masses for revolution; in the very wake of the revisionist coup in China, a major revolution of historic significance occurred in Iran, and U.S. imperialism suffered another stunning setback.

Nor can it be said that the ranks of communists around the world have disintegrated in chaos due to these setbacks; on the contrary, the counter-revolutionary coup in China has served to intensify the struggle against opportunism and subject all opportunist trends to a glaring spotlight. Despite the great turmoil within the international communist movement, the ranks of the genuine Marxist-Leninists are becoming steeled and tempered in the face of these difficulties, and at the same time they are determinedly preparing for the coming revolutionary storms with unshakeable optimism.

Finally, though the proletariat has temporarily lost state power in a number of countries, class conscious revolutionaries have not lost the incredibly rich lessons and experience of the revolutions in those countries, and the understanding of the meaning of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat has grown immeasurably deeper, due particularly to the contributions of Mao Tsetung, who not only comprehensively summed up the experience of the class struggle in the Soviet Union, but led the masses of the Chinese people to scale new heights in the Cultural Revolution.

What, then, remains following the liquidation of the socialist camp? Principally, the same irresistable force that brought the socialist camp into being: the international proletariat, together with its reliable allies, the oppressed peoples of the world, only now better prepared to seize even more breathtaking victories in the future—and in the not too distant future, either. And in this great struggle, the basic principles of the 1963 *Proposal on the General Line* remain a brillant standard and overall guiding line.

National Liberation Struggles

One of the most significant contributions of the *Proposal* was on the question of how to assess the national liberation struggles in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It not only upheld their significance for the world revolutionary movement in the face of Khrushchev's downgrading and betrayal, but it also gave the correct orientation for leading them through the democratic revolution into the socialist revolution.

Emphasizing the necessity for proletarian leadership throughout the revolutionary struggle in these countries, the *Proposal* stated that:

> History has entrusted to the proletarian parties in these areas the glorious mission of holding high the banner of struggle against imperialism, against old and new colonialism and for national independence and people's democracy, of standing in the forefront of the national democratic revolutionary movement and striving for a socialist future...
>
> The proletariat and its party must have confidence in the strength of the masses and, above all, must unite with the peasants and establish a solid worker-peasant alliance. It is of primary importance for advanced members of the proletariat to work in the rural areas...
>
> On the basis of the worker-peasant alliance the proletariat and its party must unite all the strata that can be united and organize a broad united front against imperialism and its lackeys. In order to consolidate and expand this united front it is necessary that the proletarian party should maintain its ideological, political and organizational independence and insist on the leadership of the revolution...[12]

Responding to the Khrushchevite lie that the simple achievement of national independence represented a thorough defeat of imperialism, the *Proposal* pointed out that

> The nationalist countries which have recently won political independence are still confronted with the arduous task of consolidating it, liquidating the forces of imperialism and domestic reaction, carrying out agrarian and other social reforms and developing their national economy and culture. It is of practical and vital importance for these countries to guard and fight against the neo-colonialist policies which the old colonialists adopt to preserve their interests, and especially against the neo-colonialism of U.S. imperialism.[13]

While stressing proletarian leadership of the national-democratic revolution, the *Proposal* also dialectically analyzed the contradictory role of the national bourgeoisie in these countries, pointing out both the necessity to unite with all patriotic bourgeois forces in the struggle against imperialism and the increasing tendency for the bourgeoisie, especially the big bourgeoisie, to array itself against the revolution as the class struggle advanced and grew sharper:

> In some of these countries, the patriotic national bourgeoisie continue to stand with the masses in the struggle against imperialism and colonialism and introduce certain measures of social progress. This requires the proletarian party to make a full appraisal of the progressive role of the patriotic national bourgeoisie and strengthen unity with them.
>
> As the internal social contradictions and the international class struggle sharpen, the bourgeoisie, and particularly the big bourgeoisie, increasingly tend to become retainers of imperialism and to pursue anti-popular, anti-Communist and counter-revolutionary policies. It is necessary for the proletarian party resolutely to oppose these reactionary policies.
>
> Generally speaking, the bourgeoisie in these countries have a dual character. When a united front is formed with the bourgeoisie, the policy of the proletarian party should be one of both unity and struggle. The policy should be to unite with the bourgeoisie, in so far as they tend to be progressive, anti-imperialist and anti-feudal, but to struggle against their reactionary tendencies to compromise and collaborate with imperialism and the forces of feudalism...
>
> If the proletariat becomes the tail of the landlords and the bourgeoisie in the revolution, no real or thorough victory in the national democratic revolution is possible, and even if victory of a kind is gained, it will be impossible to consolidate it.[14]

These questions, as the *Proposal* pointed out, were not merely of concern for communists in the countries of the oppressed nations:

> ...the anti-imperialist revolutionary struggle of the people in Asia, Africa, and Latin America is definitely not merely a matter of regional significance but one of overall importance for the whole cause of proletarian revolution...
>
> Certain persons in the international communist movement are now taking a passive or scornful or negative attitude towards the struggles of the oppressed nations for liberation. They are in fact protecting the interests of monopoly capital, betraying those of the proletariat, and degenerating into social democrats...[15]

The *Proposal* said that "The attitude taken towards the revolutionary struggles of the people in the Asian, African and Latin American countries is an important criterion for differentiating those who want revolution

Mao Tsetung meeting with friends from Asia, Africa and Latin America.

from those who do not..."[16] At that time, not only the Soviet Union but the pro-Soviet Communist Parties in the capitalist countries had thoroughly degenerated into the most shameless great-nation chauvinism. But this was, of course, not unconnected to their thorough degeneration into servants of the bourgeoisie, often in the form of petty pleaders for the special interests of the labor aristocracy. It was necessary for the *Proposal* to both expound the revolutionary line for leading the national-democratic, anti-imperialist revolution to victory, and to expose the revisionist line which wanted to ignore and in fact to liquidate these struggles.

In its analysis of the revolutionary tasks in the capitalist countries, to which we now turn, the revisionist line of downgrading the struggles for national liberation is shown to be connected to a line of all-around capitulation to the bourgeoisie.

"Even in Ordinary Times..."

The *Proposal* polemicized against the ridiculous theories of the "peaceful transition to socialism" and the trend towards social-democracy among many of the Communist Parties in the advanced countries, emphasizing that:

> In the imperialist and the capitalist countries, the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat are essential for the thorough resolution of the contradictions of capitalist society....
>
> While actively leading immediate struggles, Communists in the capitalist countries should link them with the struggle for long-range and general interests, educate the masses in a Marxist-Leninist revolutionary spirit, ceaselessly raise their political consciousness and undertake the historical task of proletarian revolution. If they fail to do so, if they regard the immediate movement as everything, determine their conduct from case to case, adapt themselves to the events of the day and sacrifice the basic interests of the proletariat, that is out-and-out social democracy...
>
> Even in ordinary times, when it is leading the masses in the day-to-day struggle, the proletarian party should ideologically, politically and organizationally prepare its own ranks and the masses for revolution and promote revolutionary struggles, so that it will not miss the opportunity to overthrow the reactionary regime and establish a new state power when the conditions for revolution are ripe. Otherwise, when the objective conditions are ripe, the proletarian party will simply throw away the opportunity of seizing victory.[17]

It is no exaggeration to say that these were not only profound truths in 1963, hurled as they were into the teeth of "all-mighty" international revisionism; they remain profound and extremely instructive today, and serve in a way as a benchmark by which a party in the advanced capitalist countries can scrupulously examine its own work.

The *Proposal* warns against the tendency to fall into despondency and reformist capitulation because of the tempory strength of the bourgeoisie:

> However difficult the conditions and whatever sacrifices and defeats the revolution may suffer, proletarian revolutionaries should educate the masses in the spirit of revolution and hold aloft the banner of revolution and not abandon it.[18]

It also condemns the abandonment of "principled policies and the goal of revolution on the pretext of flexibility and of necessary compromises,"[19] and on the subject of making use of contradictions among the enemy, it specifically states that "the purpose of using these contradictions is to make it easier to attain the goal of the people's revolutionary struggles and not to liquidate those struggles."[20]

The *Proposal* cuts deeply against the ingrained tendency towards reformism and stagism that affected (and has continued to affect) not only out-and-out revisionist parties, but even basically Marxist-Leninist par-

ties and organizations. Especially in the advanced countries, such as the United States, there has been a powerful trend towards walling off the relatively peaceful, non-revolutionary situation of today from the revolutionary situation of tomorrow. There has been a habit of consigning "the revolution" to some misty, indefinite future, losing sight of revolutionary elements within a non-revolutionary situation, and thus a push to concentrate essentially the whole strength of the working class on the "immediate" struggle, or on something promising "palpable" results. The importance of doing bold, widespread revolutionary agitation and propaganda ("educating the masses in a Marxist-Leninist revolutionary spirit") has been grossly underestimated. This was true in our own Party prior to the split with the Jarvis-Bergman headquarters; and even today, the full meaning of "ideologically, politically and organizationally preparing" our own ranks and the masses for revolution cannot be said to have been entirely grasped, despite the tremendous advances of the last period.

The importance of such preparations is emphasized not merely once, but repeatedly in the space of a few pages of the *Proposal*, like an insistent battle drum:

> The proletarian party...should concentrate on the painstaking work of accumulating revolutionary strength, so that it will be ready to seize victory when the conditions for revolution are ripe or to strike powerful blows at the imperialists and the reactionaries when they launch surprise attacks and armed assaults.
>
> If it fails to make such preparations, the proletarian party will paralyze the revolutionary will of the proletariat, disarm itself ideologically and sink into a totally passive state of unpreparedness both politically and organizationally, and the result will be to bury the proletarian revolutionary cause.[21]

The blunt truth of the consequences of failure on the part of the Party to carry out this all-round revolutionary preparation had not been stated so eloquently since the time of Lenin.

In his *The Tasks of the Third International,* (1919) Lenin was also faced with summing up a great struggle against opportunism and re-affirming the revolutionary principles which must guide the revolutionary party. His words are worth quoting at some length here, because the parallels are striking:

> In order to defeat opportunism, which caused the shameful death of the Second Interntional, in order to really assist the revolution, the approach of which *even* Ramsay MacDonald is obliged to admit, it is necessary:
>
> *Firstly*, to conduct all propaganda and agitation from the viewpoint of revolution as opposed to reforms, systematically explaining to the masses...that they are diametrically opposed. Under no circumstances to refrain...from utilizing the parliamentary system and all the "liberties" of bourgeois democracy; not to reject reforms, but to regard them *only* as a *by-product* of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. Not a single party affiliated to the Berne [i.e., Second] International meets these requirements. Not a single one of them shows that it has any idea of how to conduct its propaganda and agitation *as a whole,* explaining how reform *differs* from revolution; nor do they know how to train both the Party and the masses *unswervingly for revolution.*
>
> *Secondly* legal work must be combined with *illegal* work. The Bolsheviks have always taught this, and did so with particular insistence during the war of 1918. The heroes of despicable opportunism ridiculed this and smugly extolled the "legality," "democracy," "liberty" of the West-European countries, republics, etc. Now, however, only out-and-out swindlers, who deceive the workers with phrases, can deny that the Bolsheviks proved to be right. In every single country in the world, even the most advanced and "freest" of the bourgeois republics, bourgeois terror reigns, and there is no such thing as freedom to carry on agitation for the socialist revolution, to carry on propaganda and organisational work precisely in this sense. The party which to this day has not admitted this under the rule of the bourgeoisie and does not carry on systematic, all-sided *illegal* work in spite of the laws of the bourgeoisie...is a party of traitors and scoundrels who deceive the people by their verbal recognition of revolution. The place for such parties is in the yellow, Berne International. There is no room for them in the Communist International.[22]

Lenin exposes the

> ...extreme hypocrisy of the parties of the Berne International...in their typical recognition of revolution in words...but as far as deeds are concerned [they] go no farther than adopting a purely reformist attitude to those beginnings...of the growth of revolution in all mass actions which break bourgeois laws and go beyond the bounds of all legality, as for example, mass strikes, street demonstrations, soliders' protests, meetings among the troops, leaflet distribution in barracks, camps, etc.
>
> If you ask any hero of the Berne International whether his Party does such systematic work, he will answer you either with evasive phrases to conceal that such work is not being done—his party lacks the organisations and the machinery for doing it, is incapable of doing it—or with declamatory speeches against "putschism" (pyrotechnics), "anarchism," etc. And it is that which constitutes the betrayal of the working class by the Berne International, its actual desertion to the camp of the bourgeoisie.[23]

It can be seen that both Lenin and the CPC under Mao's leadership in its *Proposal* make the point that the broadest, most powerful, most uncompromising revolutionary agitation and propaganda is dialectically linked to the question of *all-around* preparation for the revolutionary situation. If one preaches only (or essentially) reformism to the masses, and is content with the narrow limits of legality, no matter how constricted those limits become during a great crisis, then one has no need to organizationally prepare for illegal work. On the other hand, such preparations are indispensible to the genuine revolutionaries if they are to continue to carry out such agitation and propaganda during a war or other crisis—precisely when the need for such revolutionary work is most urgent.

"In order to lead the proletariat and working people in revolution," the *Proposal* states,

> Marxist-Leninist Parties must master all forms of struggle and be able to substitute one form for another quickly as the conditions of struggle change. The vanguard of the proletariat will remain unconquerable in all circumstances only if it masters all forms of struggle—peaceful and armed, open and secret, legal and illegal, parliamentary struggle and mass struggle, etc.[24]

On the question of the peaceful transition to socialism, the *Proposal*, while admitting its theoretical possibility for certain tactical reasons (see the appendix to this article), emphatically pointed out that "there is no historical precedent for peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism,"[25] and that the prospects for such an eventuality were as good as nil.

Overall, the analysis of the revolutionary tasks confronting the workers of the advanced capitalist countries contained in the *Proposal* is now, as it was in 1963, a powerful affirmation of Leninism and a death-blow to international opportunism. The last paragraph of this section of the *Proposal*, so rich in material worthy of close study today, shares with much of the document an uncanny ring of aptness:

> In the last few years the international communist movement and the national liberation movement have had many experiences and many lessons. There are experiences which people should praise and there are experiences which make people grieve. Communists and revolutionaries in all countries should ponder and seriously study these experiences of success and failure, so as to draw correct conclusions and useful lessons from them.[26]

U.S. Imperialism, the "Intermediate Zone," and the National Liberation Struggles

The *Proposal*, written of course before the full emergence of the Soviet Union as a social-imperialist superpower, targeted U.S. imperialism as the main enemy of the people of the world, and analyzed its strategic objectives in the following terms:

> Taking advantage of the situation after World War II, the U.S. imperialists stepped into the shoes of the German, Italian, and Japanese fascists, and have been trying to erect a huge world empire such as has never been known before. The strategic objectives of U.S. imperialism have been to grab and dominate the intermediate zone lying between the United States and the socialist camp, put down the revolutions of the oppressed peoples and nations, proceed to destroy the socialist countries, and thus to subject all the peoples and countries of the world, including its allies, to domination and enslavement by U.S. monopoly capital.[27]

In the face of this the *Proposal* advanced the call for the international proletariat to "unite all the forces that can be united, make use of the internal contradictions in the enemy camp and establish the broadest united front against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys."[28]

At the same time, the *Proposal* placed great emphasis on the national liberation struggles in Asia, Africa, and Latin America:

> 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-centres of world revolution dealing direct blows at imperialism.
>
> The national democratic revolutionary movement in these areas and the international socialist revolutionary movement are the two great historical currents of our time...
>
> 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.[29]

The *Proposal*, which sharply attacked the Soviet revisionists for denying the significance of the national liberation struggles and adopting a great-nation chauvinist attitude towards them, called for firm support for these revolutionary struggles, and correctly pointed to the effect they had in "pounding and undermining the foundations of the rule of imperialism."[30]

It also attacked those (that is, the Soviets) who "are trying their best to efface the line of demarcation between oppressed and oppressor nations and between oppressed and oppressor countries and to hold down the revolutionary struggles of the peoples in these areas."[31]

These positions represented a sharp blow to revisionism and were accompanied by the battle-cry, "Workers and oppressed nations of the world, unite!" at a time when the national-liberation struggles were on the verge of an important new upsurge. Today, the attacks on Mao Tsetung for "narrow nationalism" and even "racism" are in response to the correct line embodied in the *Proposal* upholding the central role of the struggles in Asia, Africa and Latin America to the world revolution and refusing to consider the advanced countries of Europe and North America the center of the world proletarian socialist revolution during a period when it was not.

