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PROGRESSIVE LABOR

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October-November 1977

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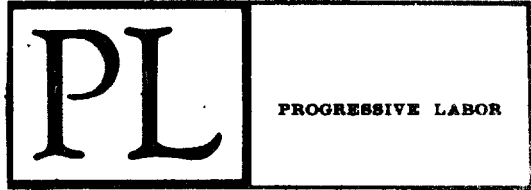
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The articles appearing in PL Magazine are published because the editorial board believes they are generally useful to the political ideological development of the international revolutionary communist movement. However, only the editorials and documents of the National Committee of PLP represent the official policies of the Party.

FRONT COVER: N.Y. May Day '77 float showed killing of two-headed monster -- Carter and Brezhnev.



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notes & comments & notes & comments & notes

First, the Bad News...

Starting with this issue, the price of PL Magazine is being increased to 75 cents a copy. This is the first increase in cost since 1965, and is due to higher costs for typesetting, printing, and mailing.

We also hope it will help make it possible to convince more newsstands to carry PL Magazine, and so increase its circulation.

For information about how you can help to distribute PL Magazine to newsstands and convince them to carry it, please contact PL Magazine at Box 808, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11202.

MORE TRA-ducung

COMRADES:

It is good to see lively debate growing on cultural issues in recent issues of the magazine, especially in the letters column. This reflects, I think, a growing awareness in the Party and among our friends that the "culture question" is not a pleasant diversion from our task of building the Party and preparing to make a revolution. Through revolutionary art we attack the ruling class, which uses its domination of "mainstream culture" to instill in workers ideas and ways of thinking that turn us away from revolution -- defeat, hippie-ism and inaction.

However, while the opening of this struggle has been generally, good, there is one aspect in some of the contributions that has been disturbing -- the lack of a comradely tone. In a number of instances writers have debated with comrades and friends in a tone that ought to be reserved for the attack on the ruling class. In bourgeois critical circles it appears to be expected that the critic will heap contempt and calumny on those who disagree with him, but that ought not to be our tone in cultural debate any

more than in any other struggle with our allies.

Particularly disturbing was L. Berilla's reply in Vol.10, No.5 to a young comrade's criticism of the magazine TRA in Vol. 10, No.4. Much of the letter is given over to an attack on Edward C.'s critical ability and to nit-picking of fine detail. It would seem that L.Berilla's disagreements with Edward C. are certainly fit for criticism but if he/she feels that Edward C.'s writing style and critical analysis are deficient, he/she should have offered ideas for improvement. As it is, the object appears to be to blow Edward C. off the scene, not to encourage him to continue to write and to improve his abilities. And to put the effort down, sneeringly, as "reminiscent of a



For Good Art

Expose the plot of Roots
And Judenrat wearing black
To confuse black and white
Workers who want progress.
Black youth are in the streets
Need jobs not roots, ovens
The ABC bosses plan
From wars for the black gold
And other goodies robbed
From black and white sweaters.
Andrew Young prefers cocktails
With peanut boss Carter
To black workers' freedom.
He works to push the rights
Of U.S. mercenaries
Killing for Ian Smith.
Death hovers around our roots
White Alger can't undo
With all his hearty Haley
Millions gift from gratified Rockies.
It represents fall
Of 20th century paper
Tigers who need Haley
Young, and their ilk more than
Wallace, Eastland, and Bilbo
Who no longer would work.
Our roots is revolution
Removing stains that Alger
Has tried engraving on black
And white working people

Larry Cutler

6th-grade book report..." smacks of anti-working class snobbery. Are workers, many of whom have not completed even the sixth grade, to be barred from studying culture and applying the understanding of their lives to an understanding of art? We ought, on the contrary, to encourage precisely these activities. Culture is not something for intellectuals to give to the masses -- revolutionary culture, by the masses, must grow out of this struggle.

Paul Heymont.

For Art's Sake?

Dear PL Magazine

Most of the pictures in the latest PL Magazine are very bad.

The worst is the racist and anti-communist cartoon regarding Mao's funeral (p.23). The figures are short, buck-toothed, slanty-eyed racist caricatures. The point seems to be that, rather than marching out to bury Mao in the straight, unthinking lines that 'communist automatons' are supposed to adhere to -- before they can even get the emperor in the ground they race back to fight like animals for power.

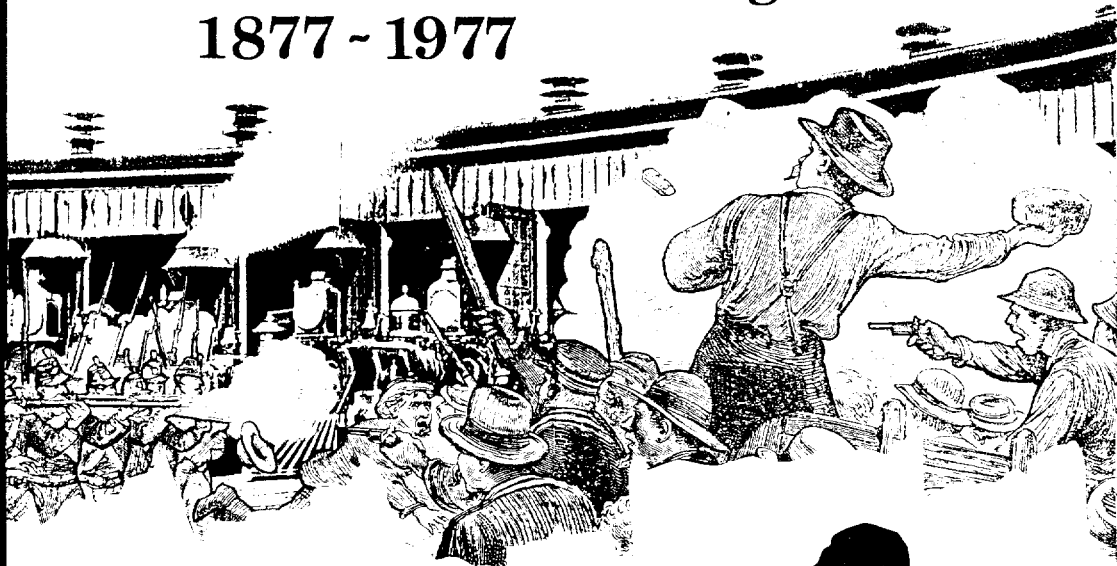
Some message!

Next worst is the "cute" caption on the Brezhnev-Tito picture(p.56). They are embracing, as is the custom in much of the world -- not the custom of revisionists or bosses -- but of the people. To make fun of our enemies because of their cultural differences is the same shitty racism the bosses use. The other aspect is the sexism of the caption writer. My guess is that it is very natural for men (or women) to show affection for each other and that the European bosses did us a job when they won us away from touching each other and toward heightened and ritualized alienation.

Then there is the "cheesecake" shot on p.58. Why? What? a spoof? a pin-up? (or a fold-up by the looks of the fold lines). I guess it's exposing the revisionism-- but that's only a guess.

The snapshots of various bosses on

Marchemos Para El 100 Aniversario Del Comuna De Pittsburgh 1877 - 1977



¡LUCHEMOS POR EL SOCIALISMO!
¡PODER OBRERO!

¡Derrotemos el Racismo en los EEUU y Sud Africa!
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pp.20,21, and 31 do fill space. So does the inscrutable "communist rally" on p.8, and the "3 young communists" on p.24.

What is the Lenin/Pepsi connection? (p.10). Am I just dense?

There is no excuse for this sloppy editing. An insert should be produced for every magazine apologizing for these errors.

The political message of every picture is worth 1,000 words.

Self-critically, I have never sent in any pictures or cartoons -- relying on 'someone else'. I will change that lazy habit and encourage others to do the same.

PL Magazine is far and away the finest periodical I have ever seen -- and we're going to make it a hell of a lot better.

Comradely,

Mark Smith, Chicago.

COMRADES:

There is a cartoon in the last issue of PL Magazine (Vol.10, No.5 -- April, 1977) which is RACIST. It appears in the article 'China Bosses' on p.23. Why do we say this?

1. The message of the cartoon is "After the communist dictator dies all hell breaks loose. His moronic followers fight for political control of China."

2. Chinese people are drawn like the typical racist stereotype of an oriental: slanted eyes and buck teeth. Plus "they all look alike."

3. They're also drawn like squabbling children (mindless communists?).

4. The cartoon makes no distinction between Chinese workers and "China Bosses", the real combatants in the class struggle.

5. There is no caption or explanation under the cartoon which criticizes its racist and anti-communist content.

PL should print up an insert that should go into every magazine. We should criticize ourselves for letting this racist garbage get into our literature.

Artists in and around the Party should be notified in advance about upcoming articles so they can contribute revolutionary communist illustrations. The bourgeois press will always produce bourgeois cartoons and we should get out of the habit of relying upon them for pictures. Comradely,

Some PL members.

Editor's Note: We agree that there is a certain validity to some of the criticisms

raised by these two letters, specifically in the case of the cartoon concerning Mao's death. We are grateful for this and all constructive criticism.

However, the writers may not have read the articles to which the pictures relate carefully enough. For example, the pictures of "Miss U.S.S.R." and "Lenin and the Pepsi Generation" reflect the contents of the articles in which they appear. Though ironic, we believe they are understandable in that context.

We do have a great need for photos and illustrations generally! Recent issues have contained requests for illustrations. Very few people do in fact send pictures in, however. One of the reasons for the relatively infrequent appearance of PL Magazine in the past -- something we hope to avoid in the future -- was the need to research, copy, and develop pictures for virtually all articles here in New York.

Many personal appeals have also been made to artists, photographers, and others -- usually to no avail.

We would be happy to receive illustrations from readers, as the comrade from Chicago has offered (however, since we received his letter more than two months ago, we have not received anything...).

Please send in illustrations: photos (especially); graphics; cartoons; etc.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO READERS!

With this issue Progressive Labor Magazine is being produced by a larger editorial staff. What this means readers is:

- * The magazine will be published more regularly, we hope once every other month.
- * Articles, stories, poetry, reviews, etc., submitted for publications will be read and answered more quickly.
- * Photos, graphics and especially cartoons are urgently needed!
- * We wish to hear from readers with ideas for articles. This will let you know what present needs for the magazine are and will help us get the numbers

of articles needed for more frequent production. Unless you have finished or are already in the middle of an article, story, review, etc., we suggest sending in a brief summary of your topic first.

Address correspondence to:

Articles editors
Progressive Labor
G.P.O. Box 808
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201

In addition, with more regular publication, the magazine should be placed in bookstores, newsstands, college stores, and so on.

With your help PL Magazine will improve and grow in the coming months.

On Similarities Between the U.S. and Weimar Germany

By M. K.

Our party has developed a vigorous analysis of inter-imperialist rivalry, war and fascism which makes clear the need and possibility of proletarian revolution. It has elaborated the new concept of making revolution primary over reform throughout our work. Yet despite verbal agreement with this line, the old practices of absorption in reform issues and hesitation in bringing the ideas of revolution to the masses remain, to one degree or another, throughout our party. These old ideas and practices represent a right-wing drift; they find their highest expression in D-D's recent articles and leadership. Only the most relentless repudiation of this revisionist line—both in theory and more importantly, in practice—will enable us to give adequate leadership to the working class in an era of ever more ferocious attacks by the bourgeoisie.

Even in certain theoretical contributions to the party of the recent past, D. displayed an over-estimation of the staying power of the bourgeoisie and an underestimation of the role of racist ideology as a weapon of the bosses. In the "Who Rules America" pamphlet, he stressed the power and control of the large banks at the expense of the contradictions in the ruling class (as revealed in the Watergate pamphlet on the struggle of the old vs. the new money). In an internal debate, he argued that the energy crisis was all a hoax; he focussed on the secondary aspect—the profit-gouging of the oil companies—and ignored the primary aspect, the real decline of U.S. imperialism, coupled with the relative independence of the Arab bourgeoisies which forced U.S. rulers to undermine the much-vaunted "American standard of living." In his articles on fascism, D. rightly stressed the role of finance capitalism but downplayed the importance of racist ideology (he also argued strongly against the crucial role of racist ideology in Nazism in discussions of fascism in

Denver). These weaknesses, the minor aspect of his previous contributions, have become primary in the new position of D-D which denies that U.S. imperialism is in sharp decline, denies the increasing severity of inter-imperialist rivalry, and, as if blindfolded, ignores the daily more obvious consequences—visible simply from reading the newspapers—of coming fascism and war.

As Lenin stresses, the 20th century opened a new stage of history with the crystallization of imperialism, an era characterized by inter-imperialist rivalry, war and revolution. Due to the slaughter of millions of workers in the decadent interests of their respective bosses in World War I, the Russian Revolution, the rising class struggle throughout Europe, and the emergence of the new communist movement, the 1920s and early 30s saw a new development in the bourgeoisie's desperate efforts to hold power: the emergence of fascism, especially in its most virulent form, Nazism. D-D wish that the present stage of U.S. imperialism was a throwback to the "idyllic" period of "peaceful" pre-imperialist development for nearly a century between 1815 and 1900. While all parallels are rough because history never repeats itself exactly, the evidence points far more strikingly to the similarities between Germany in the '20s and the U.S. than to any return to the pre-imperialist epoch.

Post-World War I Germany was characterized by an extensive concentration in industrial production and the increasing strength of the banks. Through inflation, depression and then fascism, the great industrial combines continuously gobbled up German small business. They also extended their economic interests throughout the world, seeking not only a "place in the sun" as in the 1890s, but direct conquests of Europe, Russia and the world. The role of U.S. banks and corporations, with their post-World War II dreams of an "American Century" and Jimmy KKK's plans to revive those "glorious years" parallels concentration and expansion in Germany in the early 20th century far more nearly than it does the nineteenth century and the relatively competitive capitalism characteristic of England. In addition, the post World War I period was characterized by sharpening contradictions **among** the imperialists as well as against the then socialist Soviet Union; today's U.S.-Soviet rivalry provides a close parallel to earlier inter-imperialist sparring which has already led to two world wars in this century.