The thesis of the "world-wide united front against U.S. imperialism and its lackeys" outlined in the *Proposal*, however, does deserve closer study. The analysis of U.S. imperialism's objectives quoted above, for example, correctly noted that the U.S. was seeking to "subject all the peoples and countries of the world, *including its allies*, to domination and enslavement." (Emphasis added.) One of the conclusions drawn from this is that

> In the capitalist countries which U.S. imperialism controls or is trying to control, the working class and the people should *direct their attacks mainly against U.S. imperialism*, but also against their own monopoly capitalists and other *reactionary forces who are betraying the national interests. (Emphasis added.)*[32]

This formulation raises a number of questions. One, why should the working class in the capitalist countries "controlled" by the U.S. direct their attacks mainly against U.S. imperialism, rather than against their own ruling class? Two, what is the class content, from the standpoint of the working class in these countries, of the "betrayal of the national interests" by the monopoly capitalists and reactionary forces of those countries?

The *Proposal* certainly does not deny that there are other imperialist powers than the United States; indeed, it poses the "contradictions among imperialist countries" as one of the four fundamental contradictions in the world. And in the polemic *More on the Differences Between Comrade Togliatti and Us*, which elucidated many of the themes later contained in the *Proposal*, the contradictions within this camp are analyzed in more detail:

> The uneven development of the capitalist countries has become more pronounced. There have been certain new developments in the capitalist forces of France, which are beginning to be bold enough to stand up to the United States. The contradiction between Britain and the United States had been further aggravated. Nurtured by the United States, the nations defeated in World War II, namely, West Germany, Italy and Japan, have risen to their feet again and are striving, in varying degrees, to shake off U.S. domination. Militarism is resurgent in West Germany and Japan, which are again becoming hotbeds of war. Before World War II, Germany and Japan were the chief rivals of U.S. imperialism. Today West Germany is again colliding with U.S. imperialism as its chief rival in the world capitalist market. The competition between Japan and the United States is also becoming increasingly acute...[33]

And further on,

> ...In terms of the actual interests of the imperialist powers, these contradictions and clashes are more pressing, more direct, more immediate than their contradictions with the socialist countries.[34]

It is certainly correct to note the contradictions within the imperialist camp on the one hand; and on the other, it is correct to note that, while there were sharp contradictions, at the same time these countries did still mainly form a bloc led by the United States.

However, there appears to be a tendency in the *Proposal* and in the related writings of that time to see the intensifying contradictions within the imperialist camp one-sidedly in terms of "making use of the internal contradictions in the enemy camp"[35] to establish "the broadest united front against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys."[36] The use of such imprecise terminology as "lackeys," while it could refer to forces like Marcos in the Philippines, or the Diem regime in Vietnam, (comprador elements in countries where the stage of struggle is for national liberation), could also be taken to refer to elements within the ruling class of a specific smaller imperialist power who favor closer ties with the U.S., as opposed to other forces who want to "stand up" to U.S. domination (for example, De Gaulle in France at that time.) And this, in turn, could lead to the idea that the "broadest United Front" should *include* such imperialist elements as De Gaulle.

The statement in *More on the Differences* which speaks of "the struggles between U.S. imperialism with its policy of control and the other imperialist powers which are resisting this control,"[37] tends to strengthen this interpretation. In addition, the concept of an "intermediate zone lying between the United States and the socialist camp,"[38] a zone "which includes the entire capitalist world, the United States excepted,"[39] could tend to do precisely what the *Proposal* itself correctly criticizes: "efface the line of demarcation between oppressed and oppressor nations and between oppressed and oppressor countries."

The concept of the "intermediate zone" may imply that there is something in common between the imperialists of France, for example, and the people of Vietnam—namely,

common resistance to U.S. domination. But in fact, this very example calls to mind the fact that it is the French imperialists and the U.S. imperialists who shared a common fate: both tried to enslave the people of Vietnam, and both failed.

The analysis contained in the proposal is based on a correct assessment of the historic significance of the national liberation struggles. The proposal calls on the proletariat itself "of every socialist country and every capitalist country" to "study the revolutionary experience of the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, firmly support their revolutionary actions and regard the cause of their liberation as a most dependable support for itself and as directly in accord with its own interests..."[40] And it further states: that "It is impossible for the working class in the European and American capitalist countries to liberate itself unless it unites with the oppressed nations and unless those nations are liberated..."[41]

It was absolutely correct to stress this, and to fight narrow national-chauvinist tendencies among the workers and parties in the advanced countries. The proposal quotes Lenin, who said that

> The revolutionary movement in the advanced countries would actually be a sheer fraud if, in their struggle against capital, the workers of Europe and America were not closely and completely united with the hundreds upon hundreds of millions of "colonial" slaves who are oppressed by capital.[42]

These correct formulations overwhelmingly constitute the main aspect of the line of the *Proposal* on this question. It is certainly correct to identify the struggles of Asia, Africa and Latin America as the "storm center," and to point out that, among the imperialist countries, the United States was the most powerful and leading imperialist power; but it is just as certainly true that the main task of the proletariat in *every* imperialist country is, first and foremost, to overthrow its own ruling class.

This shows from a different angle a potential danger in such formulations as "The international proletariat must and can unite all the forces that can be united, make use of the internal contradictions in the enemy camp and establish the broadest united front against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys." Proceeding from the desire to aid the national liberation struggles and to isolate U.S. imperialism to the maximum extent, a party in another capitalist or imperialist country might conclude that its task was to make use of the contradictions between its own ruling class and U.S. imperialism, to "unite" them, or a section of them, against U.S. imperialism.

This could cause such a party, for example, to raise a demand for the evacuation of NATO troops, but to do so under the "national flag," to unite with West German revanchism or Gaullist twaddle about "the grandeur of France."

The worldwide "united front" concept also laid out in the *Proposal* could lead to confusing tasks of the *socialist countries*, which indeed do and must make use of contradictions in the enemy camp in their state-to-state relations (while at the same time adhering to the fundamental principles of proletarian internationalism) and the tasks of the proletariat and the oppressed people in the various countries.

While we have examined some of the weaknesses inherent in the concept of an "intermediate zone" lying between the socialist countries and U.S. imperialism, it must also be said that it did reflect a certain reality, especially when Mao first put it forward in his famous interview with Anna Louise Strong in 1946. At that time, U.S. imperialism had just emerged triumphant from World War 2 and was, as Mao pointed out, using its anti-Soviet campaign partly to prepare a possible war against the Soviet Union, but more immediately to establish its position as chieftain in the imperialist world and its domination over the colonial and semi-colonial countries which previously "belonged" to its rivals. Since U.S. imperialism was seeking to reign supreme over the vast intermediate zone it was inevitable, as Mao pointed out, that the peoples of the world would come to oppose them. The fact that U.S. imperialism was going on the offensive against the other imperialist states and their dependencies was at the heart of Mao's analogy between the U.S. and the defeated fascist powers, which is reflected in the *Proposal*.

However, concentrating one-sidedly on the fact that the U.S. was "stepping into the shoes of the fascist powers" overlooks that the U.S. had also stepped into the shoes of its wartime allies, particularly Britain, which virtually forfeited its fabled empire to the U.S. Further, the analogy to the fascist powers has the danger of posing the question of imperialism simply in terms of "aggression" or the expansion of the interests of one imperialism at the expense of another. This view was long embedded in the international communist movement, as clearly shown by the 7th World Congress of the Communist International in 1935, which singled out the fascist powers as the most aggressive and called for international efforts to isolate and defeat them—and, unfortunately, the *Proposal* did not make a clean break with this kind of view. By way of contrast it is important to note Lenin's stand on World War 1 in which he stressed the importance of training the workers to see that it was *not* a question of who fired the first shot, or even of who was overall on the offensive, nor, for that matter, of the particular form of bourgeois rule in the different countries—but rather of the equally imperialist nature of all the major contending powers.

As a general rule, the proletariat's interest in the conflicts between various capitalist and imperialist powers is based fundamentally on how these conflicts may aid the working class in overthrowing *its own* ruling class. This, of course, is not at all in conflict with proletarian internationalism, and certainly not with rendering all-out support to the national liberation struggles, which the proposal correctly stresses as a necessity.

Within the oppressed nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America themselves, as the *Proposal* correctly notes, the revolution often takes the form of a "two-stage" revolution. In the first stage, the Communist Party must lead a broad united front which generally includes within its ranks sections of the national bourgeoisie, all forces and classes that can be united in the struggle against the imperialists and the feudal and comprador-capitalist allies. Through this united front strategy the Communist Party leads the masses of people in waging an armed struggle to defeat these imperialists and domestic reactionary forces, and to win victory in this way in the national-democratic revolution.

Only in the second stage, then, does the revolution assume the character of a struggle for socialism. Naturally, the revolutionary struggle in each colonial (or neo-colonial) country exhibits its own particular course of development within this model, the classic example of which is the Chinese revolution headed by Mao Tsetung. But these national particularities do not negate the general correctness and decisive importance of such a basic strategic approach to revolution in countries of this general type.

But can such a model apply to imperialist countries such as France, Britain, and West Germany, however much they are temporarily under the "domination" of the U.S. imperialists? No, it cannot. To adopt such a position could lead one, for example, to unite with the German ruling class during the period between World War 1 and World War 2, when, groaning under the reparations burden forced on them following their defeat, and with their "national integrity" violated in a thousand different ways, they also "struggled back to their feet" and "challenged the domination of their country" by the Entente.

It is obvious that, in general, there can be no separate "stage of struggle" within an imperialist power during which the proletariat directs its "main blow" against another imperialist power. The only exceptions to this could and did arise in World War 2, when the entry of the Soviet Union into the war changed its character (and, in a few other countries, military occupation meant that state power was effectively exercised by another imperialist power.) Even there, however, the proletariat in many countries made very serious errors because they tended to "forget" about their own imperialist oppressors and the necessity to prepare the masses to seize the opportunity to overthrow them when the time was ripe or, in the case of the occupied countries, fought for a restora-

tion of the rule of their own ruling class.

The *Proposal* emphatically does *not* advocate the renunciation of revolutionary struggle by the workers in the advanced capitalist countries—just the opposite, as we have seen. But there are, as have been pointed out, certain tendencies within the generally correct analysis put forward which are at best confusing, and which definitely require critical study today, when the Hua-Teng clique is trumpeting the "Soviet main danger" line and the "Three Worlds Theory" to call on the workers of *all* the imperialist countries (except, perhaps, the Soviet Union) and *all* the toiling masses of the oppressed nations to forget about revolution and form a political and military alliance with U.S. imperialism against the social-imperialist Soviet Union. In propagating these lines, the Chinese revisionists have been able to make use of certain misconceptions within the ranks of the revolutionaries, based to a large extent on a one-sided analysis of the experience connected with World War 2.

In the period immediately following World War 2, many communist parties in the capitalist countries of Europe fell into the trap of attempting to cement an alliance with the "anti-fascist" or "national-patriot" wing of their bourgeoisie, rather than making use of the favorable conditions that existed in the immediate post-war period to wage revolutionary struggle.

And even in 1952, in his address to the Nineteenth Party Congress of the CPSU (at which delegations from the communist parties of the world were in attendance) Stalin remarked that the bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries under the heel of the United States had "dropped the national flag," and stated that it fell to the communists to "pick it up." What Stalin is implying here is that there is some progressive aspect to the national flag of these imperialist countries. It is clear from Stalin's *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, written shortly before the Nineteenth Party Congress, that he recognized full well that these imperialist countries would rise against the United States eventually, not on some "progressive" basis, but in order to challenge the U.S. for imperialist world domination. But at the same time, he apparently found it useful to promote certain "nationalist" struggles in these countries in order to weaken U.S. imperialism in the short run. And more importantly, his statement identifies communists with the *interests* of an (imperialist) nation. In this, Stalin was mistaken—and his errors, while they ran counter to his generally correct line on the nature of imperialism, had disastrous effects when they were (as we pointed out in *The Communist*, Vol. 2, No. 2) "mechanically repeated, actually magnified, by communists in the capitalist countries..." mainly on the basis of the growth of revisionism in their own ranks.[43]

There also seems to have been a secondary tendency on the part of Mao Tsetung to give a little ground to some of these misconceptions, based on his own experience in the Chinese revolution. As Comrade Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the RCP, pointed out,

> ...no one, no matter how great his or her contribution, can be free of mistakes. This, of course, applies to great leaders as well, including Mao. And, while upholding and learning from their tremendous contributions, and defending these, as well as the overall role of such leaders, from attacks, it is also necessary to understand and learn from their errors.
>
> Specifically with regard to Mao, there seems to have been a tendency to project too much of the experience of the Chinese revolution onto a world scale. In particular, this took the form of giving a national character or aspect to the struggle in (at least some) capitalist, or even imperialist countries in the conditions where such could not play a progressive role.[44]

Again, however, the presence of certain confusing and one-sided formulations in the *Proposal Concerning the General Line*, while they must be pointed out in the light of present-day knowledge and experience, do not alter the historic contribution that the *Proposal* made to clarifying and deepening the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary line on *all* the fundamental questions facing the international working class.

War and Peace

> It is a pity [the *Proposal* points out] that although certain persons in the international communist movement talk about how much they love peace and hate war, they are unwilling to acquire even a faint understanding of the simple truth on war pointed out by Lenin...
>
> As Marxist-Leninists see it, war is the continuation of politics by other means, and every war is inseparable from the political system and the political struggles which give rise to it.[46]

The *Proposal* ridiculed the idea of opposing "war in general," which means "lumping just wars and unjust wars together."[47] Every type of war has its own class content, and every war must be analyzed dialectically. Imperialist war is the continuation of imperialist politics by other means; revolutionary war is the continuation of revolutionary politics by other means. A war such as that involving the U.S. in Vietnam was, on the side of the U.S. imperialists, an imperialist war of subjugation for the purpose of the exploitation and enslavement of the Vietnamese people and to fortify U.S. imperialism's overall enslavement, exploitation and plundering throughout the world; on the side of the Vietnamese people it was a revolutionary war of national liberation. Genuine Marxist-Leninists opposed the U.S. imperialist war and supported the revolutionary national liberation war. It was not a question of "opposing the war as a whole"—that is the standpoint of bourgeois pacifism.

An imperialist war to redivide the world, such as World War I, is a different matter. Here both "sides" in the conflict are imperialists—or part of an imperialist alliance (though there may be particular instances of just wars even within this overall context)—and Marxist-Leninists certainly would not support one or another side.

But this does not mean that the standpoint of Marxist-Leninists towards an imperialist war is simply to excoriate the imperialists and shout "a plague on both your houses!" Viewing such wars dialectically and in class terms, communists raise in all the imperialist countries the slogan of revolutionary defeatism and struggle to lead the working class and the masses of people in "turning the imperialist war into a civil war," with the aim of overthrowing the ruling classes in the imperialist countries.

Khrushchev's thesis that the new world situation arising out of World War 2 meant that it was possible to "usher in a world without war" with the imperialist system still intact was not new, even when he presented it at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956. Joseph Stalin, in his important work written shortly before his death, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, had polemicized against precisely this trend. In *Economic Problems*, Stalin defended Lenin's theses and explained the limited role that the "struggle for peace," which the revisionists wanted to blow up into a "strategy for revolution," could actually play:

> 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 foremost capitalist minds have been sufficiently taught by the two world wars and the severe damage they 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, wars between capitalist countries are no longer inevitable.

"These comrades are mistaken," Stalin pointed out. Mistaken, because the laws governing imperialism, the struggle for areas of capital export and markets, the desire and necessity on the part of imperialist powers to crush their competitors, the unwillingness of any imperialist power to remain forever in a secondary position to another, the inevitable challenge to the supremacy of the "top dog"—all these features of imperialism remained fully intact following World War 2, despite the temporary appearance of "stability" under the leadership of U.S. imperialism and the temporary submissiveness which the vanquished powers were forced to show towards the U.S.

"What guarantee is there, then," Stalin asks,

> that Germany and Japan will not rise to their feet again, will not attempt to break out of American bondage and live their own independent lives? I think there is no such guarantee.
>
> But it follows from this that the inevitability of wars between capitalist countries remains in force.
>
> It is said that Lenin's thesis that imperialism inevitably generates war must now be regarded as obsolete, since powerful popular forces have come forward today in defence of peace and against another world war. That is not true...
>
> What is most likely is that the present day peace movement, as a movement for the preservation of peace, will, if it succeeds, result in preventing a *particular* war, in its temporary postponement, in the temporary preservation of a *particular* peace...That, of course, will be good. Even very good. But all the same, it will not be enough to eliminate the inevitability of wars between capitalist countries generally. It will not be enough, because, for all the successes of the peace movement, imperialism will remain, continue in force—and, consequently, the inevitability of wars will also continue in force.
>
> To eliminate the inevitability of war, it is necessary to abolish imperialism.[48]

Stalin was speaking of general principles and long-term trends. The *Proposal,* however, does not focus on inter-imperialist war. There was virtually no immediate prospect of war between the different imperialist powers in 1963. When the *Proposal* speaks of world war, what is usually being referred to is a war launched by the U.S. imperialist bloc against the socialist countries. This had been a very real possibility since the end of World War 2; it had been addressed by Mao in his "Talk With Anna Louise Strong" and by many others within the socialist camp in the postwar period. Of course when inter-imperialist war did once again become a very real prospect, it would be the once-socialist USSR which would head one imperialist bloc. But this cannot be said to have been clear to anyone in 1963. Thus the way in which the questions concerning war and peace pose themselves at this time is not in terms of, "What should be the stand of communists toward and in an inter-imperialist war?", but in terms of what stand to take in the face of the imperialists' threat of launching a war upon the socialist camp. And here a crucial task of revolutionaries was to combat the bourgeois pacifism pushed by Khrushchevite revisionism, which tried to use the struggle against world war as an excuse to liquidate all wars, including national liberation struggles and revolutionary civil war, and which preached (and practiced) a policy of conciliation toward imperialism as the supposed path to peace.

In this context the *Proposal* addresses the Khrushchevite line that "revolutions are entirely possible without war," asking:

> Now which type of war are they referring to—a war of national liberation or a revolutionary civil war, or a world war?
>
> If they are referring to a war of national liberation or a revolutionary civil war, then this formulation is, in effect, opposed to revolutionary wars and to revolution.
>
> If they are referring to a world war, then they are shooting at a non-existent target. Although Marxist-Leninists have pointed out, on the basis of the history of the two world wars, that world wars inevitably lead to revolution, no Marxist-Leninist ever has held or ever will hold that revolution must be made through world war.[49]

Here the CPC was defending itself against Khrushchev's slander that the Chinese were pushing *for* a new world war. Although the *Proposal* does say "world wars inevitably lead to revolution," for the reasons mentioned, it does not focus on the prospect of inter-imperialist war. The relationship of revolution to such wars is a profound one, and it is worth a brief digression to review Lenin's line on this question in relationship to World War —a line which developed in opposition to the social-chauvinism of the opportunists of the Second International.

As the *Proposal* points out, the thesis that revolution can only be made during or after a major imperialist war is incorrect; such a thesis would lead to an opportunist strategy of "marking time" and then attempting to "step in" once a major conflict breaks out—a sure-fire formula for impotence both in time of peace and war.

But even before the outbreak of World War 1, the Basle Manifesto of 1912 foresaw the conversion of a war between countries into a civil war between classes, referring, for example, to the Paris Commune. In 1915, in the course of summing up the betrayal of the principles set forth in the Basle Manifesto by the Kautskyite opportunists, Lenin analyzed the relationship of imperialist war to revolution in the following terms:

> Let us consider the substance of the argument that the authors of the Basle Manifesto sincerely expected the advent of a revolution, but were rebutted by the events. The Basle Manifesto says: (1) that war will create an economic and political crisis; (2) that the workers will regard their participation in the war as a crime...and that war evokes "indignation and revolt" in the workers; (3) that it is the duty of socialists to take advantage of this crisis and of the workers temper so as to "rouse the people and hasten the downfall of capitalism"; (4) that all "governments" without exception can start a war only at "their own peril"; (5) that governments "are afraid of a proletarian revolution"; (6) that governments "should remember" the Paris Commune (i.e., civil war), the 1905 Revolution in Russia, etc. All these are perfectly clear ideas; they do not *guarantee* that revolution will take place, but lay stress on a precise characterization of *facts* and *trends.*[50]

Lenin then points out that the war *has*, in fact, given rise to a revolutionary situation:

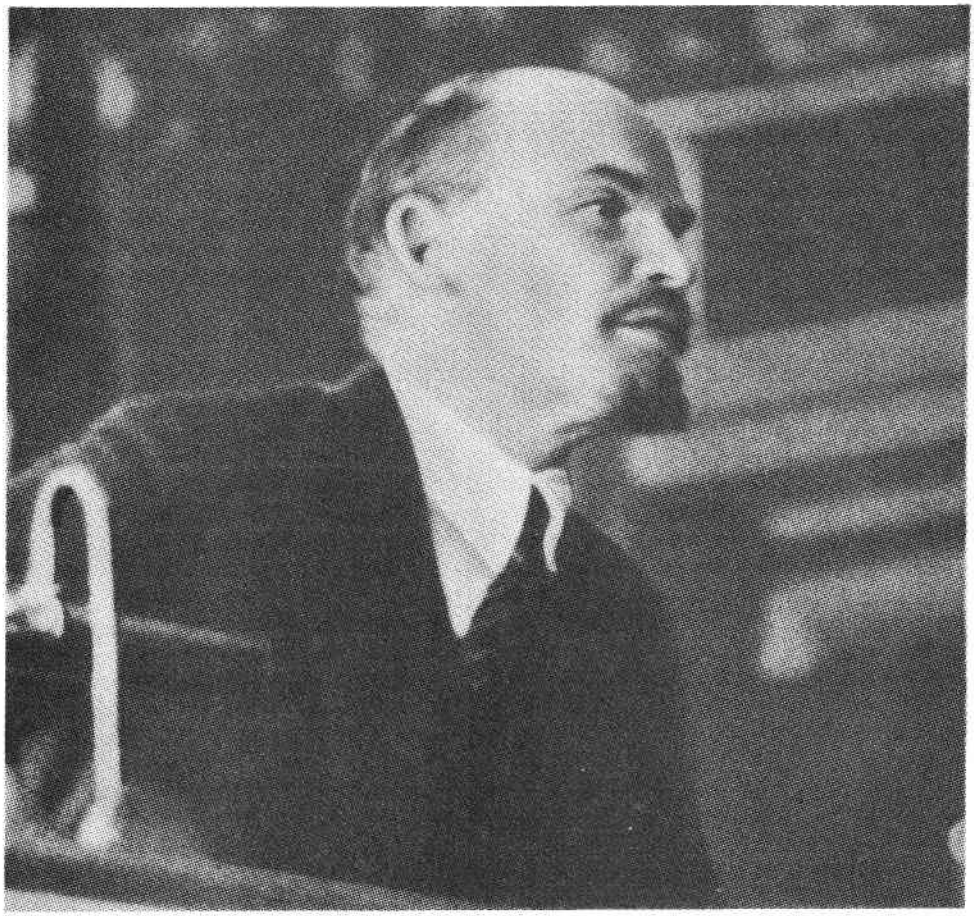
> ...A political crisis exists; no government is sure of the morrow...All governments are sleeping on a volcano...The entire political regime of Europe has been shaken, and hardly anybody will deny that we have entered...a period of immense political upheavals. When, two months after the declaration of war, Kautsky wrote...that "never is government so strong, never are parties so weak as at the outbreak of a war," this was a sample of the falsification of historical science which Kautsky has perpetrated to please the...opportunists. In the first place, never do governments stand in such need of agreement with all the parties of the ruling classes, or of the "peaceful" submission of the oppressed classes to that rule, as in the time of war. Secondly, even though "at the beginning of a war," and especially in a country that expects a speedy victory, the government *seems* all-powerful, nobody in the world has ever linked expectations of a revolutionary situation exclusively with the "beginning" of a war, and still less has anybody ever identified the "seeming" with the *actual.*[51]

Moreover, said Lenin,

> The longer the war drags on and the more acute it becomes, the more the governments themselves foster—and must foster —the activity of the masses...The experience of the war, like the experience of any crisis in history...stuns and breaks some people, but *enlightens and tempers others.* Taken by and large...the number and strength of the second kind of people have...proved greater than those of the former kind.[52]

"Will this [revolutionary] situation last long?" is the question Lenin poses next.

> How much more acute will it become? Will it lead to revolution? This is something we do not know, and nobody can know. The answer can be provided only by the *experience* gained during the development of revolutionary sentiment and the transition to revolutionary action by the advanced class, the proletariat ...no socialist has ever guaranteed that this war (and not the next one), that today's revolutionary situation (and not tomorrow's) will produce a revolution.



What we are discussing is the indisputable and fundamental duty of all socialists—that of revealing to the masses the existence of a revolutionary situation, explaining its scope and depth, arousing the proletariat's revolutionary consciousness and revolutionary determination, helping it to go over to revolutionary action, and forming, for that purpose, organizations suited to the revolutionary situation.[53]

This was the revolutionary program which Lenin advanced in opposition to the putrid social-chauvinist capitulation of the "heroes" of the Second International, and as the basis for coordination and joint action of the parties in different countries during the war. Such coordinated activity was essential, but Lenin insisted that it could come into being only on the basis of a thorough break with opportunism:

In spite of everything, there are revolutionary Social-Democratic elements in many countries. They are to be found in Germany, and in Russia, and in Scandinavia...in the Balkans, in Italy, in England and in France...To rally these Marxist elements—however small their numbers may be at the beginning—to recall in their name the now forgotten words of genuine Socialism, to call upon the workers of all countries to break with the chauvinists and to come under the old banner of Marxism—such is the task of the day...

In our opinion, the Third International should be built on precisely such a revolutionary basis. For our Party, the question as to whether it is expedient to break with the social-chauvinists does not exist. For it, this question has been irrevocably settled. The only question that exists for our Party is whether this can be achieved in the nearest future on an international scale...[54]

Historical experience has shown conclusively that imperialist war not only brings tremendous worldwide suffering and destruction to the masses of the people, but precisely because of this, because the nature of imperialism is so nakedly exposed, because such crises "make manifest what has been hidden...sweep away the political litter and reveal the real mainsprings of the *class struggle*..."[55] these wars also present the proletariat with the opportunity to deal the death blow to imperialism itself. As the *Proposal* points out, it is the international duty of communists to explain to the masses that it is impossible to bring about "a world without weapons, without armed forces, and without wars" while the system of imperialism still exists. It is, the *Proposal* affirms, precisely imperialism which is the source of wars. The communists of all countries must arm the masses with a correct, Marxist-Leninist understanding of the nature and source of imperialist war, and that only revolution can bring an end to war.

The *Proposal* also attacked the theory propagated by the revisionists that "general and complete disarmament" would be the fundamental road to world peace, saying: "...this is deliberately to deceive the people of the world and help the imperialists in their policies of aggression and war."[56] Lenin, in *Socialism and War*, pointed out that "the demand for disarmament, or more correctly, the dream of disarmament, is objectively, nothing but an expression of despair."

"Our slogan must be," Lenin wrote, "the arming of the proletariat for the purpose of vanquishing, expropriating and disarming the bourgeoisie."[57]

The *Proposal* also denied the imperialist-revisionist absurdity that nuclear weapons could invalidate the Leninist theses on war and revolution:

In the view of Marxist-Leninists, the people are the makers of history. In the present, as in the past, man is the decisive factor. Marxist-Leninists attach importance to the role of technological change, but it is wrong to belittle the role of man and exaggerate the role of technology.

The emergence of nuclear weapons can neither arrest the progress of human history nor save the imperialist system from its doom...

It cannot, therefore, be said that with the emergence of nuclear weapons the possibility and the necessity of social and national revolutions have disappeared, or the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, and especially the theories of proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat and of war and peace, have become outmoded and changed into stale "dogmas."[58]

In sum, the *Proposal Concerning the General Line* resolutely upheld and developed the Marxist-Leninist line on war and revolution at a time when this line was in danger of being buried under an avalanche of Khrushchevite revisionist cowardice and hysteria. What was true in Lenin's time and the point the Chinese Communist Party made in 1960 in their major, if indirectly addressed, salvo against Khrushchev ("Long Live Leninism!") remains profoundly true today:

We consistently oppose the launching of criminal wars by imperialism, because imperialist war would impose enormous sacrifices upon the people of various countries (including the people of the United States and other imperialist countries). But should the imperialists impose such sacrifices on the peoples of various countries, we believe that, just as the experience of the Russian revolution and the Chinese revolution shows, those sacrifices would be repaid. On the debris of a dead

imperialism, the victorious people would create very swiftly a civilization thousands of times higher than the capitalist system and a truly beautiful future for themselves.[59]

The Class Struggle Under Socialism

The theses in the *Proposal* on the question of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat represent both an unprecedented leap forward in grasping this complex and cardinal question, and, on the other hand, an intermediate stage in the development of Mao's line. The analysis put forward in the *Proposal* and other writings of that period (notably, *On Khrushchev's Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World*, the finale to the series of open polemics which the *Proposal* began), helped to blaze the trail leading to the Cultural Revolution.