Post World War I Germany had been defeated. Its working class was not only not patriotic, but was far more permeated with Marxist ideas than the U.S. working class is currently. The German bosses could not call on workers to make war and several insurrections between 1919 and 1923 showed that proletarian revolution was on the agenda. The German bosses were saved only by the sellout policies of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the political weaknesses of the German Communists (KPD) (see below).

While the U.S. defeat in Vietnam was not nearly so devastating as the German, and U.S. workers are far less radical at the moment, the experience of the 1960s represented a serious defeat for U.S. rulers. U.S. cities erupted in rebellions; major civil rights and anti-war movements emerged among students; wildcat strikes as in auto and the post office demonstrated the weak grip of the AFL-CIO sellouts, and most importantly, mass resistance to fighting in an imperialist war, highlighted by fragging of officers, emerged among working-class GIs in Vietnam. These outbursts of class struggle tremendously limited the maneuverability of U.S. imperialism; the threat of combined revolt if the imperialists continued to escalate their war effort or used nuclear weapons in Vietnam curtailed the bosses' options. In essence, the U.S. imperialists—like their German counterparts in the '20s—were deprived of the number one weapon of imperialism: the capacity to field a reliable army. Beyond this, the overall decline of U.S. imperialism—demonstrated dramatically in the defeat in Vietnam, the energy crisis, Watergate, and so forth—has forced the bosses to intensify greatly the exploitation of U.S. workers. From workers freezing to death in American cities this winter to 65% unemployment among minority youth, the deadly toll of U.S. imperialism rises day by day; the idea of the special "affluent" status of the U.S. workers, and with it, of U.S. hegemony in the world, becomes more and more of a joke. The rulers cannot revive the will of workers to fight and die for this system easily or get them to put up indefinitely with worsening conditions here at home (the **Wall Street Journal** has predicted renewed rebellions for this summer). As their only remedy, the bosses have suddenly discovered, in the words of Trilateral Commission spokesman Sam Huntington, the need to end the "Democratic



Cartoon shows Weimar judges giving lenient treatment to fascist thugs.

Distemper"—the "spirit of protest" of the '60s which has "overburdened democracy" and made it "ungovernable." "Democracy's lifespan," he hints darkly, is near its end.¹ (Huntington, by the way, authored Carter's "human rights" speech during the campaign.)

Needing desperately to field an army but confronted with increasing class struggle, the German bosses used racist ideology as a key weapon. Racism in Germany—the ideas of a special Aryan Volk and genocidal practices against Jews and Slavs—had been prevalent throughout the Nineteenth Century.² In the 20th Century, borrowing from the U.S. eugenics movement and IQ testing, this racism was intensified. In his 1928 book *Human Heredity*, Fritz Lenz highlighted the role of U.S. army World War I IQ testing used especially against blacks to provide pivotal "evidence" for a "master race." Nazi anthropologist Hans F.K. Günther hailed the U.S. eugenics movement with its immigration, sterilization and miscegenations laws as "the most advanced in the world":

The highly developed eugenic research, which in North America has become something like a patriotic preoccupation gave Grant's (the *Passing of the Great Race*) and Stoddard's (the *Rising Tide of Color*) works a sure scientific foundation, and had already made the ground ready everywhere for the reception of racial and eugenic theories. Further, there has been the whole-hearted support of leading men, and of a section of the Press; while President Harding in a public speech (on 26th October 1921) pointed out the importance of Stoddard's book... and Congress, accepting Grant's views, passed the Immigration Laws, which are to encourage the wished-for northwest European immigration, and to put a bar on the unwished-for immigration from South and East Europe.³

The most thoroughgoing and persistent racist developments within capitalist countries arose in Germany and the United States. Bourgeois scholars often point to the similarities between Nazism and "backward" Italian fascism, but in this crucial respect, the real parallel is between Germany and the "advanced" "democratic" U.S. ruling class.

In Germany, bands of racist thugs, the Freikorps and later the Nazis, marauded under the protection of police and government. Even more than the Camp Pendleton commandant saluted the KKK for its interests in common with the Marine brass, the state prosecutor Stenglein praised Hitler after the unsuccessful 1923 Munich putsch:

Hitler came of a simple background; in the big war as a brave soldier he showed a German spirit, and afterward, beginning from scratch and working hard, he created a great party, the "National Socialist German Workers' Party," which is pledged to fighting international Marxism and Jewry, to settling accounts with the November criminals, and to disseminating the national idea among all layers of the popu-

lation, in particular the workers. I am not called to pass judgment on his party program, but his honest endeavor to reawaken the belief in the German cause among an oppressed and disarmed people is most certainly to his credit.⁴

Hitler did not lack for friends in high places. As our party has stressed previously, the Nazis were not always a big mass movement. They started small (as one among a large number of bands of racist thugs). They grew because the threat of communist revolution was rising in the depression, because the middle classes were desperate, because the Nazis were protected by the government, and mainly because the Communists left them alone.

Today, the KKK in the marines or LA, ROAR in Boston, the U.S. Nazis in Chicago, represent the same scurvy racist potential as the original Nazis. The continual ruling class celebration of racists from the wide publicity given E.O. Wilson and Sociobiology to the American Academy for the Advancement of Racism's honoring of Jensen and Glazer (author of *Affirmative Discrimination*) legitimizes these thugs; the rulers have made a new form of racist mass murder—Cowan in New Rochelle and a similar case in Denver 4 months ago in which a Nazi murdered a black man at the movie—the latest "fad."• All these developments indicate the growing trend toward fascism. The need to defend U.S. business in South Africa as well as to stop rebellion among unemployed minority youth will only magnify these racist developments during the coming period of time. Racism and ultimately fascism is the road down which the U.S. ruling class is plunging. Only the blind could miss it.

Not any fascist army will fight hard. The Italian fascists, for example, could mobilize relatively a slight force compared to the Nazis who fielded 6 million men at Stalingrad alone. Most bourgeois armies fold in the face of stiff opposition as France proved in WW II or the U.S. in Vietnam. It will not be easy for the U.S. government to field a serious army. "Master race" ideas are ideas to march by. For the bourgeoisie, they are the only ideological force which permits the forging of a serious army.

• Mass murder was big in Germany in the 1920s. One named Denkes murdered some 25 people and made the corpses into a variety of products. Brecht prophetically suggested that Germany should be renamed not the land of "poets and thinkers (Dichter and Denker) but the land of *Denkes*. "Denke is the name of a criminal who killed people in order to use their corpses. He canned the meat and made soap from the fat, buttons from the bones, and purses from the skins. He placed his business on a scientific footing and was extremely surprised when, after his apprehension, he was sentenced to be executed... I contend that the best people of Germany, those who condemned Denke, failed to recognize the qualities of true German genius which the fellow displayed, namely: method, conscientiousness, cold-bloodedness, and the ability to base one's every act on a firm philosophical foundation... They should have made him a Ph.D., with honors."⁵

Given these rough similarities in the situation of the U.S. and Germany, what are the main lessons of the weaknesses of the German communists (KPD)? From their practice of the united front, emphasizing petty bourgeois forces, the black bourgeoisie and revisionists, D-D appear to follow bourgeois scholarship. The bourgeoisie (and originally Trotsky and the 7th congress of the Comintern) lambasted the German KPD for attacking the Social Democrats as social fascists. The KPD saw that the Social Democratic leaders in the government organized the Freikorps to shoot down the rebellious workers in 1919. As SPD minister Thälmann put it, "Someone must be the bloodhound; I will not shirk the task."⁶ They murdered communist leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, meted out harsh sentences to workers, and favored and protected the Nazis.

In the early 1930s, the Social Democrats truckled to the rising Nazis. When the Social Democratic police chief (!!!!!) of Prussia (the largest state in Germany) was thrown out of office and replaced by a Nazi, the Social Democrats bragged that they had "killed and wounded more leftists than rightists" while in charge of the police department. They hoped to appeal to the high courts but the Nazi takeover cut them off along the way. Naturally they could not mobilize the workers whom they hated and feared. On May Day 1933 after Hitler took power, the Social Democratic trade union leaders marched under Nazi banners in Hitler's parade. Hitler figured there was nothing left to them, locked them up the very next day and replaced them with his own men. These Social Democrats were both lemmings and traitors.

The KPD's strength, not its weakness, was its clear line on these traitors. But like the Social Democrats, the Communists failed to rely on the masses.

The KPD was mainly a party of unemployed workers. Despite receiving 6 million votes in 1932, less than 10% of its members were in factory cells, and these mostly in light industry.⁷ Unlike the Bolsheviks, it made no effort to win the political leadership of these masses of workers, and use stronghold among organized industrial workers as a pivot to lead the whole class struggle. It left them under the leadership of the Social Democratic unions. D-D share this weakness—they sought to organize a united front with the petty bourgeoisie, not a united front from below, based on political agitation around the Camp Pendleton revolt among workers. Our party's aim, like the Bolsheviks, is to win political leadership of the industrial working class.

The KPD's 2nd weakness was its failure to fight racism. In the early 20s, following the advice of opportunist (later Trotskyist) Radek, they argued that defeated Germany was now an oppressed nation (the Versailles treaty had imposed onerous reparation payments on Germany) rather than an imperialist one, and temporarily put forward the fascist slogan of "National Bolshevism." While this Nazi slogan met with resistance and was subsequently withdrawn, it reflected the KPD's hopeless lack of understanding of the link between

racism and fascism. Unlike the Bolsheviks who took anti-semitism head on in Russia, for example, in their pre-WW I victorious mass campaign in defense of Beilis, a Jew accused of the "ritual murder" of a Christian boy, the KPD never lifted a finger on this question. Our party stresses the link between the propagation of racism under imperialism and the rise of fascism. It is notable that D-D's theory of the present period deletes this essential point. In practice, they have pressed the "defense of the Camp Pendleton 14" at the expense of our line on multiracial unity and the need for revolution to defeat fascism. (In the CAR Camp Pendleton pamphlet as well as the Pendleton 14 defense committee leaflet, multiracial unity is dropped; inter-imperialist rivalry, war, fascism, and the need for a party to lead the revolution was edited out of the party pamphlet "Turn the Guns Around," leaving it—despite the title—vague and abstract.)

The KPD's third weakness was its failure, when it was big and the Nazis small, to stamp them out. The KPD fought only in self-defense. Meanwhile, the Nazis mobilized vigorously among the peasants, and moved into working class areas like Neukoln in Berlin which were Communist strongholds.⁸ The KPD could have crushed all these rattlesnakes' eggs at the start; instead it let them hatch and flourish.

On May Day 1975, our Party led the way in organizing to smash fascists in a multiracial working class march through South Boston. The summer project in Boston was equally militant. We brought the line of multiracial unity and death to the fascists to tens of thousands of Boston workers and were welcomed. Unlike D-D's conduct of the Camp Pendleton defense, CAR and PL were savagely attacked in Boston by ROAR, the ruling class, revisionists and nationalists; despite our many weaknesses in carrying out the line, our efforts exposed ROAR as a violent racist organization, and temporarily subdued the rulers' efforts to develop race war in Boston.

The main aspect of the attack by the black marines on the KKK was death to the fascists. While the party reacted immediately and militantly in defense of the black marines, a wrong line was pushed by D-D. Instead of defending this heroic act in the spirit of May Day in Boston, the CP Defense Committee played down multi-racial unity and death to the KKK. A San Francisco party member was provoked by the D-D line into attacking red flags brought to a demonstration in Ocean-side by comrades from LA (as only ROAR and the police did in Boston).

The effect of the D-D line pushed toward the marines was not to unite with them on the basis of the party's revolutionary outlook and strengthen their heroism; it was to cool them off and win them to the timid calculations of revisionists and nationalists who know how to tiptoe around the ruling class "masters" and fight the masses. No clearer proof of this could exist than the open factionalizing against the Party editorial against

taking aid from the enemy, calling it "racist" to some of the Marines. D-D's position was both classically anti-communist and racist—anti-communist because it suggested that raising revolutionary ideas meant having some other aim in view than defending the marines (i.e., being "outside agitators"); racist because it denied to these marines the very revolutionary ideas toward which their actions pointed so strongly, and because it lacked the confidence in them to defend openly their subversion of the Brass—KKK axis. Apparently, the revolutionary fight to put an end to capitalism and racism is "racist" for D-D, but sucking up to nationalist bosses like Goodlett—who oppose the marines anti-racist rebellion—is quite "anti-racist." This is simply revisionist painting black as white and white as black.

The historic weaknesses of the KPD should be examined within the context of a new situation in the U.S. and in the revolutionary movement. The old communist movement by building nationalism even in its greatest efforts—the Soviet defeat of the Nazis in WW II, Mao's New Democratic line in the Chinese revolution—have ultimately led to the triumph of revisionism. Furthermore, the U.S. working class is multi-racial. It requires the sharpest line against nationalism as well as racism to forge a new revolutionary movement among workers in this country. The bosses understand this all too well. They have promoted ROOTS to build a base for black bourgeois leadership, revelling in its "princely" African background, men like Haley himself, Andrew Young, Tom Bradley, Coleman Young, et al, to soften up black workers (and anti-racist whites) for increased unemployment, police terror, or dying to defend U.S. investments in South Africa. Some integration of the ruling class accompanies increased segregation among workers. Within the most oppressed group, a black Judenrat is needed to deal with Jimmy KKK as Kastner mingled with Eichmann and other Nazis in "Jew-clean" Berlin. Kastner lied shamelessly to persuade his home village of Kluj in Rumania to go peacefully to Auschwitz.⁹ As Eichmann put it, without the Judenrat, only 3 million Jews (if indeed that many) could have been transported to their deaths. The black bourgeois forces, the Carleton Goodlets and the Andrew Youngs, are the same kind of monsters.

Black nationalism is **not** anti-racist. It disguises the essence of capitalism and serves to increase the exploitation of black workers and all workers. As the KPD might have put it, it is black fascism as surely as the SPD was social fascism; it seeks to bend the class hatred of the most oppressed workers against white workers, while sharing the loot with white bosses. Our mass line of fighting racism and for multi-racial unity against capitalism is the only line that can serve the most oppressed workers and all workers. The revisionist trend in the party strives to keep these vital ideas from workers.

Marxian theory is not the blind leading the blind. Its purpose is not to cling to the seemingly

stable elements in the present situation (the seeming strength of U.S. capitalism), but to grasp the development of trends in the class struggle from their inception and provide leadership to the workers. The Italian socialist Turati clung to the open revisionists against the communists until the triumph of Italian fascism—then, he made a belated self-criticism. The Communist International rightly responded:

He cannot be called a leader of the proletarian masses who with great effort and after the lapse of several years comes to a correct conclusion, but rather he who can detect a tendency at its birth and can warn the workers in time of the peril that menaces them.¹⁰

The theory that capitalism (in this case U.S. capitalism) is all-powerful is an old bourgeois standby. Marx attacked it in *Capital* as the view that bourgeois production relations are "eternal." It has been revived in the revolutionary movement by many revisionists—Bernstein (the middle class is growing and capitalism is stabilizing); Kautsky "ultra-imperialism"; Bukharin, the peaceful growing of capitalism, especially the rich peasants, into socialism, Liu-Shao chi's theory of the productive forces, and so on. There is nothing original in D-D's ideas and their practice. They even use the words "chaos" and "anarchy" to attack the party's revolutionary line which is merely an echo of the bourgeoisie's response to all working class revolt. D-D deny the character of this entire era, of inter-imperialist war, fascism and revolution, which have grown with the 20th Century and will not be banished without the victory of socialism. The triumph of revisionism in Russia not only does not alter, but strengthens, this character. Only the most thorough repudiation of all revisionist ideas, only the most unambiguous political efforts to clarify the real character of war and fascism among the workers, and to prepare them, through joining our party or supporting our activities, to deal with it, will enable our class to stamp out its oppressors.

—a comrade from Denver

1. Crozier, Huntington and Watanuke, *The Crisis of Democracy*.
2. George Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology*.
3. Gunther, *The Racial Elements of European History*. 260
4. Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*, pp. 119-20.
5. Otto Friedrich, *Before the Deluge*, 377-388.
6. Robert Waite, *Vanguard of Nazism*, ch. 1-3.
7. Piatnitsky, *The Present Situation in Germany*.
8. W.S. Allen, *The Seizure of Power*. Halperin, *Germany Tried Democracy*.
9. Ben Hecht, *Perfidy*. Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*.
10. Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution*. 96

COMING

In the next issue: statement from Albanian Party of Labor's newspaper (*Zeri i Popullit*), "The Theory and Practice of Revolution," with comments by PL editors.

Schoolboy Arithmetic & the End of History

by S. Agonistes

Some people know only today's, maybe a few tomorrows, but not next year and the years after. This may be called the "now is forever" theory of history. To prove it, its political supporters often draw their analogies from the tomb of the distant past. These thoughts came to mind after reading the D-D article on the relative strengths of the USA and the USSR. The article is impressive. Reams of statistics are always impressive. Moreover, there is every reason to assume that the figures given are quite accurate. D-D carefully document their sources. Yet for all that, their "now is forever" view of present-day history, which is the framework for the statistical analysis, leads the article to a completely wrong rating of the two capitalist giants and to a set of suspicious political conclusions.

Today all the numbers add up in favor of the USA, that is, when we add the production and military might of U.S. allies to the account. This is the D-D thesis. Tomorrow, the same will surely be true, since the tempo of history is not that swift. But what about next year and the years after? Well the D-D article proposes that the U.S. bloc is stable, no historical change in the years to come, on the analogy of the present period to the hundred years between 1815 and 1914. We may expect nothing too different then until 2045. I take 1945 as the starting date for this hundred year rerun of European history after the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo. If history were in fact that permanent, the simple schoolboy arithmetic of D-D might very well add up to an accurate accounting of the two powers with regard to each other.

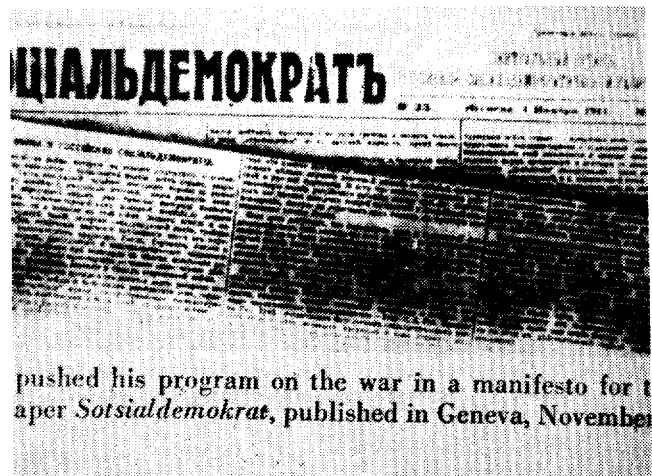
Not even the Chinese Communist Party, which on occasion has adopted a profound political posture on the next thousand years without embarrassment, is willing to bet on a hundred years of permanence. Chou-En-Lai, speaking for the dominant section of the Party, suggested a fifty-year trade pact with the American ruling class, when China shifted to a policy of conciliation toward the USA. There are two sides to this Chinese suggestion for a long term pact: one is that the Communist Party of China does not expect much from the class struggle for at least half a century, which basically discounts the class struggle altogether; in contrast, the other side of the suggestion gives full weight to the view that the USSR is in a relatively more favorable position in its rivalry with the USA. A Chinese Foreign Ministry official put it this way to William Safire: in the battle between the two giants, the USA is more afraid of the USSR and the USSR will not attack China until it has defeated the USA. The implication is clear. The overture to the U.S. is China's way of restoring a balance between the two giants to forestall a Russian victory. The Chinese revisionists fear the paper tiger far less than the Russian bear.

I make this point about the Chinese position because it touches on four basic weaknesses in the D-D argument: first, like the Chinese, it discounts entirely the relationship of class struggle to economics and international politics; second, and in this case unlike the Chinese, it bases its argument on economic numbers alone instead of the dynamics of capitalist alliances and rivalries; third, it misunderstands and oversimplifies the meaning and practice of Soviet revisionism at home and abroad; and fourth, it entirely misreads the tactics and strategy of the Chinese ruling class in world affairs.

I. The dynamics of capitalist alliances and rivalries.

First, the dynamics of capitalist alliances and rivalries: In light of what the historical evidence of the last 75 years shows us about their nature and the causes of war, D-D are politically blind in assuming a long term harmony among the members of the U.S. bloc while agreeing that a hot rivalry exists between the USA and the USSR. The factors that compel the two to be rivals are also present, to one degree or another, for each of the members of the U.S. bloc. Well then what precisely is the reason that the USA and the USSR are rivals? Is it because one is capitalist and the other socialist? This might have been a debatable point seventeen years ago. To their credit, the forces who established the Progressive Labor Party saw the true state of affairs even then. Today, except to the Communist Parties of the world, which stopped being honest about history a long time ago, and a certain breed of anti-communist, the point is no longer debatable. The two nations are rivals because each is a highly advanced capitalist country.

The case is classic. As Lenin made clear in **Imperialism**, when a capitalist nation has de-



pushed his program on the war in a manifesto for the paper *Sotsialdemokrat*, published in Geneva, November

Sotsialdemokrat of 1 Nov. 1914 open to Lenin's article, "The War and Russian Social Democracy".

veloped its productive powers to a high level, its various contradictions, such as the tendency for its rate of profit to fall in the most massive and developed industries, its need for raw materials, for market places, and for larger masses of cheaper labor to exploit than it can get at home—all these force it, whether it wants to or not, to expand its base of operations to other parts of the globe. In other words, it travels the imperialist road. The contradictions and needs of the advanced capitalist nation never diminish or level off. On the contrary, they keep on growing. As a result, imperialist expansion and/or the pressure for it are continually increasing. This is now and has been the case with the Soviet Union for the last 25 years and for much longer with the USA.

By 1914, there were no longer any significant new markets for imperialism to open up. Since then imperialist expansion has taken the course of redividing the already imperialized markets. Since 1917 the situation has grown even more restricted. The October Revolution and the Chinese Revolution of 1949 removed two huge market chunks from the path of imperialist expansion. This is true even at present, despite the capitalist directions of Russia and China. Neither area is open to any extensive, untrammled, uncontrolled imperialist activities by other advanced capitalist countries. The markets available for imperialist expansion are, therefore, now more limited than at the beginning of the century and what is available, after a hundred years of globally expanding capitalism, is more intensively imperialized. All this has meant collision after collision of one or another or combination of capitalist powers. These are the factors that make war inevitable, and not in some hundred year future, as long as capitalism exists. They explain why the two super capitalist powers are, of necessity, no matter which is "top dog," on the road to collision in the coming period.

But what about the other capitalist countries? Aren't they or at least some of them caught up

in the same contradictions and conflicts? Are the Soviet Union and the USA the only imperialist powers? The only powers whose interests are in conflict with each other? D-D answer, particularly with regard to the countries in the U.S. bloc, no. The other capitalists are not, at least, to any significant degree in imperialist contradiction with each other. The power they attribute to the USA as a result of this "no" answer forces them to conclude also that the USA, for a long period to come, is actually the only imperialist of sufficient strength to count at all. Arithmetic without a context of dialectical history is magic indeed. It does away with the real contradictions which have made the twentieth century the most unstable and violent of centuries and it produces a statistical sum that can only be described in Hollywood terms-colossal.

But their own figures and the evidence of the last ten years alone belie their answer. Next to the Soviet Union and the USA, the most advanced capitalist nations, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, belong to the U.S. bloc. They are fullfledged although not equal imperialists, as affirmed by the history of the last 75 years. These are the nations that fought two world wars with each other, Germany in each case on the side opposite to the U.S., Japan on a different side each time, and Italy the same. In neither war could the major capitalist opponents, the USA and Germany, count fully on every single one of their allies. Japan was of little help to the USA in World War I. It practically sat the war out, helping its own imperialist aims to what it could in the process. Italy proved to be practically worthless in both wars, first to the Allies, then to the Axis. In the last ten years, while allies all together in NATO and the Common Market, they have been engaged in the fiercest economic competition with each other all over the globe and most of all with the USA. I cite only the growing presence of Japan in South America, of Germany in European markets, of the revived fortunes of France in Southeast Asia following the U.S. defeat there, the two U.S. devaluations of recent years (incidentally the dollar is showing signs of deteriorating again) as proof.

Vietnam is another case in point. Adding up columns of figures is a useful schoolboy exercise, but until the columns appear in the battlefield, they ought not to be taken too seriously. What did Germany, Britain, France, Japan, Italy contribute to the U.S. side in the Vietnam War? Not a single soldier; not much, if any, equipment; and not much, if any, economic support. In this instance, they proved to be what they could prove to be again and again, allies on paper, not in practice. As a matter of fact, the leading capitalists of the bloc, Germany, Japan, and France, took as much imperialist advantage as politically possible of the U.S. embroilment in Vietnam. During this period, these three capitalist countries grew in strength vis-a-vis U.S. capitalism, which enabled them to outcompete the USA in many of the markets of the world.

Add up the figures, surely it is dangerous to

ignore them, but under no circumstances leave out history by assuming some feature of it has long term permanence. The main feature of the capitalist period is instability, the closer to the present, the more unstable, and the more so in the case of advanced capitalist relationships. Capitalist alliances are, in fact, understandable only as a sign of this essential instability. The U.S. bloc may, on the one hand, be directed at counterbalancing the growing might of the USSR. It is, on the other, a means whereby each of these imperialist allies makes sure or tries to make sure that the others do not make inroads on its own imperialist position. No sentiment, no honor, no gratitude, no cause for human betterment governs here. Only contradiction. If another lineup of nations promises to do a better job for one or another of these partners, then so be it. A transfer of allegiance is an easy thing among thieves.

II. The relationship of class struggle to international politics and economics.

So much for the permanence of the U.S. bloc. What about class struggle? It seems not to exist in the D-D article. A short section deals with internal economic conditions and their effect on the working class—the stuff out of which considerable class struggle emerges. But it sweeps the question aside by saying that if the quality of life is on the skids in the U.S., it is also on the skids in the USSR. Here is another example of the D-D school of arithmetic. Class struggle has a zero effect on imperialist alignment, on the comparative strength of the two super powers, and the reliability of allies because the struggle in one nation cancels out the struggle in the other. And what about class struggle in Latin America, Africa, Asia, the rest of Europe? Not many words. Apparently the "zero-effect" principle functions in these areas too. D-D may become famous mathematicians for having simplified arithmetic but they cannot expect to become first rate historians, let alone sound Marxists, by discounting the class struggle.

As a beginning let's take the effect of class struggle on the military contribution of U.S. allies in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. D-D add the military forces of the allies in these areas to the forces of the U.S. and the other advanced capitalist nations in the bloc to come up with a figure of 7 million army men, a force approximately 50% greater than the USSR and its allies. They admit that it would be unwise to count on every last one of the U.S. bloc at any given time and cite specifically two unreliaables, Portugal and Greece.

But what about Brazil, Argentina, Turkey, South Korea, Pakistan, Thailand and so on, which D-D call medium military powers? Can these be counted on at all, no matter what the given time? Past experience provides us with an answer. In World War II, Argentina was legally a neutral but leaned toward the axis. Aside from a place of asylum, it provided them with precious little support. In World War II, Brazil was a U.S. ally. It

declared war on the axis. It provided the U.S. with next to nothing in the way of soldiers. The same is true for every single Latin-American country allied with the U.S. in World War II. Is there any reason to believe they would behave otherwise today? Not at all. These countries are caldrons of class struggle. The ruling class of Argentina, where war among the classes is an every day affair, could not spare one soldier, one policeman without endangering its own political power. The same is true for Chile. There the fascist repression is so embracing and intensive that the struggle of the working class does not have a public forum. But the Chilean ruling class needs every last one of its storm troopers to keep the working class from seizing power. No ruling class in Latin America can afford to send troops into battlefields for the U.S. outside Latin America (although of course each ruling class will fight within their own country to preserve capitalism).