"For a very long historical period after the proletariat takes power," the *Proposal* states,

> class struggle continues as an objective law independent of man's will, differing only in form from what it was before the taking of power...
>
> For decades or even longer periods after socialist industrialization and agricultural collectivization, it will be impossible to say that any socialist country will be free from those elements which Lenin repeatedly denounced, such as bourgeois hangers-on, parasites, speculators, swindlers, idlers, hooligans and embezzlers of state funds; or to say that a socialist country will no longer need to perform or be able to relinquish the task laid down by Lenin of conquering "this contagion, this plague, this ulcer that socialism has inherited from capitalism."[60]

Paraphrasing the "Basic Line" of the CCP, which Mao Tsetung formulated in 1962, the *Proposal* emphasizes that "it takes a very long historical period to settle the question of who will win—socialism or capitalism,"[61] and that throughout this entire period the class struggle would rage: "This struggle rises and falls in a wave-like manner, at times becoming very fierce, and the forms of the struggle are many and varied." [62]

Because of this, the *Proposal* emphatically insists, the dictatorship of the proletariat is essential throughout the entire historical period of socialism. Exposing Khrushchev's theory that the Soviet state was no longer a dictatorship of the proletariat but in fact a "state of the whole people," the *Proposal* poses the question:

> What will happen if it is announced, halfway through, that the dictatorship of the proletariat is no longer necessary?...
>
> Does this not license the development of "this contagion, this plague, this ulcer that socialism has inherited from capitalism"?...
>
> Anyone with an elementary knowledge of Marxism-Leninism can understand that the so-called "state of the whole people" is nothing new. Representative bourgeois figures have always called the bourgeois state a "state of all the people"...[63]

In refuting Khrushchev's thesis that classes no longer existed in the Soviet Union, the *Proposal* relied primarily on the wealth of perceptual phenomena that made such an assertion ridiculous:

> Since remnants of the old exploiting classes who are trying to stage a comeback still exist there, since new capitalist elements are constantly being generated there, and since there are still parasites, speculators, idlers, hooligans, embezzlers of state funds, etc., how can it be said that classes or class struggles no longer exist? How can it be said that the dictatorship of the proletariat is no longer necessary?[64]

In addition, the *Proposal* points to the existence of two kinds of ownership—collective ownership and ownership by the whole people—as well as individual ownership in all socialist countries. These differences, the contradiction between worker and peasant, and the fact that the communist principle of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need" was still far from realization (due to the existence of commodity exchange, a wage system, etc.) were all pointed to in the *Proposal* to convincingly demonstrate that the existence of classes was an objective fact; that this dictated the continuation of the class struggle, which would sometimes become very fierce; and that therefore the dictatorship of the proletariat was indispensable in order to avoid a reversion to capitalism.

These theses represented at that time the most developed theory of class struggle under socialism ever advanced. They represented not only a repudiation of Khrushchev, but a negation of the errors of Stalin, who as early as the 1930s argued that antagonistic classes had been eliminated in the USSR.

In *On Khrushchev's Phoney Communism*, which went more thoroughly into these questions with specific reference to the Soviet Union, the analysis is deepened further. There it is pointed out that:

> In the Soviet Union at present, not only have the new bourgeois elements increased in number...but their social status has fundamentally changed. Before Khrushchev came to power, they did not occupy the ruling positions in Soviet society. Their activities were restricted in many ways and they were subject to attack. But since Khrushchev took over, usurping the leadership of the Party and the state...the new bourgeois elements have gradually risen to the ruling position in the Party and government and in the economic, cultural, and other departments, and formed a privileged stratum in Soviet society. [65]

But, advanced as such an understanding was at that time, it was still insufficient to fully explain the process of capitalist restoration. And though the *Proposal* and *On Khrushchev's Phoney Communism* served as powerful weapons for combatting revisionism, further leaps needed to be made to reach a fully scientific understanding of the means for *preventing* that restoration. As Bob Avakian points out in *Mao Tsetung's Immortal Contributions*:

> ...In documenting the existence of bourgeois elements in the Soviet Union it [*On Khrushchev's Phoney Communism*] lays stress on illegal activities, such as profiteering, black marketing, illegal appropriation of collective property, etc. And in enumerating the sources of new bourgeois elements...it mentions (in addition to the overthrown exploiters and international capitalism) "political degenerates" that emerge among the working class and government functionaries and "new bourgeois intellectuals in the cultural and educational institutions..." as well as "new elements of capitalism" that are "constantly and spontaneously generated in the petty-bourgeois atmosphere."...But it does not identify the revisionists (capitalist roaders) in top leadership of the Party and state—including economic ministries and institutions—as a social stratum constituting a bourgeois class within socialist society itself and with its core right in the Communist Party. [66]

The leap in understanding Comrade Avakian refers to here was to take place in the flames of the Cultural Revolution and through the continuation of the long, bitter battle that raged in China up to and following Mao's death. The discovery that the class struggle is not merely one to defeat the "remnants of the broken classes" and their "agents" within the Communist Party, or to counter the intrigues and spy rings of international reaction, but to expose, defeat and uproot the new bourgeoisie which is concentrated at the top levels of the Party and state apparatus, is of world-historic significance to the cause of communism. It was only in early 1976, when the struggle against Teng Hsiaoping and his bloc was approaching a showdown, that Mao was first quoted as saying, "You are making the socialist revolution, and yet don't know where the bourgeoisie is. It is right in the Communist Party—those in power taking the capitalist road. The capitalist roaders are still on the capitalist road."[67]

The eventual defeat the proletariat suffered in China cannot efface the tremendous contributions Mao and the revolutionaries under his leadership made to the Marxist-Leninist line on continuing the revolution

under the dictatorship of the proletariat. One might quote the *Proposal* in this regard:

> Whoever considers a revolution can be made only if everything is plain sailing, only if there is an advance guarantee against sacrifices and failure, is certainly no revolutionary. [68]

"Some might argue," wrote Bob Avakian on this point,

> that if capitalist restoration occurs in China then this would show that Mao's theory of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat—as well as the Cultural Revolution which was the transformation of this theory into a tremendous material force on a mass scale—was basically flawed. This kind of thinking is nothing but empiricism and relativism. The correctness of this theory does not depend on the immediate results in any particular situation; it has been verified in practice, in the mass struggle of hundreds of millions of Chinese people, and will be further verified in the future in the revolutionary struggle not only in China but in every country. [69]

Revisionism the Main Danger

Summing up the lessons of the "revisionist trend flooding the international working-class movement," the *Proposal* forcefully refuted the Khrushchev-Tito refrain that "dogmatism is the main danger in the revolutionary ranks":

> Firm Marxist-Leninists and genuine Marxist-Leninist Parties must put principles first. They must not barter away principles, approving one thing today and another tomorrow, advocating one thing today and another tomorrow.
>
> Together with all Marxist-Leninists, the Chinese Communists will continue to wage an uncompromising struggle against modern revisionism in order to defend the purity of Marxism-Leninism... [70]

The *Proposal* laid heavy stress on the necessity of a genuine proletarian party in waging the revolutionary struggle. It threw down the gauntlet to the horde of revisionist vultures perched in the leadership of many communist parties, warning that "if the leading group in any Party adopt a non-revolutionary line and convert it into a reformist party, then Marxist-Leninists inside and outside the Party will replace them and lead the people in making revolution." [71]

Defence of Marxist-Leninist principle, for the revolutionary party, does not mean adherence to "dogmatic" recipes, but, as the *Proposal* put it, means being "able to integrate the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the revolution in its own country." [72] In fact, the *Proposal* exposed the actual links between dogmatism and the revisionist influence of the Khrushchevites.

The *Proposal* ridiculed those parties "that parrot the words of others, copy foreign experience without analysis, run hither and thither in response to the baton of certain persons abroad, and have become a hodge-podge of revisionism, dogmatism, and everything but Marxist-Leninist principle..." [73]

The revisionist hullabaloo about "the struggle against dogmatism" was condemned as a pretext, an excuse for casting aside the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism under the banner of "creatively developing Marxism-Leninism."

The *Proposal* laid great stress on the principle that "the development and victory of a revolution depend on the existence of a revolutionary proletarian party...built according to the revolutionary theory and revolutionary style of Marxism-Leninism." [74] It condemned those parties which wallowed in the mire of bourgeois reformism, tailing and capitulating to their own bourgeoisie.

The essential purpose of this section of the *Proposal* was to call on all genuine Marxist-Leninists to break away from and condemn the revisionist parties and to rally the revolutionary forces around the banner of Marxism-Leninism. The struggle which had begun in 1956 had reached the breaking point; the revisionist parties were termed "absolutely incapable of leading the proletariat and the masses in revolutionary struggle, absolutely incapable of winning the revolution and absolutely incapable of fulfilling the great historical mission of the proletariat."

"This is a question," the *Proposal* summarizes, "all Marxist-Leninists, all class conscious workers and all progressive people everywhere need to ponder deeply." [75]

Conclusion

"The Red Flag Must Be Hoisted After Debates!"

The course of the past 16 years has not only brilliantly confirmed but considerably deepened and enriched the conclusions of the *Proposal Concerning the General Line*. The years since 1963 have not been years of peaceful coexistence, peaceful submission and peaceful capitulation, the peace of the graveyard the revisionists wished to impose upon the international communist movement. They have been years of revolutionary struggle, which has rocked every corner of the globe. Following the publication of the *Proposal*, the struggle within the international communist movement entered a new stage. This, however, did not mean an ebb, but a further intensification of the struggle. The 1960s saw the advent of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, in which the working class scaled heights it had never reached before. The Cultural Revolution, too, is a part, and a very significant part, of the heritage of the international working class in its struggle for communism. We must seriously study our defeats as well as our victories, but the triumphs of our class worldwide, and not the temporary setbacks, are the main mileposts that stake out the course of our historic mission.

Mao Tsetung, the greatest revolutionary of our time, was a true internationalist who never ceased to uphold and propagate revolution and Marxism-Leninism, not only in China but throughout the world. The revival of the international communist movement on a genuinely revolutionary basis was due in large measure to his leadership, and to the living, breathing revolutionary example provided by People's China. Here was a socialism that did not reek of formaldehyde, here was a proletarian dictatorship where the cardinal task of the working class was revolution, class struggle, the overthrow of everything old and reactionary and mummified, and the ushering in of a new world.

The road ahead for the workers and oppressed people of the world today, and for the revolutionary communists who stand in the vanguard of the proletarian struggle, can only be a road leading still higher. To stand still or turn back is to perish, to be ground under the wheel of history, which must and will advance and won't stand still for anybody, no matter what "theoretical" justifications are advanced "proving" that it should.

We study this great struggle that shook the international communist movement, the struggle against Khrushchevite revisionism, as we study the whole legacy of Marxism-Leninism: to steel and unite our ranks today, to prepare for the even greater challenges of tomorrow.

"I have long aspired to reach for the clouds," Mao Tsetung wrote on the eve of the Cultural Revolution. He, too, as he prepared for this great battle, surveyed the past to draw strength for the future:

> ...Again I come from afar
> To climb Chingkangshan, our old haunt.
> Past scenes are transformed,
> Orioles sing, swallows swirl,
> Streams purl everywhere
> And the road mounts skyward.
> Once Huangyangshieh is passed
> No other perilous place calls for a glance.
>
> Wind and thunder are stirring,
> Flags and banners are flying
> Wherever men live.
> Thirty-eight years are fled
> With a mere snap of the fingers.
> We can clasp the moon in the Ninth Heaven
> And seize turtles deep down in the Five Seas:
> We'll return amid triumphant song and laughter.
> Nothing is hard in this world
> If you dare to scale the heights.

Appendix

CPC's Struggle Against Khrushchev: 1956-1963

In February of 1956, Nikita Khrushchev launched his all-out attack on Stalin in a frothing "secret" speech at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. As pointed out in the main body of this article, this attack, of course, was not on Stalin alone, but on Marxism-Leninism, of which Stalin, despite his errors, was still a powerful symbol. Through Khrushchev's revisionist attack on Stalin, he sought to negate the dictatorship of the proletariat and to clear the way for the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union. In addition, Khrushchev put forward a host of other revisionist theories, such as the theory of the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism through the parliamentary road, resurrecting Bernstein and Kautsky. He also proposed that, due to new radical changes in the world situation (principally the growing might of the socialist camp on the one hand, and the advent of nuclear weapons on the other, which Khrushchev held made war both unnecessary—for the imperialists and the revolutionary masses alike—and too dreadful to contemplate), it was possible to eliminate war prior to eliminating imperialism. Twisting the meaning of Lenin's principle of peaceful coexistence, Khrushchev transformed it from a principle of foreign relations between states with different social systems to a strategic orientation for capitulation to and collaboration with imperialism in carving up the world.

Khrushchev was counting on several factors to force the fraternal parties to accept a *fait accompli,* including the tremendous prestige of the Soviet Union as the first and most powerful socialist country, and the tendency that had developed over a long period of time for the Soviet Union to play the role of the "father party," which often meant that other parties (with some exceptions) blindly followed Soviet direction on fundamental questions. The fact that Stalin had made errors was misused to lend plausibility to the Khrushchevite theses. But most importantly, Khrushchev was relying on a social base, both within the CPSU and the parties around the world, which had already degenerated politically and was already pursuing a revisionist line on many questions.

It is a serious misconception to think that, before the Twentieth Congress, all was well in the Soviet Union or elsewhere. Even while Stalin was alive, a powerful developing stratum of new bourgeois elements had emerged within the party and state apparatus. And though Stalin waged struggle against these forces and the revisionist theories they advocated right up to his death, he also made serious mistakes which actually tended to foster these elements and give them openings.

Among the People's Democracies in Eastern Europe the rot of revisionism was widespread. Well before the Twentieth Congress, Khrushchev had set about consolidating his bourgeois social base in these countries. In 1954, he decided to "rehabilitate" Tito and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) which had been booted out as renegades from the socialist camp since 1948 and had been closely collaborating with U.S. imperialism and pursuing the path of all-out capitalist development for some time even before that. Khrushchev pictured Tito not as a counter-revolutionary but as a "victim of injustice," claiming that "under the influence of the agent Beria" wild charges had been fabricated.[1] In 1955, Khrushchev went to Belgrade and embraced Tito, announcing that Yugoslavia was a socialist country after all and that the LCY was a Marxist-Leninist party (with some "minor" vacillations).

Following the "Welcome Back Tito" movement ordered by Khrushchev, campaigns were conducted within other European parties to rehabilitate large numbers of similar renegades and oust large numbers of revolutionaries. Through these and other measures, as well as reliance on coercion and even the threat of military intervention, the Soviet revisionists were confident that they could pull the People's Democracies with them.

In the non-ruling Communist Parties, especially those of the West, a number of factors had combined to produce significant decay in the revolutionary will of some, and out-right revisionism in others (with the Togliatti-led Communist Party of Italy perhaps the most extreme case, but with several other parties, including the CPUSA, hot on Togliatti's heels).

This degeneration was by no means universal, however. Especially among the parties, both in and out of power, in those areas of the world where the national liberation struggles were raging, the revolutionary line was much stronger. The Indonesian Communist Party, the Vietnam Workers Party, the Korean and Japanese Parties, as well as other smaller parties around the world, did not leap to embrace Khrushchev's revisionism.

The Communist Party of China led by Mao Tsetung had, by 1956, already accumulated ample experience in acquiring a critical mind towards the "Soviet model" and the line of the CPSU on many questions. Stalin had been dead wrong on a number of key questions regarding the Chinese revolution, as he himself was to admit, and fierce two-line struggles had raged in the CPC against opportunists who in fact parroted errors in the Soviet line. During Khrushchev's 1954 visit to Peking, the Chinese side made clear to him that they took seriously the "principles of equality and mutual benefit" phrase in the Joint Communique describing relations between the two countries. The speeches of Chinese leaders later that year, while mentioning Soviet aid as a "favorable factor," stressed that "to bring about the socialist industrialisation of China and develop the national economy is clearly the proper duty of the Chinese people themselves."[2] Talk such as this was in sharp contrast to the view more prevalent in the socialist camp, as expressed, for example, in the following 1957 statement by none other than Enver Hoxha:

> The leading role of the Soviet Union in the international communist movement has become a historical reality due to the universal character of the Soviet experience itself. The fact that the Soviet Union has been transformed from the backward country it was before the revolution into a powerful industrial country with a highly developed culture ...prove[s] that the experience of the Soviet Union and the course it has followed are correct and of universal importance for all. The experience of the Soviet Union is not only the first but also the most brilliant example of the application of Marxism-Leninism.[3]

Aftermath of Twentieth Congress

Following the Twentieth Party Congress of the CPSU, the Chinese press, while formally hailing the successes of the Congess, contained nothing on the Stalin question. Then, on March 30th, *People's Daily* ran a translation of a *Pravda* editorial, "Why is the Cult of the Individual Alien to Marxism-Leninism?", which contained most of Khrushchev's slanders on Stalin. A week later, *People's Daily* ran a major editorial, "On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," which, while again in form upholding the Twentieth Congress, actually constituted a polemic against the *Pravda* piece and the attack on Stalin.