The same goes for Africa and Asia. What can one expect from Pakistan, where strikes and demonstrations, often violent, over recent election results have created chaos? From Thailand, where guerrilla forces have operated for years and are growing in numbers? From Zaire, where insurgent Kantangans are now in the field? Even South Africa, the economically and militarily strongest capitalist class outside Europe cannot spare a single squad for outside Africa for the U.S. because of the class struggle there, one which is intensifying month by month. Not a single country outside of Europe can afford to field even a minor force for the U.S. because of the various class struggles around the world. It is strange arithmetic to add the "medium military powers" to U.S. strength; they are, on the contrary, a drain on the U.S.

We are left then only with what China, Japan, and the West European capitalists may add to U.S. military strength. Surely the class struggle is at work in these countries also. Spain and Portugal are areas of particularly sharp contentions and will add nothing to U.S. strength. Italy's working class is continually striking and taking to the streets. At the very least, it will tie down a substantial part of the Italian army, itself a very doubtful force. At the very most, it will, especially if war comes, center the struggle on who rules and, thereby, tie down the entire Italian army. Remember each World War of this century accelerated the struggle for who rules among the classes. There is no reason to think that the case will be otherwise, not only in Italy, but in France and even in Japan and West Germany.

The effects of Soviet and Chinese revisionism on class struggle and the relative strength of the different capitalist classes and blocs will be discussed in a moment. Here I want simply to say that it is premature to assume that China and the Communist Parties of West Europe are in the pockets of the U.S. bloc. At any rate 7 million is another one of those colossal numbers. But the class struggle determines that a substantial part of that sum will be deployed elsewhere than on the side of the U.S.

One other aspect of the class struggle needs to be dealt with. The internal contradictions of U.S. capitalism are economic, political, and international. The bare figures of production and military size tell us nothing about these internal contradictions and, as a consequence, the full meaning of the figures themselves. Capitalism is in the business, not of producing or making war, but of maximizing profit. Mass production and war necessarily follow from that goal, although war quite obviously contributes to it in no insignificant way. As capitalism develops one branch of industry after another, the rate of profit in each begins to fall sooner or later. The reason for this is that technology is the chief way of the means at hand (speedup and the long working day are the others) to put the largest and an ever increasing number of workers to work, to exploit them in other words. It is the chief way to guarantee a large enough production at a low enough unit cost to compete and outcompete other capitalists at home and overseas. However, the amount of capital used for technology, called constant capital (because of itself it produces no surplus value), rises at a much faster pace than the amount of capital used for living labor, the labor-power that produces surplus value, even though more and more of it is employed because of the use of technology. Hence, the rate of profit falls. The falling rate is compounded even more by the contradictions of technology itself. As the already intensively developed industries grow older, their technological base wears out, is made obsolete by newer technology and, whether for the one reason or the other, needs to be replaced. But that demands an even more enormous investment of constant capital. Oil is a perfect example of this turn of events, but so are other industries in the USA.

These are the economic factors that underlie the internal crises of U.S. capitalism. They have made the U.S. less competitive in the world markets than West Germany, France, and Japan,



U.S. soldiers in Europe demonstrate to demand being sent home, 1946.

whose technology is newer and whose wage bill per man hour is lower. To become more competitive, it is absolutely essential for U.S. capitalism to replace its obsolete and worn out technology, to increase man-hour productivity, and, if it can, to reduce the wage bill per man hour. But if it pays for the new technology out of its capitalist coffers, it will further depress an already depressed rate of profit. It is not about to do this. Hence, it is now using every political trick, appropriation, and legal maneuver to force that money out of the pockets of the masses of the American people. No matter what the current production figures are, this is the ongoing process both in economics and politics and what is behind the steady deterioration of the quality of life in the USA.

If it were only a matter of statistics, this would hardly be more than academic in interest. But it directly affects the class struggle. Does anyone think that the working class will play dead as the capitalist class burdens it more and more with speedup, tries harder and harder to cut wages (through racism, runaway shops, inflation, forced work programs, inadequate health, educational, and other public services) and saddle it with the enormous bill for constant-capital investment? All other things being equal the working class will resist furiously and openly, as it has in the past. The capitalists know this. That is why they use every means possible to control the struggle: nationalism, racism, liberalism, layoffs and other economic reprisals, cops, alcohol, drugs, the drug of television and other cultural forms. But if it only uses these political and economic strategies to throw the weight of the crises on the working class, the real conditions of the system will make a shambles of them, and the class struggle stands a good chance of erupting in full force. That is why U.S. capitalism needs to prepare for fascism. It is the ultimate way, when capitalist maneuverability is reduced in scope by the realities of the internal and external crises, to put the lid on class struggle. But to put the fascist lid on, U.S. capitalism will have to field a vastly expanded police and armed force, not only for war abroad, but for repression and eternal vigilance against the working class at home.

Whichever way it goes, an open and erupted class struggle or a fascist contained and underground one, the class struggle as it now exists or as it will potentially exist in the future means that simple arithmetic applied to production and military strength may add up to an accurate sum in the abstract, but by no stretch of the imagination gives us a real measure of the relative standing of the US-USSR. It doesn't matter whether the same process is at work in the Soviet Union, as it no doubt will be. That doesn't cancel out the effect. Specific historical developments different in each case and the uneven development of capitalism guarantee that. In fact, under certain conditions, the same process at work in the Soviet Union may very well intensify the problems and character of the U.S. bloc.

Toward the end of their article, D-D express

the worry that a failure to recognize the U.S. as "top dog" will cause the downplaying of two things: 1) the exposure of U.S. imperialism and 2) struggle against U.S. capitalism. The history of Progressive Labor Party has hardly been one of downplaying the one or the other. It is curious that D-D pay little attention to this distinct danger of war and fascism by the U.S., generated by the crises discussed above. Isn't this an exposure of American imperialism? What do they want to expose? That the U.S. is super strong! Well it hardly needs D-D to undress that already naked fact. Even if they aren't "top dog," they are obviously super strong. No one has argued otherwise. No, what D-D want to expose is that the U.S. is not only ahead of the USSR, but so far ahead that there is no contest. In this light, their warning against American exceptionalism seems quite empty. What has that exceptionalism been made up of historically if not that the U.S. is unbeatably ahead of everyone else, that U.S. problems can be overcome without intensifying the class struggle, that the U.S. is so strong that a revolution is not desirable or possible, certainly not in the foreseeable future.

Underestimation of the enemy is a dangerous matter. Overestimation is no less so. In fact overestimation hardly ever stimulates class struggle. In the first place, it falsifies what is actually going on. It leaves no room, therefore, for a realistic plan of consistent action against the enemy. In the second, when it portrays the enemy as unbeatable, it triggers inaction (not to mention cynicism and defeatism). It doesn't make any sense to fight an unbeatable enemy. The Party has recently had its own experience with how the formulation that U.S. capitalism is in total control of everything in bourgeois society deflected members from involvement in class struggle. Fortunately, the Party detected the problem in short order, and has written several editorials pushing for more involvement in class struggle.

A more productive way to struggle against U.S. imperialism is to see clearly how its internal crises have altered its standing in the world, what its strategies are to overcome these crises, and how it is heading toward war and fascism. This way we have very specific class struggles to organize, very specific multi-class rank-and-file struggles against war and fascism to organize, and a very clear picture of why all the class and political struggles must be turned into a civil war against the capitalist class if war and fascism are to be stopped once and for all. Rather than the super-strength numbers game of D-D, which given the kindest interpretation merely repeats what is well known but in fact hides what is actually happening in current history, this kind of exposure informs the working class of the true aims and dangers of U.S. capitalism. It is the path to no end of concrete struggle.

III. The meaning and practice of Soviet revisionism at home and abroad.

D-D show no better understanding of Soviet revisionism and capitalism than of class struggle and the crises of U.S. imperialism. At the end of



the article, they express still another worry: the judgment that the USSR is in a stronger imperialist position than the U.S. might "unintentionally prettify Soviet imperialism, making them seem more powerful than they really are, covering up their internal weaknesses and sharpening contradictions." Ah, how refreshing after the pages of statistics and political analysis that studiously ignore U.S. internal weaknesses and sharpening contradictions to hear D-D call for something more than schoolboy arithmetic, for something more than "now is forever" history. But they have the whole problem backwards. In the first place, it is they who have engaged in prettifying, not the Soviet Union, but the U.S. In the second place, with regard to Soviet capitalism the problem is not prettification but caricature. They have caricatured Soviet capitalism and imperialist policies and have used a caricature Marxism to do it. As a consequence, they misunderstand completely the meaning and practice of Soviet revisionism at home and abroad.

Their Marxism is a caricature because they forget that capitalism is in a continual historical development. It is not a single, static model, absolutely the same everywhere. No capitalist nation is precisely at the same stage of productive development. None are at the same point in the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. Wide variations occur in many instances, even among advanced capitalist countries. Not all use exactly the same methods of exploitation and repression. Not all develop under the same historical circumstances. None are exceptions to the general development of the typical weaknesses and contradictions of capitalism. But the development of these does not occur at exactly the same pace, in exactly the same manner, along exactly the same line, or at the same level of intensity at one and the same time. Therefore to say that the Soviet Union is capitalist and subject to the Marxist laws of capitalist contradiction is to say

a truth and yet not to give a truly living picture of Soviet capitalism.

To capture a living picture, there are certain things to remember. The USSR is a rather recent comer to capitalism. Unlike the other capitalist nations, it began immediately at a somewhat advanced stage of production. It expropriated an already developed socialist economy, which it continued to develop at a high level of concentration throughout the post-war period. More important it did not begin in the spontaneous, individualistic way that capitalism began in every other case.

All other capitalist developments began in the form of individual or family ownership of particular enterprises. The joint-stock ownership of later development did not eliminate this characteristic of traditional capitalism. It transferred it to small conglomerations of capitalists, more or less distinct but nevertheless distinct from other such conglomerations, which individually owned or controlled particular enterprises, more or less monopolized but distinct from each other in the different branches of industry. The later overlappings and alliances of individual conglomerations of capitalist ownership, through finance capital, in cartels, and in multi-national corporations, still retain this characteristic. What we have in them are competitors who collude and colluders who compete. Because of the steady tendency toward monopoly, there may be few significant owners and, hence, a less diverse market place anarchy, but on the other hand their collusions and competitions intensify astronomically their contradictions with the working class, with each other, and within their separate business structures. In any given nation and internationally, this historical pattern creates all sorts of political and economic problems for the functioning of the capitalists as a class.

An entirely different set of circumstances prevails in the USSR. The capitalist class which expropriated the working class there is not a coalition of individual or individual conglomerate capitalist owners. Just as the working class owned all of the economy as an entire class, so the capitalist rulers of the USSR own all of the economy as an entire class. What they have done is take a model of socialist ownership and apply it to capitalist ownership. Unlike the capitalists of other countries, who rule as a class but own in various individual forms, the Soviet capitalists rule as a class and own as a class. This is a much unrecognized and unexplored side of revisionism.

Of course, with capitalist production in full swing pressures for individual ownership build up. The amassing of individual fortunes through hoarding and embezzlement, the appearance of the dissident movement, which is no less a right-wing movement than revisionism, become more understandable in this light. But as of now and probably for some years more, the class as a whole runs a tight ship and shows no inclination to fragment its ownership. This model of all-class ownership makes economic development

often more lumbering and bureaucratic, but it also eliminates the problems of collusion/competition, two of which are to exert a powerful downward pressure on the rate of profit and to lead to a considerable amount of waste production. As a consequence, the Soviet capitalists are able to slow down the falling rate of profit at present and more easily get their constant-capital investment from the working class. They are also able to do more with a lean economy. Their numbers may not in most commodities match U.S. statistics, but for the most part they get comparatively more mileage from them, item for item and perhaps even for dollar invested.

Another thing to remember is that the Soviet capitalists seized power with relative ease and speed. They did not go through the drawn-out struggles (sometimes lasting more than a century) and periodically rocked by massive and violent civil conflicts which characterized the battle for power of the western capitalists. Compared to these, the terror and repression, sometimes of a fairly extensive kind, that the Soviet capitalists used to silence opposing voices are quite limited.

What made the rapid and easy seizure possible? Revisionism. The revisionist policies of the Soviet Communist Party transformed the leading cadre in the leading Party centers into a capitalist class and the government/Party apparatus into a tool of capitalism. But these policies did so always in the name of consolidating working class control and as a set of tactics to advance socialism. In the main, the capitalist class of the Soviet Union has successfully used revisionism to keep the Russian working class in its corner. This will not always be the case. As the contradictions of Soviet capitalism grow, class struggle will increase. But what resistance the working class now puts up to certain capitalist developments is basically a striking out for reform within the system, which it still regards as socialist and in which it still has confidence.

To exaggerate the weaknesses and internal contradictions of Soviet capitalism, to exaggerate the character and extent of class struggle in the USSR at this time and for some years to come is to underestimate and misunderstand how dangerous revisionism is. It is a weapon directed at the heart of the working class from inside the working class because it parades as proletarian and socialist ideology. In the U.S., racism and liberalism are the two main ideological weapons directed against the working class. In the Soviet Union and among mass sections of the oppressed classes in other countries, revisionism is the main danger: its duplicity makes it an acceptable idea to masses of workers and hence a powerful political and military force, but against the working class itself.

If it is a weapon against the working class because of its pretended proletarian and socialist outlook, it is for the same reason a potent weapon against U.S. and other non-Soviet imperialism. Like the all-class ownership of the Soviet capitalists, this side of revisionism is almost always

neglected. Right now, even without a world war, many of the major class struggles and guerrilla forces around the world look to the Soviet Union, hardly the U.S., for support and sometimes leadership. Furthermore, revisionism, having jettisoned the strategies of Marxism that energize all struggle toward socialist revolution, appeals to a wide range of union, political, and armed resistance: for example, to the liberalism of the Rhodesian guerrillas, the revisionism of the Angolans, and the Katangan wing of fascism in Zaire.

Does anyone imagine after the experiences of World War II and the seething insurgencies, insurrections, and wars which have characterized all the years since that the next worldwide war will not see a tenfold increase in partisan/underground operations where they now exist and in places where they have not yet surfaced? No, they will explode all over the place. And on whose side will they be, for the most part? The USSR? The USA? Since revisionism has operated so successfully until now in its false colors, sound politics answers the USSR. Even if the partisan/guerrilla forces have no interest in supporting one side or another in a war between the U.S.-USSR, the longer history of U.S. and West European capitalism guarantees that they will fight the U.S. and its allies, not the USSR. So whose columns shall we add the guerrillas to? And what number value shall we assign to them? Unfortunately, in contrast to conventional armies, the size of guerrilla forces is not listed in the **Almanac of World Military Power**. But we all know they operate most successfully because they live in the heart of a supporting population. Guerrillas are everywhere surrounded by friends; conventional armies are everywhere confronted by armed insurrectionists and are everywhere surrounded by a hostile, uncooperative population.

One last point about Soviet revisionism: its influence on and eventual adoption by the Vietnam Party and the Viet Cong does not mean that Vietnam is about to be turned over to U.S. imperialism. Vietnam will deal with the U.S. The Soviet Union also does. But if anything, Vietnam revisionism means that the Vietnamese will be turned over to Soviet imperialism. That's the purpose of revisionism. May the same be said for the Communist Parties of France and Italy? What if they have rejected the dictatorship of the proletariat? The Soviet Union hasn't slapped their wrists for it. What if they have rejected revolution? The Soviet capitalist class perfected the notion of peaceful coexistence and the parliamentary road to socialism. What if they have agreed to stay in NATO in the event they are elected to run the government? They know that NATO is not a binding general staff or decision-making body. More important than all their rejections and agreements is that, like the Soviet Union, they offer revisionism as a working class outlook and a set of tactics to achieve a socialist society. Besides which the rejections are already part and parcel of their revisionism, even before they were stated publicly. To think, therefore,

that they are now in the pocket of the U.S. is a silly oversimplification. The purpose and net effect of revisionism is to enhance Soviet not U.S. imperialism.

The three sides of revisionism, the side of all-class ownership, the side that mobilizes the working classes against themselves, and the side that mobilizes them against the U.S. will have to be taken into account in judging who is the "top-dog" imperialist. They make simple arithmetic absolutely impossible.

But revisionism also reminds us that a new, terribly effective weapon is now in use to keep the working class the "bottom dog." Still masses of workers see it as a legitimate working-class politics. How then can we destroy it? Only by recruiting masses of people, on sound revolutionary grounds, to Progressive Labor Party. We can do that only if we take part in, generate on our own, and bring communist ideas into the class struggle. That means right here in the United States, not anywhere else. A mass party will not only electrify the class struggle here at home. It will give us the credibility, in theory and practice, to rip away the false colors covering up Soviet revisionism, to win the international working class from this empty attraction to the politics of revolution. It turns out then that the urgency of fighting U.S. imperialism here at home and spreading communist ideas is dictated to us not only by a proper estimate of the U.S. but also by a living picture of the Soviet Union. It turns out at the same time, doesn't it, that the D-D caricature prettifies, if anything does, Soviet imperialism. Together with their simple arithmetic, it directs us away from class struggle or to a misconceived struggle. In the process, it leaves communist ideas outside on the doorstep or probably back in the PL office. In their place, it brings into the struggle a set of useless Marxist parodies.

IV. The Chinese ruling class in world affairs.

Perhaps the most amazing parody (fantasy to be more precise) is the addition of the Chinese regular army (2,555,000) and active reserve (5,000,000) to the U.S. bloc. What a naive reading of China's tactics and strategy this is. It is hard to believe that D-D are not aware of the simple-mindedness of this addition. Suspicion then of their purposes is not unjustified. They seem so willfully willing to use fairy tale to discredit the argument that the USSR is, on the grounds of a dialectical reading of political-economy, more favorably placed now and will be increasingly so for the next period. But the politics of Chinese revisionism is difficult to understand at best. D-D may simply be victims of their mechanical distortions of Marxist analysis.

The last ten years reveal that Chinese revisionism operates in a three-sided battle. On one side, it is used to attack U.S. imperialism. On another, it is used against the USSR, in the form of directly accusing the Soviets of imperialist designs but also in the form of attacking Soviet revisionism. Its revisionism, as a result, takes a

different coloring. Its goal is the same, but with this important difference: its purpose is to promote Chinese, not Soviet imperialism. The third side of its battle is internal. But here too there are important differences. Chinese revisionism has been a significant part of the struggle among different groupings of "capitalist roaders" for state power. At the same time it is used in the fight to make the working classes a willing party to their own loss of power.

The first two sides of this battle indicate that the ruling class of China intends China to be a third center of capitalism, not a satellite of either super power. Its strategy is to capture what it calls the third world for its own imperialist ends. Both U.S. imperialism and Soviet revisionism are roadblocks. Its international tactics on the diplomatic, political, and economic levels—but primarily on the diplomatic—are designed to offset these roadblocks, mainly by getting the super powers to stalemate each other and in the process wear each other out. As I said earlier, the Chinese ruling class judges the USSR to have more advantages in world affairs now. The alliance with the U.S. is its way of trying to establish a stalemate between the two. The whole point of these tactics is to buy time. China needs a great deal of time to develop its productive forces so that economically it has the capacity to carry out its imperialist aims in the third world. It needs time, and this is the most immediate problem, to restore order and consolidate ruling class control internally.

The battle among the different sections of capitalism for state power is grossly misunderstood if it is seen as a palace dispute. It was a major class struggle among the different capitalist groupings. Each grouping mobilized millions of non-working class, primarily bourgeois forces to its side. Furthermore each grouping used revisionism to win millions of working class forces to its side. The road of the revisionists toward expropriating the working class



Dan Vered, Israeli Communist Jailed by fascist Golda Meir regime.

in China has been far tougher to travel than for the Soviet rulers. The battle among the capitalist roaders is probably now over. The first group to be defeated was the section that basically wanted the capitalists class to stay in the orbit of Soviet imperialism, even if that meant being junior partner. The next section to be beaten was the "gang-of-four." It represented that part of the capitalist class that wanted to be no one's junior partner and thought the best strategy was to go it completely alone, leaving stalemate conditions to spontaneity. As things look now, the capitalist roaders who represent that section of the capitalist class that wants to be no one's junior partner but wants to actively manipulate the conditions of stalemate are in complete control of the state.

But although the battle among these different sections appears to be finally decided after more than ten years, it has left behind an explosive and highly disordered situation among the classes. The victorious capitalist roaders are busy liquidating this dangerous problem (to them, that is). They have had to use substantial armed forces to this end. Until they have pacified the population and particularly the working class through revisionism, they will have to keep a major part of their army on ready-alert for domestic purposes. This internal problem makes it hardly possible for China at this stage to add its regulars and/or reserves to either bloc. On the other hand, their tactics of stalemate and wear each other out signify that, even if or when internal affairs have been stabilized, the Chinese ruling class has no intentions of lending its army to any one on any consistent long range basis. That army will be in the field, if it is forced to be in the field, for the purpose of extending Chinese imperialism. The next world war may be a two-sided affair, but with a third side deploying its forces in its own favor. This may mean that China will be a reluctant dragon on one side if need be, possibly then on another if stalemate requires it, and mostly an aggressive one for itself against smaller powers, while the U.S. and USSR are occupied with each other. Lenin said somewhere that the real world, particularly when in rapid movement and sharp contradiction, is richer and more concretely complex than theory. How much more so than schoolboy arithmetic! No, it would not at all do to count China's army in the U.S. column.

Production figures and military logistics belong to the living texture of history, the texture of unstable not relatively permanent capitalist relationships, of class struggle as the key motive force, and of revisionist strategies aimed at multiple targets. That kind of history computes numbers dialectically and provides a strong case for the judgment that the USSR is "top dog." D-D claim that the difference between themselves and this judgment is only a matter of estimate. But that's only a lot of jive, just another attempt on their part to do a number on us. The difference is between a revolutionary view of the current period and a non-revolutionary view. Their political conclusions are suspicious because the dangers they foresee follow, not from the estimate

that the USSR is now ahead of the U.S., but from their own reverse opinion, the opinion that today's raw economic figures unrelated to historical process determine relative strength.

If it were only a matter of D-D, their mistaken political views would hardly be worth much attention. But D-D have been around for a long time. They have been leading members of the Party, have learned their politics mostly in the Party. D-D are for these reasons probably symptomatic of a more general right-wing weakness among all of us in the Party. It may be found in similar disagreements to theirs with what is basically a sound Marxist line but also in what seems on the surface to be agreement, the empty echoing of slogans. This kind of echoing covers up a failure to think dialectically, to take full account of concrete reality (including numbers), to build a base for the Party year round (without hip-hopping to different people), to participate and generate class struggle, and to make every struggle a schooling in communist ideas. How could anyone build a base year round without hip-hopping, how could anyone make communist ideas the guiding tool of class struggle, the means of winning the working class to the Party with only slogans to say? The arithmetic of numbers and the arithmetic of slogans end up with the same political sum, zero.

The criticism of D-D serves best as self-criticism of all the ways in which all of us don't "fight city hall" because the U.S. is too strong, or revisionism too clever, the working class too unresponsive, ourselves too lazy or afraid to listen to them so that we come to know better how to get a response from them, or too uncommitted to get beyond the slogan to the concrete evidence and dialectics of the Party's politics.

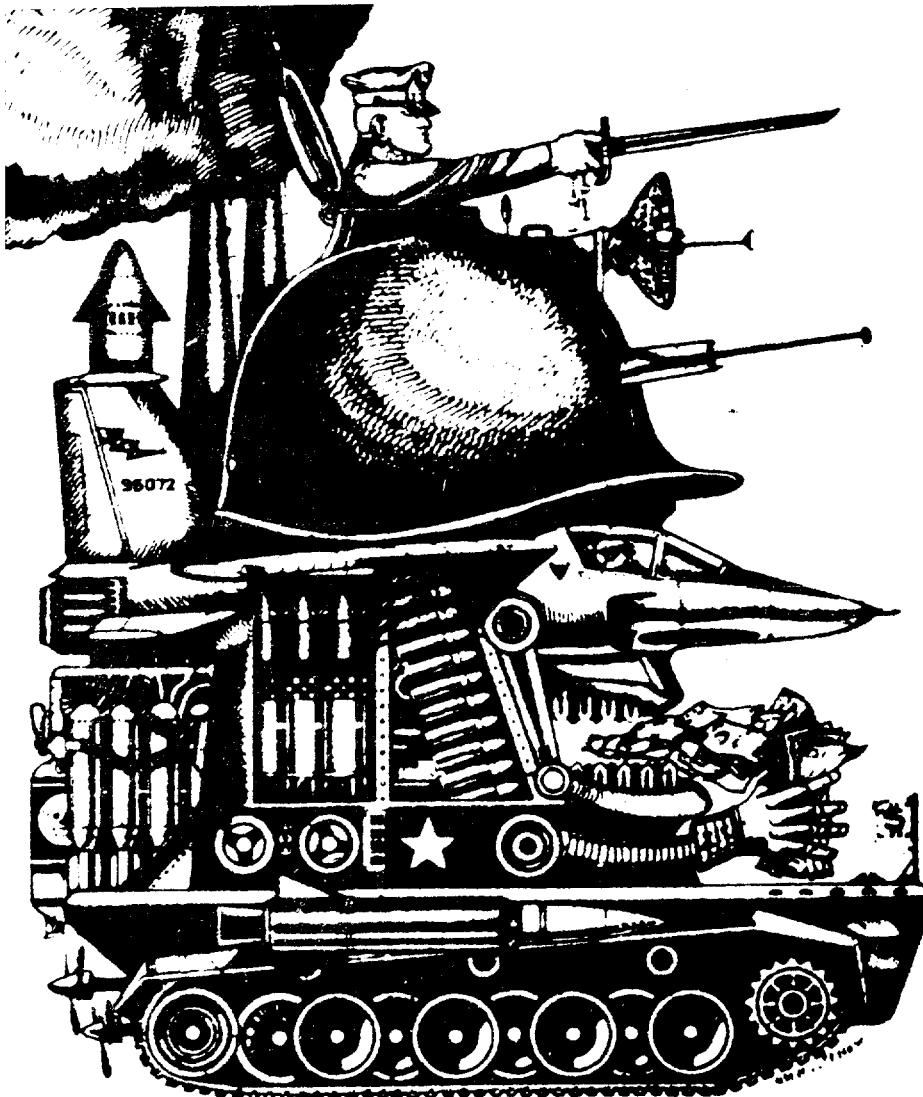
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Follow The Bouncing Check...

Look for the un - ion lab - el
 When you are buy - ing a coat, dress or blouse
 Re - mem - ber some - where
 Our un - ion's sew - ing
 Our wage - s go - ing
 To feed the kids
 And run the house,
 We work hard
 But who's com - plain - ing.
 Thanks to the I. L. G. we're pay - ing our way.
 So, al - ways look for
 The un - ion la - bel,
 It says we're a - ble
 To make it in the U. S. A.
 "Union Label"—The Ladies Garment Workers
 Union ad as sung on radio and TV:

According to I.L.G.W.U. union "leader" Sol Chaiken, the union has lost 63,000 workers in the last 3 years. The New York Times reported (June 8, 1977) "a steady slide ... into wages that are already below the official poverty level for many members" of the I.L.G.W.U.

IMPERIALISM



by L. V.

We live in the epoch of imperialism, the last stage of capitalism and the rise of world socialism. The epoch began at the turn of the 20th Century. It has been characterized by intense inter-imperialist rivalry causing numerous wars around the globe and culminating in two great world wars, the growth of fascism as the principal form of bourgeois rule, and above all the growth of the international communist movement which led the great historic revolutions in Russia and China.

In his classic work on imperialism, Lenin listed five basic features:

1. The growth of monopolies which arise out of the concentration of capital.
2. The merging of banking capital with industrial capital and the creation of finance capital.
3. The export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities.
4. The formation of international monopoly capitalist combines which share the world among themselves.
5. The division of the world among the imperialist powers is completed.

In the letter characterizing the current epoch, March 8, 1977, D-D departed from a *Marxist-Leninist* analysis of imperialism.