While not as full or correct as later writings of the Chinese Party on the subject, the article stressed Stalin's role as a continuator of Leninism, pointing out that "Stalin's works, as before, should still be seriously studied" and that "we should accept, as an important historical legacy, all that is of value in them, especially those many works in which he defended Leninism..."

"On the Historical Experience" constituted not only a polemic against the Khrushchev attack on Stalin (though necessarily couched in language formally upholding the congress), but obviously was also a polemic against elements within the CPC who sought to use the 20th Congress as a wedge to pry China itself off the socialist road. This point was raised obliquely by Mao at an expanded meeting of the CPC Political Bureau in April of 1956:

"The Soviet Union has already initiated a mass criticism campaign. Some of it is not suitable for our country nor the Soviet Union...We should not follow blindly, but should subject everything to analysis. There is good and bad in everything. We cannot say that everything the Soviet Union does is good. Now, people are saying that we have been following even what is bad. We should learn whatever is suitable for our use..."[4]

Meanwhile, events were moving rapidly in Eastern Europe. In June 1956, Tito was received with all honors in Moscow and signed an agreement with Khrushchev restoring diplomatic relations and pledging "mutual cooperation and exchange of views in the field of socialist scientific thought."[5]

This was the signal for a revisionist offensive throughout Eastern Europe, which was especially pronounced in Poland and Hungary. In Poland, Wladislaw Gomulka, who had been purged as a Titoite in the late '40s, was readmitted to the Party on August 4 and immediately assumed the leading role. In Hungary, Party First Secretary Rakosi, who had been under pressure from Moscow since 1955 for his refusal to endorse Tito, had issued the most lukewarm endorsement of the 20th Congress possible, and suggested that "only with the passage of time would it be possible to form a complete judgment." In July, he was removed from his post at the Plenum of the CC of the Hungarian Party. His successor was a compromise choice, but the strong pro-Tito faction in Hungary, which was allied with such proletarian leaders as Cardinal Midzendty, was already engaged in broad mass agitation demanding the return to power of Imre Nagy, a thoroughgoing counter-revolutionary revisionist who had been purged from the Hungarian Party in the late '40s and who had been organizing against the socialist state (for example, he was implicated in the plots of the infamous Petofi Club, an organization of intellectuals demanding a return to capitalism under the guise of "democracy").

In Poland, Gomulka's aim upon his accession to power was to secure Tito-like autonomy for Poland. Analysis of the Polish situation was complicated, however, because many forces were at work, and the mass rebellions which swept Poland in the summer and fall of 1956 (in which the Polish working class took a considerable part) were a result, not only of reactionary agitation by the Polish Catholic Church and other counter-revolutionaries, but also of the disastrous errors of the Polish Communist Party over a long period.

By October, the situations in both Poland and Hungary were showing signs of sweeping out of control. The possibility of both countries defecting to the Western bloc appeared real. Khrushchev panicked, massing troops on the border of Poland (Soviet troops were already stationed in Hungary). But Gomulka, through a sweeping series of economic concessions to the working class and political moves such as the release of the reactionary Cardinal Wyszinski, was able to calm the disorders while pledging loyalty to the Warsaw Pact and a policy of continued friendship with the Soviet Union. (While Gomulka at the same time posed to the Polish people as a patriotic national hero, he turned out to be one of the most slavish bootlickers in the developing Soviet satellite galaxy.)

The situation in Hungary, however, continued to intensify. By October 23, the Hungarian secret police were shooting students in the streets. That evening, Imre Nagy was appointed Prime Minister and re-elected to the Politburo of the Party. On November 1st, Nagy openly raised the flag of Western imperialism, renounced the Warsaw Pact, declared Hungarian neutrality, and asked for guarantees from the United Nations.

Khrushchev, who had nearly adopted the stance of simply crushing the Polish revolt by force of arms, lost his nerve and swung the other way. Fearing a showdown with the West, which was vigorously supporting the Hungarian counter-revolution, Khrushchev "intended to adopt a policy of capitulation and abandon socialist Hungary to counter-revolution," according to a Chinese article written in 1963.[6] The article, one of a series of polemics following the publication of *Proposal Concerning the General Line,* continues:

> In the face of this situation, the Chinese Communist Party and other fraternal Parties, persevering in Marxism-Leninism, firmly demanded repulsing the assaults of imperialism and reaction and safeguarding the socialist camp and the international communist movement. We insisted on the taking of all necessary measures to smash the counter-revolutionary rebellion in Hungary and firmly opposed the abandonment of socialist Hungary.[7]

Following the suppression of the Hungarian counter-revolution, the Chinese Communist Party issued a statement which noted that a large part of the disorders in Hungary and Poland was rooted in the great-nation chauvinist policies the Soviets had pursued towards the People's Democracies, and pointed out that "some of these socialist countries have been unable to build socialism better in accordance with their historical experience because of these mistakes."[8] The statement also distinguished between the just demands of the masses in Poland and Hungary and the intrigues of the counter-revolutionaries:

> ...the people of Poland and Hungary in the recent happenings have raised demands that democracy, independence, and equality be strengthened and the material well-being of the people be raised on the basis of developing production. These demands are completely proper. We consider it absolutely necessary to take note of this and to differentiate between the just demands of the broadest mass of the people and the conspiratorial activities of an extremely small number of reactionary elements. The question of uniting the broadest mass of the people in the struggle against an extremely small number of reactionary elements is not only a question for an individual socialist country, but one deserving attention by many socialist countries, including our country.[9]

Mao's Speech to Eighth CC

Two weeks after the suppression of the Hungarian counter-revolution, Mao addressed the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. In his speech, Mao summed up the recent struggles, broadened the attack on the line of the Twentieth Congress, and initiated a struggle against the powerful right-wing within the Chinese Communist Party headed by Liu Shao-chi.

Liu had given the Main Political Report at the Eighth Congress of the CPC in September. There, utilizing the revisionist theses of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, Liu had launched an attack on Mao's policy of unleashing the masses to collectivize agriculture and carry through socialist transformation, terming this a "left" deviation of "demanding that socialism be achieved overnight...not believing that we could attain the goal of socialist revolution by peaceful means," and failing to be based on "achieving socialism by means of state capitalism." On the international situation, Liu again echoed Khrushchev, babbling about "lasting world peace as a real possibility," and alleging that "Even inside the ruling circles of the United States, there is a section of more sober-minded people who are becoming more and more aware that the policy of war may not, after all, be to America's advantage....Facts prove that the iron curtain is not on our side; our doors are open to all."

In his conclusion, Liu attempted to promote slavish dependence on the Soviet Union without even mentioning self-reliance, warning that "without their support our socialist cause cannot advance to victory...We must continue to learn from the experience of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist Parties of all other countries in regard to revolution and construction."[10]

So it was in the context of a revisionist offensive at home as well as abroad that Mao

spoke before the Second Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee in 1956. Mao took up four subjects: the economy, the international situation, Sino-Soviet relations, and "the question of great and small democracy."

Mao defended the mass movements for the collectivization of agriculture and ridiculed those attempting to pour cold water on the enthusiasm of the cadre and the masses, likening them to "committees for promoting retrogression." Mao laid stress on the task of suppression of counter-revolutionaries, pointing out sarcastically,

> If we did not suppress counter-revolutionaries, the working people would be unhappy. So would the oxen and the hoes, and even the land would feel uncomfortable, because the peasants who put the oxen, the hoes, and the land to use would be unhappy. Therefore, some counter-revolutionaries must be executed, others arrested, and still others put under public supervision.[11]

On the uprisings in Poland and Hungary, Mao pointed out that:

> The fundamental problem with some East European countries is that they have not done a good job of waging class struggle and have left so many counter-revolutionaries at large; nor have they trained their proletariat in class struggle to help them learn how to draw a clear distinction between the people and the enemy, between right and wrong and between materialism and idealism. And now they have to reap what they have sown, they have brought the fire upon their own heads.[12]

At the same time, Mao said,

> I think these bad things are good things too...Since there is fire in Poland and Hungary, it will blaze up sooner or later. Which is better, to let the fire blaze, or not to let it? Fire cannot be wrapped up in paper. Now that fires have blazed up, that's just fine. In this way, numerous counter-revolutionaries have exposed themselves.[13]

It was in this speech that Mao, who at that time was pondering and rethinking the whole theory of class struggle under socialism in the light of the recent shocks and upheavals, raised the question, "Will there still be revolutions in the future when all the imperialists in the world are overthrown and classes eliminated?"[14] Could, as he put it, a Gomulka still come to power or a Jao Shushih (a counter-revolutionary exposed in China around the time of Mao's speech) be propped up? Mao's conclusion was in the affirmative, but his reckoning had more to do with the situation at that moment than with the distant future.

In the next breath, Mao turned to the question of the Soviet Union. He accused the Soviets, at their Twentieth Congress, of not only having thrown down "the sword of Stalin," but also of discarding "the sword of Lenin" to a considerable extent.[15] He went on to say:

> In both our democratic revolution and our socialist revolution, we have mobilized the masses to wage class struggle in the course of which we have educated the people. It is from the October Revolution that we have learned to wage class struggle...
>
> How much capital do you have? Just Lenin and Stalin. Now you have abandoned Stalin and practically all of Lenin as well, with Lenin's feet gone, or perhaps with only his head left, or with one of his hands cut off. We, on our part, stick to studying Marxism-Leninism and learning from the October revolution...Not to rely on the masses in waging class struggle and not to make a clear distinction between the people and the enemy—that would be very dangerous.[16]

Mao directly referred to "cadres of higher and middle rank" within the CPC who were collaborating more or less directly with the CPSU, what Mao termed "maintaining illicit relations with foreign countries":

> This is not good...this kind of business must stop. We don't approve of some of the things done in the Soviet Union, and the Central Committee has already said this to the Soviet leaders several times; some questions on which we have not touched will be taken up later. If they are to be taken up, it should be done by the Central Committee. As for information, don't try to pass it on...those engaged in such activities put themselves in an awkward position...[17]

Then, while attacking those who put up the slogan of "great democracy" as a means of establishing a bourgeois dictatorship, Mao began to lay the basis for the Hundred Flowers Movement and the anti-rightist campaign of the following year, saying in his characteristic style,

> We are in favor of great democracy. And what we favor is great democracy under the leadership of the proletariat...there are people who seem to think that, as state power has been won, they can sleep soundly without any worry and play the tyrant at will. The masses will oppose such persons, throw stones at them and strike at them with their hoes, which will, I think, serve them right and will please me immensely. Moreover, sometimes to fight is the only way to solve the problem. The Communist Party needs to learn a lesson. Whenever students and workers take to the streets, you comrades should regard it as a good thing.[18]

"More on the Historical Experience..."

At the Second Plenary Session, the revisionist group within the Central Committee of the CPC was forced to retreat, and Mao and his followers gained the upper hand. As a result, *More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat* appeared in the Chinese press on December 29, 1956, sending shock waves not only throughout China but throughout the international communist movement.

Though designed to avoid the appearance of a direct attack on the Soviet Union, and despite taking some positions that are questionable or wrong, the line of argument the article took flew in the face of everything Khrushchev had done at the Twentieth Congress, and this was not lost on its readers. "We must never forget the stern struggle with the enemy, i.e., the class struggle on a world scale," it said, and it pointed out that the contradictions with the imperialist camp, far from lessening, were sharpening and becoming "a still more pronounced feature of world politics."[19]

The article for the first time put forward the thesis that the contradictions among the people in socialist society could be transformed into contradictions between the enemy and the people, a theme Mao was shortly to develop as part of his full theory of the class struggle under socialism. Significantly, *More on the Historical Experience* analyzed and summed up the universal validity of the Leninist road of the October revolution, emphasizing the leading role of the Party, revolutionary armed struggle to seize power, the dictatorship of the proletariat to crush the resistance of the exploiting classes and lead the masses forward to communism, and the importance of proletarian internationalism, in which the socialist state "strives to win the help of the laboring people of all countries, and at the same time strives to help them and all oppressed nations."[20]

Posing the universal significance of the October road in this way was an important advance, because it made possible the dialectical analysis which differentiated what is universal in the Soviet experience from what is particular to it. After defending the universal significance of the October revolution, the article points out that "all nations pass through the class struggle, and will eventually arrive at communism, by roads that are the same in essence but different in specific form ...indiscriminate and mechanical copying of experience that has been successful in the Soviet Union—let alone that which was unsuccessful there—may lead to failure in another country."[21]

Although showing some unclarity on the Tito question, *More on the Historical Experience* also initiated a tradition of using Yugoslavia as a "stand-in" for Khrushchev and the Soviet Union that would continue through 1962:

...Comrade Tito made assertions about "those hard-bitten Stalinist elements who in various Parties have managed still to maintain themselves in their posts and who would again wish to consolidate their rule and impose those Stalinist tendencies upon their people,and even others." We feel it necessary to say in connection with these views of Comrade Tito's that he took up a wrong attitude when he set up the so-called "Stalinists" as objects of attack and maintained that the question now was whether the course "begun in Yugoslavia" or the so-called "Stalinist course" would win out. This can only lead to a split in the communist movement...[22]

The article also contained an explosive paragraph in defense of Stalin, with the famous assertion that

> even if people must speak of "Stalinism," this can only mean, in the first place, communism and Marxism-Leninism, which is the main aspect; and secondarily it contains certain extremely serious mistakes which go against Marxism-Leninism and must be thoroughly corrected...In our opinion Stalin's mistakes take second place to his achievements.[23]

So by the end of 1956 the great battle was already taking form; the two sides were marshalling their forces and sharpening their weapons for a protracted, life-and-death conflict. The possible consequences, and what was at stake, were clearer to nobody than to Mao Tsetung, and he was preparing the Party and the people already, arming them ideologically for the struggles ahead.

"We wish a peaceful world," he said at a meeting of Provincial Secretaries in January 1957,

> but we must put ourselves in the worst position and be prepared for major disasters. We came from Yenan and must be prepared to return there...we should be prepared to return to Yenan because of the atomic bomb, a possible world war, blunders committed and the Hungarian incident. If in our thinking we are prepared for the worst, we need not have fear. If we are unprepared, we are bound to regret it."[24]

The Moscow Conference

In October, 1957, Mao Tsetung led the Chinese delegation to Moscow for talks with Soviet leaders. The purpose of the talks was to hammer out a draft declaration on the major questions facing the international communist movement, to be presented to the Meeting of Representatives of Communist and Workers' Parties scheduled for the following month.

There were sharp and protracted struggles between the Chinese and Soviet sides on a number of questions of principle during these preparatory talks. Mao was faced with the complicated task of ensuring that the Declaration finally submitted for adoption by the fraternal parties was fundamentally a revolutionary document, while at the same time avoiding a breakdown in the talks and a split in the communist movement, which would have been incorrect at that time.

Waging sharp struggle on fundamental questions while being acutely conscious of the necessity to struggle for and protect unity was Mao's consistent policy during the entire period leading up to the final, inevitable rupture with the Soviet Union, and this necessitated the use of considerable diplomacy as well as staunchness of principle. Mao foresaw the possiblity of a split, and undertook the task of preparing for such an eventuality years before the open break in 1963. At the same time, he was well aware that the struggle to overcome serious differences and attain unity is itself an important principle. The agenda of the advance meeting in Moscow included discussions of economic development of the socialist bloc, the "struggle for peace and socialism," relations between the fraternal parties, and the international situation. But the focal point of controversy was the question of the transition from capitalism to socialism. After a long period of stormy debate in which, apparently, many drafts were submitted and rejected on both sides, the Soviets were forced to concede some changes in their original proposal, which "said not a word about non-peaceful transition, mentioning only peaceful transition," and "described peaceful transition as 'securing a majority in parliament...' "[25]

Despite the changes, however, the formulation remained feeble. Conceding the point "only out of consideration for the repeatedly expressed wish of the leaders of the CPSU that the formulation should show some connection with that of the 20th Congress of the CPSU,"[26] the Chinese side nevertheless submitted a separate memorandum to the CPSU Central Committee, the *Outline of Views on the Question of Peaceful Transition.*[27] The *Outline*, while itself, out of considerations of tact, not entirely dismissing the possibility of peaceful transition, reduced all talk of it merely to a tactical ploy designed to "enable the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries to sidestep attacks on them on this issue." (A lame argument indeed, but again, one introduced solely as a formality. Sometimes the circumlocutions the Chinese were forced to resort to in order to avoid openly ridiculing the Soviet position reached the edge of hilarity and themselves became a form of ridicule.)

What follows is the meat of the *Outline*:

> ...The bourgeoisie will not step down from the stage of history voluntarily. This is a universal law of class struggle. In no country should the proletariat and the Communist Party slacken their preparations for the revolution in any way...
>
> To the best of our knowledge, there is still not a single country where this possibility [peaceful transition] is of any practical significance...[28]

Although the final formulation in the Declaration was unsatisfactory, the struggle around the question of "peaceful transition" made it unambiguously clear to the Soviets that the CPC, while prepared to uphold the unity of the communist movement, also had its own, sharply conflicting line and was also prepared to adhere to principle. In addition, a number of other significant changes were made in the revisionist CPSU draft declaration:

> The main additions were the thesis that U.S. imperialism is the center of world reaction and the sworn enemy of the people, the thesis that if imperialism should unleash a world war it would doom itself to destruction...the thesis that the seizure of political power by the working class is the beginning of the revolution and not its end; the thesis that it will take a fairly long time to solve the question of who will win—capitalism or socialism, the thesis that the existence of bourgeois influence is an internal source of revisionism, while surrender to imperialist pressure is its external force; and so on.[29]

The Declaration also proclaimed that "revisionism is the main danger" within the revolutionary ranks, while qualifying that statement, at the insistence of the CPSU, by stating also that dogmatism could become the main danger in any specific country at any time.

The upshot of the struggle at the Moscow meeting was a Declaration in which many of Khrushchev's theses appeared, but in a considerably attenuated form, while other sections contradicted them and provided a substantial ground for the revolutionaries to both support the Declaration and continue to wage the struggle against revisionism, using the Declaration as a weapon. The section on war and the international situation in particular reflected the impact of this struggle. But more significantly, Mao Tsetung himself addressed the full session of the conference on November 18, and there laid out, in his historic "East Wind, West Wind" speech, a strategic assessment of the international situation and the tasks of the communists.

Analyzing the changes in international relations since World War 2, Mao said:

> It is my opinion that the international situation has now reached a new turning point. There are two winds in the world today, the East wind and the West wind. There is a Chinese saying, "Either the East wind prevails over the West wind or the West wind prevails over the East wind." It is characteristic of the situation today, I believe, that the East wind is prevailing over the West wind. That is to say, the forces of socialism are over-

whelmingly superior to the forces of imperialism.[30]

Mao adduced a number of recent international events to support this assessment, ranging from the victory of the Soviet Union in World War 2 and the qualitative weakening of the imperialist camp that occurred as a result of that war, to the victories of the Chinese revolution and the Vietnamese and Korean revolutions, and to the high tide of national-liberation struggles that had forced the collapse of the British and French colonial empires. Mao's analogy represented in one sense a summation of the actual balance of forces then prevailing in the world (the combined might of the socialist camp and the anti-imperialist forces of the world versus imperialism), but more profoundly, Mao was referring to the dialectical course of historical development, to the fact that the era of imperialism is the era of proletarian revolution on a world scale, in which the proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries together with the oppressed peoples of the world will shatter and defeat imperialism completely—a course of development which cannot be shaken by any temporary setback.

From this general assessment, Mao forcefully drew the conclusion that the strategy of the world revolutionary struggle should not be to pull back and make compromises with imperialism, fearing to confront it, and in fact attempting to stamp out revolutionary struggle under the signboard of peaceful coexistence, peaceful competition, and the "struggle for peace," as the revisionist camp was stressing. This, Mao pointed out explicitly, was nothing but a strategy of capitulation and groveling before the imperialists. Mao specifically addressed the question of thermonuclear war, which Khrushchev alleged to have invalidated Marxist-Leninist theory on the question of war and revolution:

> The question has to be considered for the worst. The political bureau of our Party has held several sessions to discuss this question...Let us imagine how many people will die if war should break out? Out of the world's population of 2700 million, one third—or, if more, half—may be lost...the other half would remain while imperialism would be razed to the ground and the whole world would become socialist; in a number of years there would be 2700 million people again and definitely more...if imperialism insists on fighting a war we will have no alternative but to make up our minds and fight to the finish before going ahead with our construction. If every day you are afraid of war and war eventually comes, what will you do then? [31]

Mao then recalled his famous interview with Anna Louise Strong in 1946, resurrecting and deepening his thesis that "imperialism and all reactionaries are paper tigers." The essence of Mao's talk boiled down to two points: One, it was possible to avoid a world war in the forseeable future, due to the actual situation in the world and the balance of forces then prevailing, without tying the hands of the revolutionaries and moderating the all-out revolutionary struggle against imperialism; two, even if a world war should break out, though such an event would entail tremendous suffering and sacrifice, the result "will be to hasten the complete destruction of the world capitalist system." [32]

The theses in Mao's speech made a considerable impact on the Moscow Declaration. The Moscow Declaration, while necessarily a compromise document, ended up considerably more Leninist than the Soviet leaders would have liked.

From the Moscow Conference to "Long Live Leninism!"

The two-line struggle in the international communist movement entered a new stage in May of 1958 when, on the 140th anniversary of Marx's birth, China's *People's Daily* uncorked an incendiary polemical assault against Titoite revisionism. The League of Communists of Yugoslavia had circulated a Draft Programme earlier that year which not only "creatively developed" Khrushchev's theses, but advanced the notion of capitalism spontaneously growing into socialism, and posed the task of the working class as that of competing with the monopolists to gain the predominant position in the state bureaucracy.

The Chinese polemic against Tito, which was undertaken without Moscow's approval, forced Khrushchev into the position of either backing Tito or the CPC; for the time being, he chose the latter course out of necessity. Within a month, the verdict imposed by Stalin against Tito in 1948 (which the Chinese held up as "basically correct" in their May 5th editorial) was back in place.

The new chill in relations between Belgrade and Moscow had the effect of dramatically improving the state of things between Moscow and Tirana. Ever since 1948, when the Cominform resolution condemning Yugoslavia "saved Albania from enslavement," [33] Enver Hoxha had viewed Albania's relationship to the Soviet Union as a means to parry Tito's various designs to turn Albania into the "seventh Yugoslav Republic." Hoxha's disenchantment with Khrushchev began when Khrushchev started to curry favor with Belgrade; the denunciation of Stalin at the 20th Congress came as a bitter blow, particularly because Hoxha feared that Khrushchev's new policy would seal the doom that Stalin had so unexpectedly averted in 1948.

In late 1956, following the turmoil in Hungary and Poland, Hoxha led a delegation to Moscow. The talks there concerned Albania's fears and reservations regarding Tito, whose role as "Pied Piper" of the Hungarian counter-revolution filled the Albanians with apprehension. The talks "were not to our liking," Hoxha reported to a meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the PLA, but they were forced to swallow their pride and endure various slights at the hands of the Russians.

In May 1959, when tension between the CPSU and the CPC was already approaching the breaking point, Khrushchev paid a nine-day visit to Albania. Foreign observers at that time speculated on what could have kept the Soviet leader so long in Tirana. As it turned out, Khrushchev had arranged a separate, secret meeting in Tirana with Marshal Peng Teh-huai, the Minister of Defense of the People's Republic of China.

Peng, an ally of Liu Shao-chi, had long been one of the most vociferous and unalloyed advocates of the pro-Soviet wing of the Chinese leadership. A champion of strict adherence to the Soviet model of army-building and the theory that "weapons decide everything," Peng pinned his hopes on massive Soviet technical and military assistance. Bitterly opposed to the anti-rightist campaign of 1957, and the Great Leap Forward and people's commune movement launched in 1958, Peng saw eye-to-eye with Khrushchev on many things.

Khrushchev had criticized the People's Commune movement directly on a number of occasions, in unison with Marshal Tito. On November 23, 1958, four days following the CPC resolution formally approving and spurring forward the great mass movement begun earlier that year, Tito registered the opinion that the Communes "had nothing in common with Marxism." On December 1, Khrushchev told no less a Marxist than U.S. Senator Hubert H. Humphrey that the Communes were "old fashioned" and "reactionary." At the 21st Congress of the CPSU, held at the beginning of 1959, Khrushchev made several implied attacks on the communes, which, as one author put it, referred to "his concern about 'economic maladjustment,' 'over-arrogance,' 'equalitarian communism,' and other such euphemisms for the Chinese experiment." [34] At the same time, while delivering a standard criticism of Yugoslav revisionism, Khrushchev left the door open to Tito while in the next breath tossing him a piece of meat:

> ...The Soviet Communists and the whole Soviet people have friendly feelings for the fraternal peoples of Yugoslavia and for the Yugoslav Communists. The Soviet Union will continue to work for cooperation with Yugoslavia in all questions of the struggle against imperialism for peace in which our positions will coincide...
>
> While continuing to expose revisionism as the main threat within the Communist movement, the struggle against dogmatism and sectarianism must go on unabated, for they impede the creative application of Marxist-Leninist theory and

lead away from the masses...[35]

A Soviet government statement of 1963 summarizes the Khrushchev position on the Great Leap Forward:

> ...Precisely because the interests of the Chinese people are dear to us, we were upset by the turn which became apparent in the development of the Chinese national economy in 1958, when the leaders of the People's Republic of China proclaimed their line of the "Three Red Banners," announced the "Great Leap" and began setting up People's Communes. Our party saw that this was a road of dangerous experiments, a road of disregard for economic laws and for the experience of other socialist states...We could not fail to feel alarmed when, with every step they took, the leaders of the People's Republic of China began to pour abuse on the Leninist principle of material incentive, abandoned the principle of remunerating labour, and went over to equalitarian distribution in Peoples Communes...[36]

Mao's policies represented not only a "Great Leap" in the class struggle within China but a clear sign that the Chinese had no intention of becoming a dependency of the Soviet Union. This Khrushchev found intolerable. The CPC was also going out of its way to botch Khrushchev's foreign policy of "peaceful collaboration" with U.S. imperialism, the key link of which was the hoped-for summit conference with Eisenhower which Khrushchev had been angling for since 1958.

In the summer of 1958, British and American troops invaded Lebanon, and it appeared for a time that the intention of the Western powers was to mount also an invasion of Iraq, where an anti-imperialist struggle was in progress. Khrushchev, in the heat of the crisis, played a groveling role, appealing to President Eisenhower in the following terms:

> ...We address you not from a position of intimidation but from a position of reason. We believe at this momentous hour that it would be more reasonable not to bring the heated atmosphere to the boiling point; it is sufficiently inflammable as it is.[37]

At the same time, a quite different message issued from Peking:

> There cannot be the slightest indulgence towards American imperialism's act of aggression...Therefore let the people of the whole world take emergency action...
>
> "Nothing can be saved by yielding to evil, and coddling wrong only helps the devil." ...if the U.S.-British aggressors refuse to withdraw from Lebanon and Jordan, and insist on expanding their aggression, then the only course left to the people of the world is to hit the aggressors on the head![38]

On the heels of the Middle East crisis came the confrontation in the Taiwan Straits. On August 23, the Chinese began an all-out heavy bombardment of Quemoy and Matsu, two offshore islands held by the Chiang Kai-shek regime. American Secretary of State John Foster Dulles adopted a highly belligerent tone, including threatening nuclear war against the People's Republic of China, and it became clear that the U.S. was preparing to give military support to Chiang.

For an entire week, the only sound emanating from Moscow was that of frightened heavy breathing—odd behavior for a "close socialist ally" bound by a military alliance with China. Finally, on August 31, Khrushchev timidly offered that "anyone who tried to threaten an attack on the Chinese People's Republic must not forget that he is also threatening the Soviet Union." Only a week later, when the crisis had finally ebbed, did Khrushchev issue a tougher statement, to the effect that an attack on China was an attack on the Soviet Union. As the crisis continued to fade, Khrushchev issued more and ever tougher statements—the behavior of a blustering fool vainly seeking to cover the traces of his cowardice.

By the end of 1958, it was clear to Khrushchev that Mao had no intention of cooperating, and in fact was becoming a formidable threat to his whole revisionist strategy, both within the communist movement and the arena of global power relations. And within China, Khrushchevites such as Peng Teh-huai were simultaneously coming to the conclusion that Mao had to be stopped, if not overthrown completely.

Such is the background to the charming tete-a-tete in Tirana between Nikita Khrushchev and Peng Teh-huai in May of 1959.

Peng came to the Tirana meeting prepared, with a long paper that amounted to a manifesto against Mao and his whole line, focusing on the Great Leap Forward and the People's Communes. Peng presented this to Khrushchev, without the knowledge of Mao, and sought Khrushchev's support. Khrushchev enthusiastically backed Peng in a bid to overthrow the revolutionary leadership of the Chinese Communist Party.[39]

Shortly after his return to China, Peng openly raised the flag of revisionism at the famous Lushan Plenum of the CPC Central Committee in August of 1959. Rallying his powerful social base, especially in the military, and striking an alliance with rightist elements in the economic ministries, Peng sought not only to overthrow the revolutionary line, but, apparently, Mao and the other revolutionary leaders on the Central Committee. His defeat, after a long and bitter struggle at Lushan, came at a critical time not only in the class struggle in China, but in the intensifying struggle between Marxism and revisionism within the international communist movement.

The Lushan Plenum served to consolidate the revolutionary line throughout the Chinese Party, and the Right was forced to temporarily retreat. In the anti-rightist campaign which followed, the masses of Party members and the broad masses of people were further steeled and tempered in anticipation of the even more stormy battles that were fast approaching; and the fundamental line questions were enunciated with more clarity than ever before.