D-D made a special point of comparing U.S. imperialism to 19th Century British imperialism, indicating that this was a period of no world wars, that it took *100 years* for Germany and the U.S. to achieve sufficient finance capital to challenge British supremacy, and that it was not obvious until the end of the hundred years of British hegemony from which direction the challenge would come, D-D said, "U.S. imperialist hegemony gives the present period a character resembling that of British supremacy (1815-1914)."

D-D base this analogy on the great superiority of U.S. finance capital which has achieved an ultra-imperialist posture in the world compared to other imperialist powers, particularly the Soviet Union. Thus U.S. imperialism, despite certain military setbacks, (Vietnam, Angola) can "buy back" its imperialist dominance in these and other areas. Also U.S. hegemony makes world war unlikely for the present period, because no other imperialist power, including the USSR, has the finance capital to challenge the U.S. Hence D-D say that the Soviets will very probably back off from all nuclear and semi-nuclear confrontations.

What's wrong with this analysis? Everything.

The first obvious error is that D-D compares the present epoch with a previous epoch which was the epoch not of imperialism but of the growth of monopoly capitalism and the rise and transition to imperialism. As Lenin wrote, "The last third of the 19th Century witnesses the transition to the new imperialist epoch. Monopoly is enjoyed by finance capital not in one, but in some, very few, Great Powers..." And "Neither Marx or Engels lived to see the imperialist epoch which began not earlier than 1898-1900." (from **Imperialism and the Split in the Socialist Movement**.)

This "slight" error of confusing two different epochs leads D-D to ignore the fact that the world has already been divided up between imperialist powers and that the drive to expand the export of capital by different imperialist powers causes a struggle to redivide up the world anew. As Lenin wrote, "It is beyond doubt that capitalism's transition to the stage of monopoly capitalism, to finance capital (i.e. the imperialist epoch) is connected with the intensification of the struggle for the partition of the world." And "Finance capital and the trusts do not diminish but increase the differences in the rate of growth of the various parts of the world economy. Once the relationship of forces is changed, what other solution of the contradictions can be found under capitalism than that of force." (from "Imperialism")

D-D's second error is to underestimate the significance of the **Law of Uneven Development Under Imperialism**. D-D think that world war occurs only when imperialist powers reach a somewhat parity level of finance capital when they challenge one another for hegemony. D-D write that, "It was only when German finance capital could challenge British finance capital that all-out war ensued." But this is not the case.

Unevenness in economic and political development is a law of the development of capitalism in general. In the epoch of imperialism it is of "decisive importance." (J. Stalin) "The law of uneven development in the period of imperialism signifies development by leaps and bounds in some countries as compared with others, a rapid ousting of certain countries by others from the world market, periodic redivisions of an already divided up world by means of military conflicts and catastrophic wars..." For example, prior to WW. I in 1902, British imperialism had a 5 to 1 superiority over German imperialism in the export of capital. By 1914 this superiority had de-

clined to a two and a half to one superiority. The point is that world war broke out, not because of a parity of development of finance capital, but because British capital had declined sharply relative to the rapid growth of German capital, even though British capital exports increased from 62 (billions of francs) to 75-100. But German imperialist capital export had increased from 12.5 to 44.0. The point is that German capital was increasing at a much faster rate than British capital, and could expand further only by means of war. Capital, after all, is accumulated by the exploitation of workers at home and super-exploitation of workers abroad.

A third error of D-D's analysis of the current epoch is to one-sidedly emphasize that finance capital **exclusively** determines the strength of an imperialist power. While we agree that finance capital is a key factor, **it is not the only factor**. Thus, if an imperialist power can dominate a territory politically and militarily, it is certainly in a better position to exploit it economically. If the D-D "buy-back" theory would correspond to reality, why then should U.S. imperialism even fight local wars inasmuch as they could always "buy back" their positions? What D-D leave out of their analysis is the role of national bourgeoisies and their efforts to maneuver between the super-powers who are contending for domination. This maneuvering by the capitalist classes of various developing countries for a bigger piece of the profit action does not lessen the struggle between the super-powers because the U.S. has more finance capital; on the contrary, it **sharpens** the struggle between them.

Let's Look at the Real World

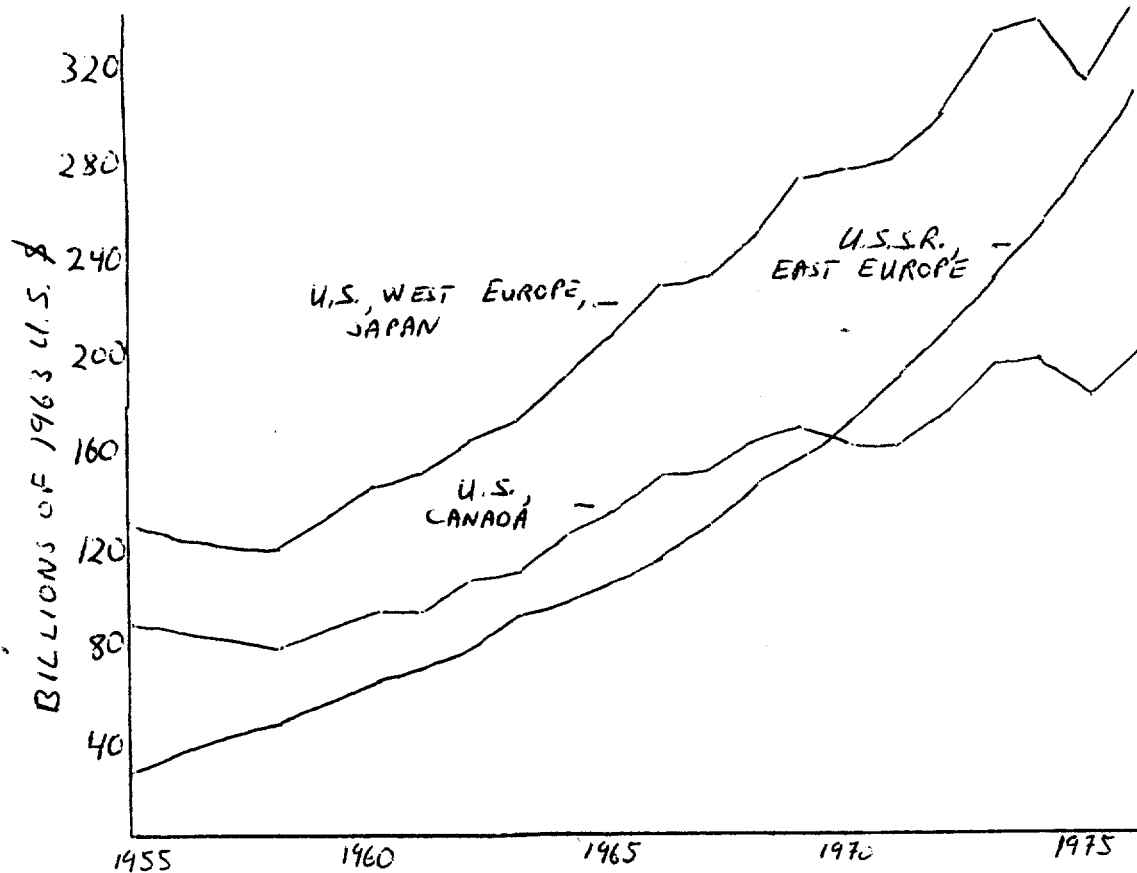
The Party's analysis of the present period is that the main contradiction in the world is one of inter-imperialist rivalry between the Soviet U. and U.S. imperialism; that U.S. imperialism is in a period of relative decline vis-a-vis the growing strength of the Soviets, and that this rivalry is growing in intensity and will inevitably lead to war. It is also the party's analysis that the U.S. ruling class, confronting a developing crisis at home and abroad, is heading toward fascism. While we don't put a date on when war and fascism will occur in the period ahead, we are struggling to prepare the party and the working class to be ready "sooner than later" to make revolution as the only road forward for the international working class. D-D, on the other hand, see the period ahead as one of relative stabilization, of no major danger of world war and fascism, and that the period ahead is not one of crisis.

Is the U.S. in decline relative to the Soviet Union? (a point D-D dispute.)

1. On Industrial production:

The following charts and statistics clearly show that the Soviet Union has been developing at a much faster rate than the U.S. in such decisive areas of production as mining, manufacturing, gas and water industries, coal, crude oil and natural gas, light and heavy manufacturing, and even the food, beverage and tobacco industries. (see charts)

HEAVY MANUFACTURING



In mining etc., the Soviets rate was about 20% faster than the U.S. for the years 1960-69 and over 100% faster between '70-'74. In heavy industry, the Soviets were about 18% faster in rate of growth than the U.S. for 1950-69 and about 100% between '70-'74. Even in light industry they were growing at a faster rate than the U.S. (Note that only Japan was growing at an even faster rate until the increase in oil prices and the world-wide recession of '73-'74.)

While these statistics do not tell how much of each category is produced, the chart on shares of the world industrial output shows that the Soviet bloc outproduces the U.S. and Canada by 9% (34%-25%) (although D-D would argue that Western Europe, Latin America and Asia should be included in the U.S. camp; more on allies later). The point here is that the charts clearly indicate that the U.S. is declining on the industrial front relative to Soviet growth.

2. On Oil and Natural Gas

In their article, Jan. 12th, 1977, D-D try to portray the picture that it's the Soviets, not the U.S. that is strategically weak in oil and natural gas. The facts are these: The Soviet Union is the world's biggest producer of natural gas and oil while the U.S. relies more on imports. U.S. domestic production of oil and natural gas has declined since the 1970s while U.S. imports have risen from 4.7 mb/d (million barrels a day) to

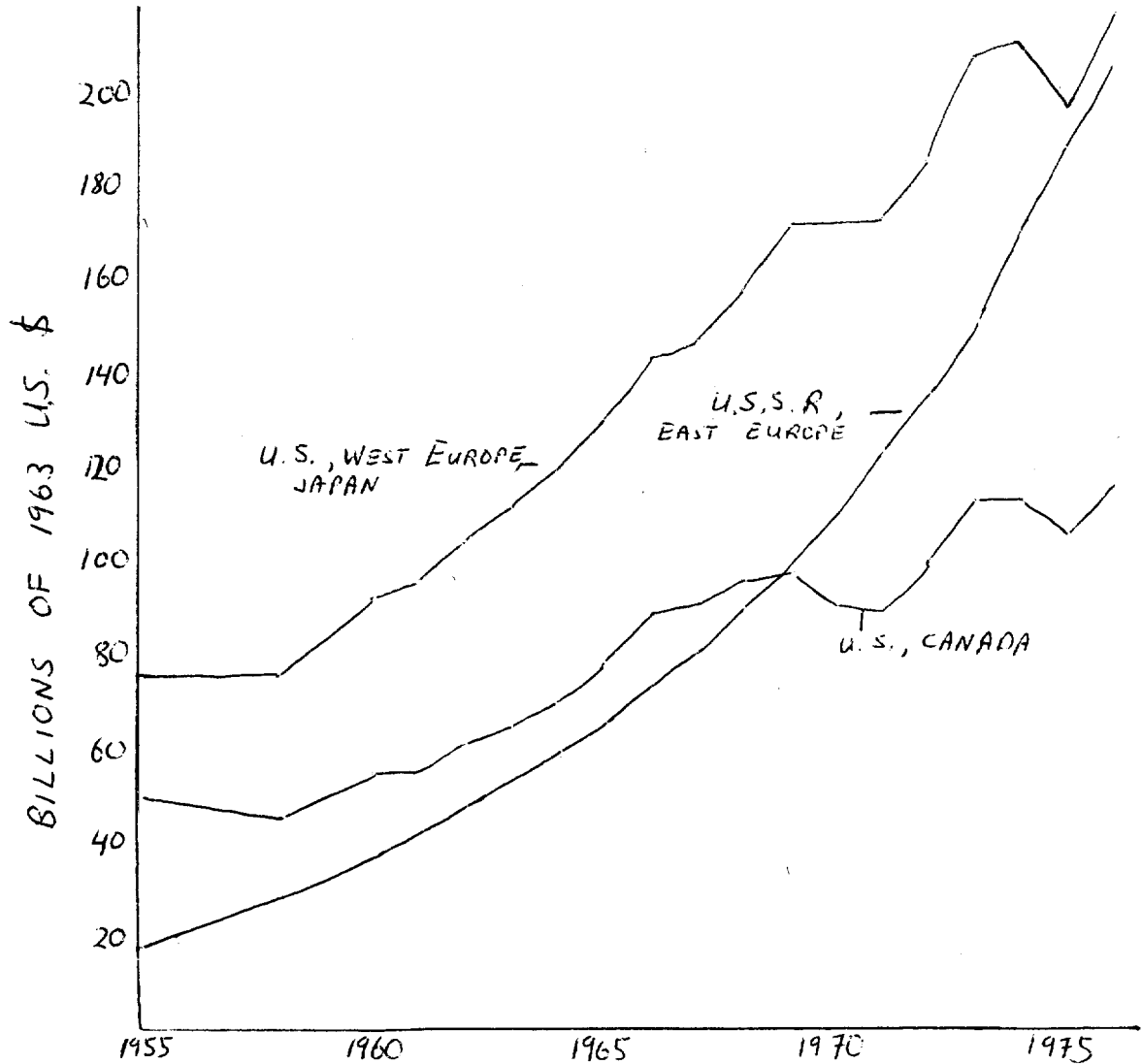
6.8 mb/d in the first half of 1976 (*Foreign Affairs*, Apr. 1977, p. 497).

In 1976 oil and natural gas together accounted for 67% of total energy consumption in the U.S. (oil, 29%, natural gas 38%). Also, oil and gas imports account for 42% of U.S. energy consumption. The oil bill for 1977 is estimated at 41 billion dollars, or about twice the 1976 balance of trade deficit (facts from, British publication, *The Guardian*, March 6th, 1977). In addition, at present levels of gas consumption, the gas resources have diminished by a quarter in 10 years, and gas production has dropped by 13% in the last 3 years, so that if present consumption levels are maintained the U.S. will have completely exhausted their reserves of natural gas within 12 years!