> That the revolutionary combatants of the proletariat are not afraid of difficulties [a *Red Flag* editorial of September 1 said] is because they believe in and rely upon the strength of the masses. Like all other revolutionary undertakings of the people, the socialist undertaking belongs to the millions of the masses of the people themselves. The Marxist-Leninists have always attacked the view which has regarded the revolution as a proposal first thought of by a small number of persons behind closed doors and then followed by the masses acting on orders. In essence, such a viewpoint is bourgeois. Lenin once said, "History generally, and the history of revolutions in particular, is always richer in content, more varied, more many-sided, more lively and 'subtle' than even the best parties and the most class-conscious vanguards of the most advanced classes can imagine...Revolutions are made, at moments of particular upsurge and the exertion of all human capacities, by the class consciousness, will, passion and imagination of tens of millions, spurred on by a most acute struggle of classes."[40]

In a sense, this passage and the stirring quote from Lenin can be taken to concentrate the essence of the many volumes of polemics which were to follow. Marxism-Leninism derives its force and being from the tidal strength of the masses, draws on the deepest currents of the movement, and, at the peak of the upsurge, rears up a great wave of revolution sweeping everything before it.

Nevertheless, there inevitably appears on the battered coast some gesticulating Canute like Khrushchev, convinced that this rushing shore-bound torrent must retreat before his command. In April of 1960, on the anniversary of Lenin's birth, the gathering storm sounded with the force of a typhoon with the publication of *Long Live Leninism!*

From *Long Live Leninism!*" to *Proposal Concerning the General Line*

Long Live Leninism!, which appeared in the theoretical journal *Red Flag* in April of 1960, served essentially as a formal declara-

tion of war on the entire revisionist trend headed by Khrushchev. Running more than fifteen thousand words, and written in a militant, slashing style, the polemic dealt with all the fundamental questions of the two-line struggle more sharply and openly than ever before. While still using Tito as the whipping boy and not attacking Khrushchev or the CPSU by name, Khrushchev's theses *were* all attacked by name.

A thorough review of *Long Live Leninism!* would be a lengthy task. But the greatest immediate impact of the polemic was around the question of war and peace. The article poured ridicule on those "communists" who advocated cowardly capitulation in the face of imperialist missile-rattling; it thunderingly reaffirmed the doctrine of proletarian revolution:

> The U.S. imperialists and their partners use weapons like atom bombs to threaten war and blackmail the whole world. They declare that anyone who does not submit to the domination of U.S. imperialism will be destroyed...The Tito clique echoes this line, it takes up the U.S. imperialist refrain to spread terror of atomic warfare among the masses...
>
> Of course, whether or not the imperialists will unleash a war is not determined by us; we are, after all, not chiefs-of-staff to the imperialists...if the U.S. or other imperialists...should dare to fly in the face of the will of all humanity by launching a war using atomic and nuclear weapons, the result will be the very speedy destruction of these monsters encircled by the peoples of the world, and the result will certainly not be the annihilation of mankind...
>
> We believe in the absolute correctness of Lenin's thinking: War is an inevitable outcome of systems of exploitation and the source of modern wars is the imperialist system. Until the imperialist system and the exploiting classes come to an end, wars of one kind or another will always occur. They may be wars among the imperialists for redivision of the world...or wars between the imperialists and the oppressed nations, or civil wars of revolution and counter-revolution between the exploited and exploiting classes in the imperialist countries, or, of course, wars in which the imperialists attack the socialist countries and the socialist countries are forced to defend themselves. All these kinds of war represent the continuation of the policies of definite classes...[41]

Long Live Leninism! bitterly condemned the attempt to twist the principle of "peaceful coexistence" between countries with different social systems into a ban on revolution:

> Peaceful coexistence of nations and people's revolutions in various countries are in themselves two different things, not one and the same thing; two different concepts, not one; two different kinds of question, and not one and the same kind of question.
>
> Peaceful coexistence refers to relations between states, revolution means the overthrow of the oppressors as a class by the oppressed people within each country, while in the case of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, it is first and foremost a question of overthrowing alien oppressors, namely the imperialists.
>
> ...It was that old revisionist Bernstein who made this shameful and notorious statement: "The movement is everything, the final aim is nothing." The modern revisionists have a similar statement: The peace movement is everything, the aim is nothing. Therefore, the "peace" they talk about is in practice limited to the "peace" which may be acceptable to the imperialists under certain historical conditions. It attempts to lower the revolutionary standards of the peoples of various countries and destroy their revolutionary will.[42]

From the time of the publication of *Long Live Leninism!* the struggle in the international communist movement grew increasingly open and intense. A number of international gatherings, including the General Council of the World Federation of Trade Unions two months after *Long Live Leninism!* was published (that is, in June 1960) became arenas where the line struggle was waged without let-up. Khrushchev addressed the Third Congress of the Rumanian Communist Party in late June, and in his speech blubbered that "millions of people might burn in the conflagration of hydrogen explosions." Defending himself against *Long Live Leninism!* he was reduced to muttering that "it should not be forgotten that Lenin's propositions on imperialism were advanced and developed decades ago...Besides, comrades, one cannot repeat mechanically now on this question what Vladimir Ilyich Lenin said many decades ago about imperialism, and go on asserting that imperialist wars are inevitable until socialism triumphs throughout the world..." [43]

In August a *Pravda* article opposed the "left sectarian" views expressed in the Chinese polemic with the brilliant argument: "Why construct, build, create, if one knows in advance that all the fruits of one's labor will be destroyed by the tornado of war?" [44]

On August 13 the Soviets began withdrawing their technicians from the People's Republic of China. *Long Live Leninism!* had hit the revisionists where it hurt. They were forced on the defensive and had to resort to ludicrous "replies" like those given above, at the same time as they futilely attempted to use great-nation bullying and economic coercion to force Mao and the CPC to "toe the line." A smug *Pravda* piece, which appeared even as the Soviet technicians were boarding planes back to Moscow, gloated: "Could one imagine the successful construction of socialism going on in present day conditions even in so great a country as, let us say, China, if that country were in a state of isolation and could not rely on the collaboration and aid of all other socialist countries?" [45]

In November 1960 the Conference of 81 Communist Parties met in Moscow. There the battle raged ferociously for almost a month. The majority of the parties supported the CPSU positions; by 1960, the rotting disease of revisionism had already consigned most parties around the world to the same opportunist graveyard as the Second International. But Albania and several of the Asian parties either supported the correct line or, at least, refused to endorse the revisionist line, and a number of other parties wavered. The final product of the conference was a statement which amounted to a grab-bag; each trend could pick out of it what was useful to it.

The Moscow Conference solved nothing. In 1961 the CPSU hit at China by opening polemics against Albania, employing the same polemical ploy against the CPC that Mao had introduced by using Tito as a stand-in for Khrushchev. The 22nd Congress of the CPSU, held in October of 1961, was a grotesque circus. V.M. Molotov, a genuine Soviet revolutionary who had led an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow Khrushchev in June of 1957, wrote a letter to the Congress denouncing the new CPSU Draft Programme slated for adoption there as a "counter-revolutionary, pacifist programme." For this courageous act, through which he struck a blow for the entire Soviet people and the working class of the world, it was his honor to be the target of about 70 diatribes from the floor which were also veiled attacks on the CPC.[46]

Khrushchev's "New Programme" introduced the theory that the dictatorship of the proletariat no longer existed in the Soviet Union (one true statement!) and had been replaced by the "state of the whole people," since classes and class struggle had been eliminated entirely in the Soviet Union. He also unveiled an "ambitious new program" promising the complete construction of communism in the USSR by 1980! [47]

The 22nd Congress closed with the decision to remove Stalin's body from its tomb next to Lenin's, and to efface his name from the mausoleum "forever."

Throughout 1962, despite several initiatives from various parties to call a halt to the polemics and convene another conference, the implacable struggle between Marxism and revisionism which had begun in 1956 was clearly approaching a climax. Khrushchev picked up where he had left off in his love affair with Tito, and now stressed the "proximity of identity" of their views on "foreign affairs." As tension mounted between China and India, the Soviet Union began supplying jet fighters to India; when war broke out in October, Khrushchev sided with India. Khrushchev's capitulation to the

U.S. in the Cuban missile crisis of the same month was condemned by China as a cowardly submission to nuclear blackmail.

On January 5, 1963, *Red Flag* published an article "Leninism and Modern Revisionism." "Revisionism is an opium to anaesthetise the people; it is a beguiling music for the consolation of slaves," the concluding paragraph ran.

> As a political grouping, revisionism constitutes a detachment of the bourgeoisie within the working-class movement, an important social prop for the bourgeoisie and for imperialism. As a trend of thought, revisionism will never fail to appear in varying guises at different times so long as capitalism and imperialism exist in the world...Today the dark clouds of revisionism hang over the international working class movement. The modern revisionists are openly engaged in splitting activities. The emergence of modern revisionism is, of course, a bad thing. But as its emergence was inevitable and as its existence is an objective reality, its public appearance enables people to see, discern, and understand the harm it does. Thus the bad thing will be turned to good account...[48]

On March 30, the Central Committee of the CPSU sent a letter to the Central Committee of the CPC which reiterated their revisionist line and at the same time piously proposed "a halt to polemics" and called for joint talks to solve differences.

The letter they received in return was the *Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement*.

The *Proposal* was not just another polemic; it was, as an article commemorating the second anniversary of its publication said,

> a programmatic document. It drew a clear line between Marxism-Leninism and Khrushchev revisionism on a number of major problems of the contemporary world revolution and made a great theoretical contribution to the struggle against Khrushchev revisionism...
>
> The *Proposal* was a major turning point in the struggle between Marxism-Leninism and modern revisionism. It was a turning point in the transition from the emergence and growth of Khrushchev revisionism, and indeed of the entire modern revisionist trend after World War 2, to its complete bankruptcy.[49]

The *Proposal* was a letter only in the formal sense; more accurately, it was a call to revolutionaries the world over to join the battle against revisionism. The Soviet Union itself attempted to suppress its contents, but through various ways it was circulated in the USSR. For example, Chinese citizens throughout the Soviet Union organized illegal distribution of a Russian edition of the *Proposal*. The *Proposal* was passed out in train stations, stacks were left where workers might get to them, Chinese delegates to the Congress of the International Federation of Women in Moscow disrupted the Congress and read out long extracts from the *Proposal*, braving beatings and arrests.

A complaint sent by the Soviet Foreign Ministry to the Chinese government on July 4 moaned that

> the text of the letter was at the same time taken by members of the [Chinese] embassy staff to various insitutions in Moscow in a number of cars, mailed to Soviet citizens and delivered to their homes, and taken by officials, specially sent from Moscow, to other towns, including Leningrad, Kiev, Odessa, Dubna, etc....
>
> This not only astonished Soviet people but also aroused a feeling of justified protest...
>
> But...the distribution of the materials continued and assumed an even wider scale. It went so far that the Chinese crews of the Moscow-Peking trains scattered the text of the letter in the Russian language from the windows of coaches at railway stations. The text of the letter was transmitted through the public address system of trains during their stops. When Soviet people politely told the Chinese citizens that their actions were impermissible, the latter in many cases behaved in a defiant way. For instance, the above mentioned Yao impudently told Soviet people that the Chinese workers "will not ask anybody's permission" to disseminate materials of this kind...[50]

It has never been stated who in the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party inspired and gave direction to this "activity unheard of in diplomatic practice," which certainly should be condemned as a violation of the Leninist principle of peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems. But, whoever instigated this outrage, he wasn't a stodgy old bureaucrat or comfortable veteran resting on his laurels—that's for sure. ■

Footnotes

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4. "Proposal," sec. 10.
5. "Proposal," sec. 4.
6. *Ibid.*
7. "Proposal," sec. 5.
8. *Ibid.*
9. "Proposal," sec. 6.
10. *Ibid.*
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12. "Proposal," sec. 9.
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15. "Proposal," sec. 8.
16. *Ibid.*
17. "Proposal," secs. 10, 12.
18. "Proposal," sec. 12.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*
21. "Proposal," sec. 11.
22. Lenin, "Tasks of the Third International," *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 504-5.
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25. "Proposal," sec. 11.
26. "Proposal," sec. 12.
27. "Proposal," sec. 7.
28. *Ibid.*
29. "Proposal," sec. 8.
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32. "Proposal," sec. 10.
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49. "Proposal," sec. 14.
50. Lenin, "The Collapse of the Second International," *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 213.
51. *Ibid.*, pp. 214-15.
52. *Ibid.*, pp. 215-16.
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55. Lenin, "Lessons of the Crisis," *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 213.
56. "Proposal," sec. 14.
57. Lenin, "The War Programme of the Proletarian Revolution," *Collected Works*, Vol. 22.
58. "Proposal," sec. 15.
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60. "Proposal," sec. 17.
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*
63. "Proposal," sec. 18.
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65. "On Khrushchev's Phoney Communism and its Historical Lessons For the World," by the Editorial Departments of *Renmin Ribao (People's Daily)* and *Hongqui (Red Flag)*, July 14, 1963, in *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement*, p. 440.
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75. "Proposal," sec. 25.

Appendix Footnotes

1. *The Soviet-Yugoslav Controversy, 1948-1958: A Documentary Record*, ed. by R. Bass and E. Marbury (Prospect Books, 1959), Document 8: "Statement by Soviet First Party Secretary Nikita Khrushchev on Arrival at Belgrade Airport, May 26, 1955," p. 53.
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25. *The Origin and Development of the Differences, op. cit.*, p. 71.
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27. *Ibid.*, pp. 105-08.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 105-06.
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30. Gittings, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
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33. Enver Hoxha, "Report to the Party Activists in Tirana," *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 708.
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35. Floyd, *op. cit.*, p. 257.
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Salt

(Continued from page 23)

conventional forces, while opposing Soviet adventures everywhere in the world.

As for the SALT II "opposition", the main focus of their attack is in four areas. First, they claim that the U.S. had already become Number 2 and the SALT treaties are a critical part of this process of "allowing" the Soviets to catch up with and surpass the U.S. This argument is not fundamentally in contradiction to the line that the U.S. is "second to none", given it helps raise questions about just where the U.S. does stand militarily and helps to shock many more among the masses out of complacency to support new arms programs. Likewise the "hardline' argument that the U.S. must openly strive for military superiority has a certain usefulness in shifting the terms of the debate to "how are we going to protect our country from the Russian Bear?"

Second, the "hardliners" are going to town with the fact that SALT II clearly did not successfully accomplish the stated U.S. negotiating goals of limiting the Soviets' strategic arsenal, especially its "big guns" like the SS-18 and the Backfire bomber. While Carter is trying to downplay this fact in order to sell the whole package, the bourgeoisie as a whole—including its chief military and political reps—are full aware of this and want to make sure the American people are also aware of this. Naturally, the "hardliners" have been looking for areas where the U.S. "gave up" its own big guns—but they've had a hard time finding anything to score points with here, especially in the wake of Carter's announcement to develop the MX.

Thirdly, the "hardliners" and many "undecideds" as well are raising a hullaballo about "verification". Their goal is to make it a commonly held assumption that the Soviets will cheat at every opportunity (true) and try to break the treaty, while the U.S. wants to play fair (not true!). In addition, both the U.S. and the Soviets will continue to trade charges and counter-charges over "verification" because they want to guarantee that they have the right to keep their spy satellites, reconnaissance planes etc., in the air to have a good look at the other side's war machine. Pointing to the loss of U.S. "listening posts" in Iran, the verification controversy hopes to get the American people to see the "need" to dominate other areas of the world to contend with the Soviets—they are pointing particularly at Turkey.

Finally, the "hardliners" and many "undecideds" are raising the question of "linkage"—that is, taking a firmer stand on tying SALT to the Soviet's behavior in various parts of the world, to put pressure on them to stop stirring up trouble in the U.S. camp through its Cuban mercenary army in Africa, the Vietnamese in Southeast Asia, the revisionist parties in Western Europe and elsewhere. The U.S. for its part doesn't want the new U.S.—China alliance or the Pope's visit to Poland "linked" to the SALT agreement, but nevertheless knows that the Soviets will stand firm on this question. This is exactly why the U.S. raises it, since U.S. imperialism, the main beneficiary of the last redivision of the world, is more in a defensive or counteroffensive position against the Soviets, and therefore has more to gain by (in words at least) sanctifying the present territorial division of the world and shake its finger at the Soviets encroachments on U.S. spheres of influence as "aggressive" and "destabilizing to peace." Thus, we see even Carter warning Brezhnev at their recent Vienna summit that "Any effort by either of our nations to exploit the turbulence that exists in various parts of the world pushes us toward [confrontation]. The United States can and will protect its vital interests if this becomes the route we must follow." Though the question on "linkage" has been debated for years within the bourgeoisie and how far to push it, this again demonstrates how the SALT II debate is an ideal forum for the bourgeoisie to get its essential message across.

In short, while many acrimonious charges are thrown about, and important tactical differences will certainly remain and continue to be loudly debated, the bourgeoisie hopes through the course of the SALT II debate to make the very framework for public discussion how to best militarily and diplomatically defend the U.S. empire.

Though much less is known about it, a similar debate is taking place in Soviet ruling circles over the gains and losses for them represented by SALT II. Continuing to "learn from the West", some of these disagreements about SALT's usefulness (or lack thereof) for expanding social-imperialism's world empire are being debated more publicly than usual in the USSR. According to a recent story in the *LA Times*, several areas of dissatisfaction have been brought out including that the treaty did not cover the strategic nuclear forces of U.S. allies France, Britain and China, and SALT II didn't place any restrictions on U.S. bombers and other "medium range" forces based in Europe that have the capability of reaching the Soviet Union. Moreover, the Soviet press is now undoubtedly full of articles on the U.S. decision to go ahead with the MX missile, demonstrating the U.S.'s *real* intentions of going for superiority—and that similar Soviet developments will be necessary, for "defensive" purposes of course.

Opportunists Parrot Superpowers

As the SALT II debate has opened up over the last several months, a number of opportunists who clothe themselves in "Marxist-Leninist" garb have quite predictably produced bourgeois analyses of the treaty that dovetail with, or outright front for, one imperialist superpower or the other. In doing so, they all accept the bourgeoisie's attempts to portray itself as split between "hardliners" and "moderates", and thus a class that is not being drive inexorably towards world war and thus must be overthrown by proletarian revolution.

The CPML's recent three-part newspaper series reads like a reprint series from the *Committee on the Present Danger*. According to the *Call* (5/21), "While anti-SALT forces are being dubbed 'warmongerers' for wanting to keep the USSR from developing a significant edge, in fact it is the pro-SALT appeasers of Soviet aggression who are heightening the war danger by allowing the USSR the opportunity to gain first strike power." SALT II is condemned as a string of concessions to the USSR ("the most dangerous source of war")—made by the Carter administration, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and most of the U.S. imperialists—weak-kneed fellows who are apparently no longer capable of defending their own class interests.

The utter rankness of this social-chauvinist line is hanging out for all to see, perfumed over, of course, with Klonskyite double talk about how strengthening U.S. imperialism's war machine will somehow "delay the outbreak of war." None of this is very new to the CPML, but what *is* interesting is to follow the *Call*'s (June 18) incredible acrobatics trying to explain that Carter's decision to go ahead with the MX missile represents an attempt "to maintain rough equivalence in arms with the Soviets" (Hooray, a blow against appeasement and the outbreak of war!)—yet only several lines later we are told that "efforts must be undertaken to rally mass opposition to the MX, which represents another step toward war." With a ringing call to action like this, how could anyone accuse the CPML of calling on the U.S. bourgeoisie to step up its war preparations?

The pro-SALT positions of the pro-Soviet CPUSA is the revisionist mirror image of the CPML's. According to the Feb/March 1979 issue of the CP's Youth group's newspaper, the *Young Worker*, "Our generation needs to rally its forces for ratification of SALT II. It is literally a question of our right to live." This article goes on to say that SALT II will "prevent a massive increase in missiles and bombers...strengthen U.S.-Soviet cooperation and build peace and detente...and save $70 billion in tax money which can instead be used for massive youth job programs. Thus, in addition to loyally defending the Soviet social-imperialists as "the bastion of world peace", the CPUSA promotes the hoax of "winning jobs through detente."

The same "right-wingers" that the CPML applauds for standing up to the Soviets are, according to the CPUSA the source of war—not the whole imperialist bourgeoisie itself. And thus, while CPUSA and CPML front for different superpowers, they end up in the same swamp of reformism and social-pacifism, raising their versions of "jobs not war" and calling on the masses of people to pressure one or the other section of the

bourgeoisie into changing their "war policies" in order to avoid or delay the outbreak of war.

However, since the CPUSA's straight-up pro-Soviet line has not found much of a base yet in the U.S., the Soviets are at this point better served by the more "balanced" (i.e. eclectic) position of groups like the *Guardian*. In its pages we find that the Soviet Union is "hegemonic", but isn't a social-imperialist power, just like the U.S., governed by the laws of imperialism that are driving them headlong into World War 3. According to the *Guardian*'s Mr. Silber, (4/25/79 issue), "the Soviet Union favors the arms pact and detente in general because in key third world areas it is prepared to 'let events take their own course.' The USSR does this in the belief that the anti-imperialist struggle will weaken the U.S. much more than would the launching of a major war." Because of this, Silber argues, the USSR was willing to make more than its share of concessions to get SALT II signed.

As for the prospect of World War 3, he claims that the Soviets believe that, "At this time and for the forseeable future such a clash would be a strictly 'no-win' proposition for all." Thus, according to Silber, Soviet policy is "geared to a long-range history-is-on-our-side view of affairs in which neutralizing the direct military threat to itself from U.S. imperialism is seen as the key. Soviet "Marxist" theoreticians couldn't put it better!

As part of his Kautskyite argument that world war is not a real danger "for the forseeable future" (though the U.S. will face "more crucial" assaults on its empire "from liberation struggles" which, in practice, the *Guardian* defines in the same way as Brezhnev i.e. the presence of Cuban and Soviet influence) Silber also discovers two opposing sections in the U.S. bourgeoisie. For him the "anti-SALT forces" include "those sections of finance capital most directly tied to the military-industrial complex and with strategic interests in some of the question mark areas of the world, while the pro-SALT forces include "most of those sectors of finance capital whose material interests are bound up with stability in Western Europe and with the prospects for large-scale trade with the Soviet bloc." While Silber portrays the bellicose "anti-SALT" section of the bourgeoisie as being after "the reestablishment of a U.S. first-strike capability", he explains that "without foregoing any military options, the pro-SALT sector of finance capital wants to be able to explore the advantages of a measure of political collaboration with the USSR as possibly a more effective defense of the empire than the Vietnam war turned out to be."

Furthermore, Silber asserts that there are some "far-seeing" finance capitalists who want to cut military spending in order to avoid cutbacks in domestic social programs since "they recognize that sooner or later—and probably sooner—such a policy will undoubtedly provoke social turmoil domestically."

Here we have the revisionist line in its full plummage again—the arms buildup and the growing moves towards war flows not from the whole bourgeoisie, but from the particular needs of one section of the ruling class. This has no basis in reality whatsoever, for there is and can now be no section of the U.S. bourgeoisie that has an interest in strategic "political collaboration with the USSR" (Silber) or in "appeasing the Russian polar bear." (CPML) This revisionist line can only serve to direct the masses away from targeting, as the source of war, the imperialist ruling class as *a whole* in the U.S., and further, from struggling consciously to put an end to the whole imperialist system as the only way to put an end to war.

Imperialists Plan "Winnable" War

Lenin stressed that imperialist war is the continuation of imperialist politics by other, i.e. violent, means. This certainly holds true for the third world war the imperialist powers are preparing. For many years, the superpowers promoted the conception of "Mutually Assured Destruction" (appropriately called MAD) that would prevent the outbreak of nuclear war. Actually, the argument is not new in the annals of history—similar arguments were heard before World War I, and even Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, believed (or at least said) that this terrible new weapon would make it "unthinkable" for major powers to go to war against each other.

How much the imperialists themselves ever believed the MAD conception is a matter for conjecture, but what is clear is that "mutually assured destruction" was never what they were about. And today, while continuing to promote this concept to frighten the masses of people and make them feel helpless before the threat of nuclear war, the MAD doctrine has been discarded in their principal planning for World War 3.

The aims of this war would be to redivide the world through force of arms—to capture areas for the export of capital, the sources of raw materials, and zones of influence by the contending imperialist powers, above all by the two superpowers. *This* is what the imperialists are aiming to do, and this is what determines what type of weapons they produce and how they are planning to use them—not some kind of abstract desire to see the other power destroyed.

The rulers of both the U.S. and USSR would prefer to wage a war without an all-out nuclear exchange, and certainly are aware of the fact that even if such a mutual slaughter takes place on the most extreme basis—the wiping out of each other's major cities—the outcome of the war (the redivision of the world) would still not be settled and the result might well be that neither would wind up on top. At the same time, neither is so naive as to count on the fact that the other would be willing to surrender its spheres of influence and its superpower status without doing everything it could first. In other words, a war would in all probability start in one or several areas of the world without a strategic nuclear exchange, but the likelihood of this happening would dramatically increase if either the U.S. or USSR came to the conclusion that this was the only way to alter the course of war which was leading to their defeat.

The idea that World War 3 would begin and end with the push of a button is one the imperialists promote among the masses of people, to make them feel that their only protection is in the hands of their "own" bourgeoisie. However, this is irrelevant to their actual military preparations. As discussed earlier, the SALT agreements have allowed them to focus on those aspects of their military preparations—nuclear and conventional, strategic and tactical alike—that are most necessary to wage war and emerge victorious.

Presently the military of the superpowers are concentrating on preparing for "theater warfare", that is, war in strategic areas such as Europe and the Middle East where the fighting would include a combination of conventional and tactical nuclear forces. Whether such warfare took place within the framework of an all-out strategic exchange or not, the goal of such warfare would be to control key areas of territory and thus would necessarily involve large numbers of ground troops. Presently, the U.S. is especially worried about the numerical superiority in conventional forces (as well as shorter supply lines) possessed by the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies in Europe vis-a-vis the U.S. and its NATO allies, and it has already started to concentrate more resources to trying to bolster its forces there. For example, NATO spending for what they call "infrastructure for prepositioning material" (in other words, stockpiling weapons and laying the basis for a massive infusion of troops) amount to only $640 million in the years between 1975-80, but $5.4 *billion* is earmarked for this "prepositioning" for the years 1980-85. The U.S., which already spends $80 billion a year for NATO (only half of which is listed in the Defense Department budget) has agreed to increase this at a rate of 3% annually, adjusted for inflation. Likewise, the other NATO allies have made similar committments.

Not surprisingly, much of the superpowers' military machine is earmarked for this kind of war fought in Europe. Europe is not only a prize in and of itself because of its vast productive forces, but even more importantly, control over Europe is absolutely necessary to bring about a favorable division of the rest of the world. The U.S. and USSR must seek to deprive each other of the ability to make use of Europe's vast reserves. Lenin pointed out in his famous work *Imperialism* that

"(1) the fact that the world's already par-

titioned obliges those contemplating a redivision to reach out for *every kind* of territory, and (2) an essential feature of imperialism is the rivalry between several great powers in the striving for hegemony, i.e. for the conquest of territory, not so much directly for themselves as to weaken the adversary and undermine his hegemony."

Single Strike or Protracted War

Much of the hullaballoo surrounding SALT has been centered around the question off a "first strike capability." While neither side will admit to preparing for such, each is quick to point to the danger of its rival attaining such superiority. A "first strike" is presented to the masses in this country as the Soviet Union launching an unprovoked, all-out surprise nuclear assault and manage not only to kill 3/4 of the people of the United States, but wipe out the U.S.' ability to retaliate.

Again, the story being fed the people is not the same one discussed in the war rooms. Long before Soviet missiles landed in the U.S., red-white-and-blue missiles would be headed for the Soviet Union, or vice versa. What is at stake for the imperialists is not so much the ability to knock out their adversary in a single strike (such a thing is impossible anyway) but the capability of surviving a nuclear exchange (or exchanges) in the best position and be prepared to continue to carry on a protracted war—on the conventional, as well as strategic level. Most of the missiles in the superpowers' arsenal are targeted not at the population centers of their rivals but at the other sides' strategic weapons and their military machine. This is what is behind U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff Lew Allan's recent comment that the Southwest, where the new mobile MX missile is to be deployed, would be like a giant "sponge" soaking up Soviet H-bombs.

The whole point in the much touted "mobility" of the MX missile is that the giant missile could be scrambled around on railroad tracks between more than 8,000 different possible hardened silos, making it impossible for the Soviets to know which ones were for real. This would enable much of the MX missiles system to remain intact in an initial exchange no matter who "struck first" and allow the U.S. imperialists to use them over the course of war in various areas of the world, while both superpowers have not ruled out the possibility of waging a world war without any sort of strategic nuclear exchange (indeed some military experts say that SALT II will make conventional war feasible), they are very concerned about exactly how to make a world war with strategic nuclear weapons "thinkable" and above all "winnable".

Indeed a recent article in the imperialist journal *International Security* (Winter 78/79) gives as one of the three aims of SALT II the reduction of "the destructiveness if such a war broke out." Similarly, a Congressional study released on May 22 examined the consequences of different scenarios of nuclear war. While describing a strategic exchange aimed at the population centers and industrial base of the rivals as leading to near total destruction of both the U.S. and the USSR, it says that "a nuclear war in which each side concentrated on each others military capabilities would result in somewhere between 2 and 20 million killed." The study points out that a small nuclear attack "could be somewhat less damaging than World War 2 was to the Soviet Union, and Soviet recovery from that conflict was complete." One thing is certainly true is the study's remark "it is unlikely that the survivors would simply take it in stride."

Revolution—Missing From Their Calculations

Exactly how a world war would develop and what course it would take, are of course, impossible to predict. The imperialists themselves have shelves full of possible contingency plans. The SALT I and II negotiations have undoubtedly involved discussion of exactly this question—what targets would be considered fair game and so on. Negotiations will continue up to the outbreak of war and even into the war itself over these and similar questions.

But to rely on the imperialists of the two superpowers to act "reasonably" would be the height of folly. Especially when one considers the *terms* within which they are talking: simply a conventional war waged with tactical nuclear weapons which, as bourgeois analysists have pointed out, would be the equivalent of a strategic exchange for those unfortunate to be living in the battle zone (everyone in Germany, for example); perhaps a limited strategic war that would leave "only" 20 or 30 million dead in both the U.S. and the USSR, and so on.

However, one factor the imperialists can't put into their calculations is the actions of the working class and the masses of people in every country, including their own. As a war grows more imminent, as the immensity of the crime the imperialists are preparing becomes understood by more and more millions of people, the possibility of revolutionary storms arising and throwing a giant monkey wrench into the imperialists war plans will increase many fold. And if a war should break out before revolution can prevent it, it will not, as stated before just begin and end with a nuclear exchange. The masses will be insisting that nuclear weapons not be used and the question of achieving peace will be uppermost on the minds of millions.

Through the work of revolutionary communists, the working class and masses of people can come to understand that it is only through the overthrow of their own ruling class, and working together with the workers of the world to topple the rule of every imperialist bourgeoisie, that it will be possible to bring the war to a halt and create the conditions under which it can never arise again. It is certainly true that if the imperialists unleash a third world war they will greatly hasten their doom. ■