But D-D argue that U.S. imports come from reliable allies; indeed, that the imports are really from U.S. companies abroad which are an integral part of U.S. imperialism. True, but herein lies another fundamental error in D-D's analysis which we alluded to earlier... ignoring the contradictions between allies, ignoring the question of political and military control over territories.

Who could be a more reliable ally than Saudi Arabia, the world's leading exporter of oil? Saudi Arabia is the only major OPEC country with oil reserves that have been developed wholly by American companies. But it was Saudi Arabia that introduced the 50-50 profit-sharing plan

METAL PRODUCTS



SOURCE: UN Statistical Yearbook, UN -- Growth of World Industry, various years. There are many problems in arriving at these figures; the numbers are most accurate around 1963. For more information, write PL Magazine.

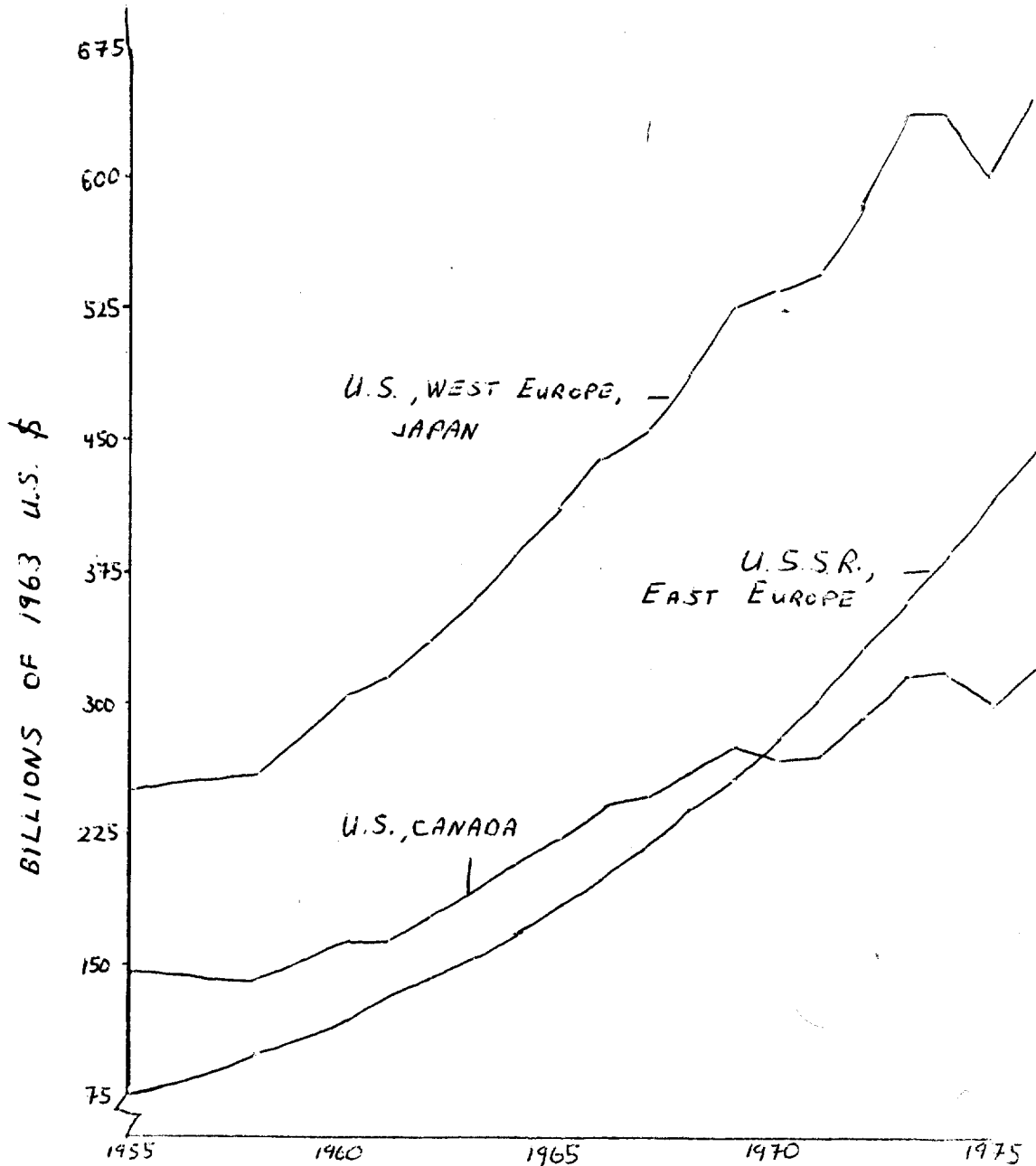
between governments and companies (as an alternative to nationalization). While the Saudis have more recently taken a soft line on price increases (since 1974), in the fall of '73 they were a full partner in initiating the Arab "oil weapon" against the U.S. Kissinger spoke of using force to prevent strangulation of the industrial world. As the **Foreign Affairs** article points out, this "indicates the potential for serious conflict beneath the placid diplomatic surface." The Saudis are accumulating capital (foreign exchange reserves) at a fantastic rate from 662 million in 1972 to 24.6 billion in mid-1976, or 2/3 that of W. Germany and 1-1/2 times that of the U.S. or Japan.

All this represents the point that the capitalists of Saudi Arabia have their own class interests to pursue and, though certainly an ally of the U.S. can come into conflict with U.S. imperialism to the point where the U.S. was required to threaten it with military force. This has happened and can happen to other so-called "reliable" allies. Today's allies are often tomorrow's enemies.

3. Food and Agriculture

While it is well-known that U.S. is more productive than the Soviets in food production and the U.S. is an exporter of grain while the Soviets are an importer, it is not true that "U.S. agricultural superiority allows the ruling class to blackmail scores of nations, even the Soviet Union and its satellites who are dependent on the U.S. for food," as D-D claim. U.S. grain exports account for half of all the grain exported in the world. However, as Emma Rothchild, writing in **Foreign Affairs** (Jan. 1976) points out, foodpower as a political weapon is an illusion. Rothchild explains, "The world grain market is peculiarly insulated from export embargoes. It is different from the world oil market in that less than one-eighth of the grain produced in the world is traded internationally as compared with more than half of the oil produced." Thus, U.S. grain exports are only 5% of all grain produced while oil exports of the Persian Gulf states account for half of the world's exports and a third of all oil pro-

TOTAL INDUSTRY



duced. Grain-importing countries therefore have enormously more opportunity than oil-importing countries to buy from odd sources—in the case of countries to which the U.S. refused to sell from the residual 95% of the world harvest.

In addition, Rothchild points out that a U.S. food boycott policy would backfire politically by arousing world-wide resentment against U.S. imperialism and only result in further U.S. isolation. Other contradictions are also pointed out in that the U.S. farmers would also oppose such policies because of their own narrow profit interests. Rothchild also notes that the Soviets have recently invested heavily in self-sufficiency for

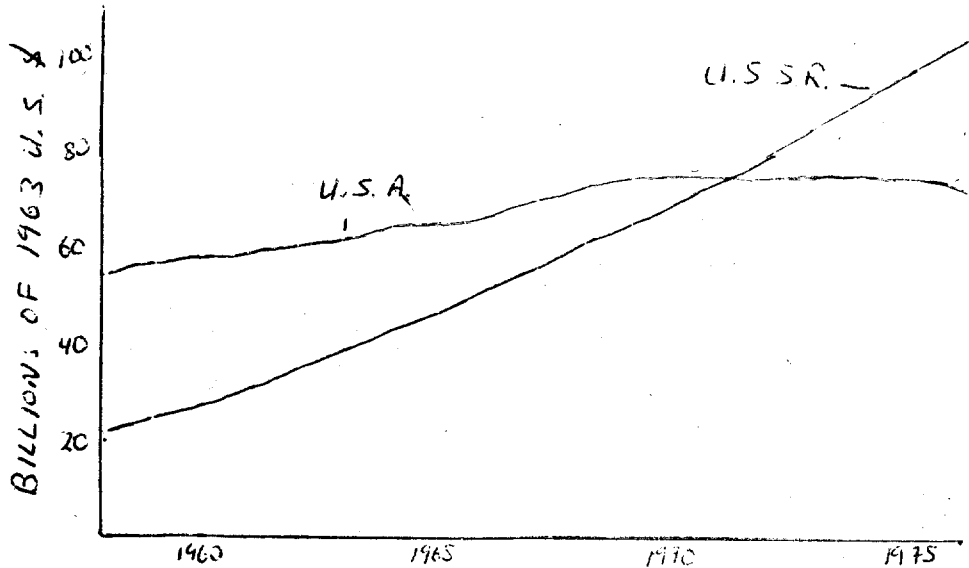
agricultural development and in food storage. Currently almost 95% of Soviet food consumption is from its own sources of production.

The point is that strategically the U.S. is an increasing **importer** of oil and natural gas while the Soviets have achieved self-sufficiency. And that U.S. food power as a political weapon is an illusion.

4. **Military Power**

While the U.S. after the second W.W. enjoyed a nuclear monopoly and military superiority, this advantage has long since disappeared. Almost all reports (with the exception of D-D's) indicate that the Soviet Union has not only caught up but

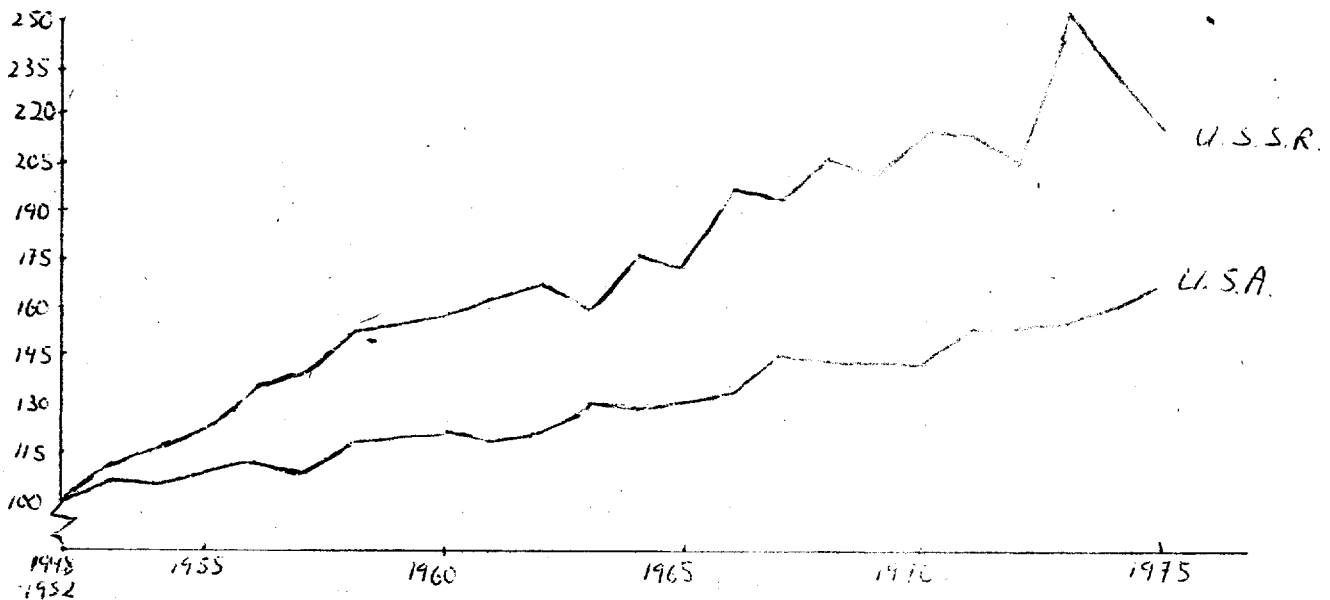
CRUDE PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS



has overtaken the U.S. militarily. We are not going to bore the readers with more statistics on this. As Gen. Haig, NATO commander said categorically, "They now have the largest accumulation of potential military power the world has ever seen. A global Soviet military power has emerged. At the present rate the Soviet Union alone is annually out-arming all NATO countries put together." As Drew Middleton, military expert for the N.Y. Times noted, "The global military situation that will confront Jimmy Carter as he takes office on Jan. 20 differs significantly

from that faced by any of his predecessors since 1945. The difference arises from the growth of Soviet military strength and the relative decline of American power over the last ten years." Paul Nitze, former Deputy Defense Secretary and Secy. of the Navy writes in **Foreign Affairs** that "The U.S. in 1960 held a slight but increasing advantage over the Soviet Union, and this advantage became greater in about mid-1964. Thereafter, however, Soviet programs greatly accelerated—after the Cuban missile crisis—and started to reverse this trend, so that by mid-1968 the total

INDEX OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION



SOURCE: FAO. Agricultural Production Yearbook. This graph compares rates of growth; it does not show how much the USSR produced relative to the US in any year.

deployed throw-weights on both sides, before a hypothetical nuclear exchange, were roughly equal. However, the U.S. operational advantage persisted for sometime thereafter, offsetting the Soviet superiority in deployed throw-weight. For example, if in 1970 the Soviets attacked the U.S. forces, their entire pre-war advantage would have been eliminated, leaving the U.S. with substantial superiority at the end of the exchange. However, this situation began to be reversed in 1973, with the Soviets gaining the military capability to end an exchange with an advantage in their favor... By 1977, after a Soviet-initiated counter-force strike against the U.S. to which the U.S. responded with a counter-force strike, the Soviet Union would have remaining forces sufficient to destroy Chinese and European NATO nuclear capability, attack U.S. population and conventional military targets, and **still have a remaining force throw-weight in excess of that of the U.S.** And, after 1977, the Soviet advantage after the assumed attack mounts rapidly."

All these long quotes (and there are plenty more) indicate that the U.S. ruling class and its military advisors are growing panicky about the growth of Soviet military power. As Lord Chalfont, Brit. Secy. of State in the Wilson Cabinet, noted in his article in the **National Review** (2/18/77) quoting the Kissinger Doctrine: "The Soviet Union is emerging as a global super-power and there is very little anyone can do to prevent it."

And the D-D thesis is that because of U.S. finance capital, the struggle between the super-powers isn't even a horse race. Does anyone think that the party can base its political line on such nonsense?

5. Political Influence

D-D admit the growth of Soviet political and economic influence around the globe, but try to minimize it in order to emphasize that the U.S. really has nothing much to worry about. In Latin America, Soviet imperialist penetration has increased over the past 20 years, D-D admit. In Africa, D-D write, that "here, too the Soviets have made huge gains in the last 20 years." But again, D-D claim it's not the U.S. that is on the decline here (they can always "buy back" what they have lost militarily) but it's the Soviet influence that's on the wane. They cite the dominant state in Central Africa, Zaire, as being under total U.S. control and has achieved a fascist-type stability. Unfortunately for D-D, as Lenin said, "Life will assert itself." So only recently a crisis developed in Zaire. Let's examine this a little, for it's very instructive.

The party's analysis is that the main contradiction in the present period is Soviet and U.S. inter-imperialist rivalry. Virtually all international events can only be understood within the framework of this rivalry, which grows in intensity and makes for a volatile world situation.

Zaire, formerly the Belgium Congo, demonstrates this analysis completely. Back in 1961, Zaire's prime minister and national leader was murdered by the CIA because he was considered too pro-Soviet. Since then \$500 million (1960-73)

was sent to prop up their stooge Mobutu. Last year, Angola Zaire's neighbor, came under Soviet influence (MPLA) as the U.S. stood by helplessly, unable to send the troops in, as in the good old days of U.S. hegemony. Then Kissinger hastily makes his African tour to indicate a change in U.S. policy, to back "majority rule" in Zimbabwe, So. Africa, Namibia, etc. Then the ruling class assigns Andy Young to head the UN delegation to give a "new look" to U.S. imperialism. But this charade fools no one... the underlying conflict goes on.

With the backing of the new pro-Soviet government in Angola, 6,000 Katangan soldiers invade Zaire. Formerly they were trained and armed by the Belgians, French and Portuguese imperialists. Now they are armed with Soviet weapons and instructed by the Cubans. (The Soviet imperialists just took over where the others had been ousted.) Zaire (as D-D noted) is an important U.S. interest. \$1 Billion is invested in the country which supplies 7% of the world's copper, 67% of its cobalt, and 1/3 of its industrial diamonds. Most of the wealth is in the province under invasion. The current battle may not result in the loss of Zaire to the U.S. bosses who are rushing in additional aid to the desperate Mobutu regime as well as coaxing others to enter the fray. In an article in the **N.Y. Times** of March 23, 1977, however, it was noted that "if Southern Zaire were to secede and be brought into the Soviet camp, then pro-Moscow Marxist states would form a belt through the heart of the continent running from Angola and Congo on the Atlantic to Mozambique on the Indian Ocean."

And yet the D-D analysis says that it isn't even a horse race because of the strength of U.S. finance capital.

In the Mid-East, "Soviet influence has zig-zagged considerably," says D-D. But hasn't U.S. influence also zig-zagged considerably? The point is that Soviet influence over the past 25 years has zig-zagged **upward** in this region while U.S. influence has zig-zagged **downward**. The Arab ruling classes are opting for an independent imperialist posture as they accumulate oil wealth and military hardware, but of course they have a long way to go to catch up to the super-imperialist powers. In the meanwhile, they jockey back and forth, going after the best deal they can swing.

In a recent issue of **Foreign Affairs**, Apr., 1977, George Ball, former Under-secretary of State, writes an article on the Israeli-Arab conflict which highlights the fact that the Mid-East situation is highly volatile and could result in an imminent Soviet-U.S. clash following a probable breakdown in the scheduled Geneva Conference sometime this Fall. He urges that the U.S. seek the cooperation of the Soviets in dictating a peace plan to both the Israelis and the Arab states. He directs the main fire at Israeli intransigence for refusing to withdraw to the pre-1967 borders, spells out the economic liability that Israel is to the U.S. (\$2.34 billion a year) and indicates also the internal contradictions that the Carter Ad-

ministration will face if it pursues a hard line—which he contends is the only line that could stabilize the area for U.S. imperialism. He says “The time is ripe to take a strong hand and save Israel from herself and in the process try to prevent a tragic war that could endanger the economies of the non-communist powers, separate the U.S. from its allies and precipitate enormous internal debate, and pose a serious danger of a clash with the Soviet Union.”

This article, on the real situation in the Mid-East, hardly corresponds to the D-D fable of unchallenged U.S. hegemony and stability.

D-D also admit that Soviet influence has grown in Asia and that the balance of power in Vietnam and India has shifted in their favor. As Kathleen Gough noted in her book, **Imperialism and Revolution in South Asia**, “As of early 1972, the Soviet Union controlled 80% of India’s electric-generating equipment industries, 80% of heavy engineering industries, 30% of iron and steel, 60% of electrical equipment, and 25% of power industries. With respect to India’s export trade, the USSR controlled 57% of India’s export of wool, 75% of woolen garments, 53% of cotton, 75% of jute and 51% of skins. Also since 1965, the Soviet Union has exported very large quantities of weapons to India. It has investments in privately-owned Indian factories which use Soviet raw materials to manufacture goods with cheap Indian labor; the goods are re-exported to the Soviet Union...” Like Western imperialism, Soviet imperialism aims to control Indian industries, accumulate profits from cheap Indian labor, make India a base for capturing its internal markets and control it politically through a combination of economic and military loans. (For more information on Soviet imperialism in India, Egypt and other so-called “Third World” and developing countries, see the PL article on Soviet imperialism, Vol. 10 No. 5.)

India’s only the second most populated country in the world—certainly a good source to accumulate some capital...and yet the D-D line would have us believe that it isn’t even a horse race!

As for other areas of political influence, such as Western Europe, D-D write that “NATO has demonstrated a greater stability than few alliances in imperialist history.” But the problem with the D-D analysis is that (as in the case of Zaire) they do not understand that we live in a world of **changing** relationship of forces, of contradictions between capitalist classes as well as within capitalist states. (SEATO in South-Asia is finished, so that the “reliable” ally Marcos of the Philippines is reassessing his alliance with the U.S.) (NYT, 2/24/44).

NATO as an alliance against the Soviet Union has withered over the past decade. Its primary aim has become an instrument for maintaining **INTERNAL STABILITY** in western Europe. Because of the deepening economic crisis confronting Western imperialist countries, the capitalist classes there are more and more forced to rely on their political reserve—the revisionist socialist bloc to run their system for them and to try to keep the class- and socialist-conscious work-

ers of western Europe in check, as they did recently in Portugal. While the revisionists assure their capitalist bosses and the U.S. imperialists that they will remain in NATO, the fact is that the U.S. ruling class neither trusts the CP’s reliability, nor the reliability of their French Italian and British allies.

The D-D thesis on the current epoch of imperialism, and, on the immediate period ahead (10-15 years) projects a **totally false picture** of UNCHALLENGED U.S. imperialist hegemony around the globe, of a U.S. imperialism that is not in serious decline, of a U.S. imperialist alliance that is stable and reliable, of a U.S. imperialist system that is not likely—in the period ahead—to be in a world war or require fascism, because it is “SO STRONG.”

This false picture of imperialist reality as it has developed since the turn of the 20th Century and in the present period, if adopted by the party, would put the party onto the road of becoming a revisionist party. The party will not be lulled by the assurances of D-D that we are living in such a stable world situation. Nor will we lull the international working class with such a distorted view of imperialism.

What About the Working Class?

It’s indeed curious, that the D-D article on U.S.-Imperialist rivalry and letter on the current epoch and historic period completely ignore what’s happening to the U.S. working class. Why this oversight? Because any examination of the reality of the sharpening racist attacks on the U.S. working class would completely contradict their thesis about, the great stability and financial strength of the U.S. imperialists. The fact is, as the Party has pointed out in numerous articles, that the U.S. ruling class is sharpening the ax against the workers precisely because of its **serious decline**, and its **decline is intensified by the economic crisis confronting it**. As the Party noted in its pamphlet on the **Decline and Fall of Fun City**: “In order to keep pace with the other capitalists, the ruling class estimates that it will need possibly up to \$4.5 trillion in the next ten



years. The money is to go for city, state, and local govt. deficits, residual construction, plant expansion (etc.)” **The ruling class faces a \$1.5 trillion “capital gap,”** as pointed out in **Business Week’s** article “The Capital Crisis” 9/22/75. The fundamental cause of this “Capital Gap” is not only the decline of U.S. imperialism vis-a-vis other imperialist powers, but **the decline in the rate of profit.** (Marx’s analysis is quoted in the **Business Week** article.) As an indication of how serious the decline in the rate of profit has become for the U.S. ruling class, the Dept. of Commerce stated that the pre-tax return on invested capital by non-financial corp. (manuf. and service) has dropped from just under 17% in 1965 to just over 5% in 1975.

It is to make up for this “capital gap” that the ruling class is stepping up its attacks on the working class in the form of layoffs, cutbacks, wage cuts, higher taxes and prices. Of course the ax is aimed at minority workers in the first place. This is not just a New York City phenomenon, but is a crisis confronting every major city and area in the U.S.

How do D-D explain these increasing attacks on the working class? How do they explain the growth of such fascist organizations as ROAR and the KKK and others, which have more and more surfaced across the country and in the U.S. military establishment?

How do they explain the past decade of growing conflicts within the ranks of the ruling class itself (from the assassination of the Kennedys, the ouster of Johnson, the resignation of Nixon, the Watergate crisis, etc.) if the U.S. ruling class is SO financially strong and stable?

No, they don’t explain it—because it fully exposes their bankrupt analysis about the strength and stability of U.S. imperialism.

The Struggle Between Two Lines

The D-D line on imperialism and the current period is a departure from a M-L analysis and constitutes a frontal assault on the basic party line on the growing danger of war and fascism in the coming period. It is a line which has a long history in the international communist movement and in the U.S. communist movement, in particular, which always veered in the direction of right opportunism based on the thesis of the exceptional strength of U.S. capitalism, and imperialism in general.

Some History of the Struggle Between the Two Lines

Lenin’s polemics with Kautsky’s analysis of imperialism brought about the split between the revisionists and the Bolsheviks. Lenin said “Kautsky’s utterly meaningless talk about ultra-imperialism encourages, among other things, that profoundly mistaken idea which only brings grist to the mill of the apologists of imperialism, viz., that the rule of finance capital lessens the uneasiness and contradictions inherent in world economy, whereas, in reality it increases them.”

And Lenin said, “Compare this reality—the vast diversity of economic and political conditions, the extreme disparity in the rate of development of the various countries, etc., and the violent struggles among the imperialist states—with Kautsky’s silly little fable about ‘peaceful’ ultra-imperialism.”

From Kautsky, to Browder, to Khrushchev, the revisionists have always exaggerated the power of the imperialists, minimized and downplayed the contradictions between them, and peddled a line to assure the international working class that revolution was “not possible” because the bosses are “too strong and stable,” and also that the workers need not concern themselves about threats of world wars. Our Party will not go down that road—the road D-D suggests that we take and which the National Committee characterized as “warmed-over Browderism.”

Khrushchev had his own twist to the ultra-imperialist line when he set forth the thesis that nuclear weapons made war “obsolete.” D-D don’t go that far, but echo Khrushchev’s position by saying that the Soviet imperialists will “very probably back off” because they know how strong U.S. imperialism’s lead is over them, and also that imperialists know their business well and won’t risk nuclear war.

Many comrades and workers believe that the U.S. and Soviet imperialists won’t use nuclear weapons and that world war is unlikely because nuclear weapons are “counter-productive” to imperialist aims. This view was also peddled by the Chinese communists to a certain extent when they didn’t have nuclear weapons in their early 1960’s polemics with the Soviets when they cited the non-use of poison gas in the second World War. However, all comrades and workers should understand that a third world war will be a nuclear war! This is so because the entire military apparatus and strategy of the USSR and U.S. for waging world war hinges on nuclear capability. It would be bordering on criminal naiveté to tell the workers of the world “not to worry” about nuclear war because the imperialists will “very probably back off.” When the vital interests of the imperialists clash—and they are heading in that direction—we say to the working class: prepare for revolution, and make revolution!! Communist revolution is the only road to victory for the international working class! Do not rely on the imperialists to “back off.” Do not heed the counsel of those who tell us world war and fascism are “unlikely” for the coming period. Reject the U.S. 100-yr. hegemony “buy-back” and “back-off” D-D thesis.

We say, build the revolutionary movement now! Rely on the working class! Smash the U.S. ruling class’s drive toward war and fascism! Unite around the Party—defend the Party’s Revolutionary Line and smash the right-wing opposition to the Party’s Line. BUILD THE PLP!

dialectics- 'comprehending and transforming reality'

by C. D.

As an historically developed science, Marxism-Leninism stands on four theoretical cornerstones. The first is the discovery by Marx of surplus value as the key to capitalist exploitation. Marx proved that the secret of commodity production is the unpaid labor extracted from workers and converted into capital by bosses. He showed that even when a worker receives the full value of his labor power as a commodity on the market, the capitalist still receives more from this labor power than he put into it. This discovery rendered all previously existing economics obsolete, unmasked the true character of capitalist social relations, and gave the working class the conceptual framework it needed to envision a society in which it would control and dispose of all the surplus it created.

The second universal feature of Marxism-Leninism is the discovery of working class revolution and **proletarian dictatorship** as historic inevitabilities. The Communist Manifesto of 1848 had already stated that the history of mankind after the period of primitive communism was a history of antagonistic class struggle. However, the recognition of class struggle does not, in and of itself, render a theory revolutionary. Marx knew this: he knew, as we can readily see today, that the bourgeoisie recognizes the reality of class antagonisms even when its most vulgar apologists seek to camouflage this reality behind a smokescreen of "pluralistic" quasi-religious gibberish. It took the Paris Commune of 1870-1 to prove that the violent overthrow of capitalism, the total annihilation of the capitalist state apparatus, and its replacement by a revolutionary socialist dictatorship were absolute laws of historical development. Lenin amplified and enriched this theory in his classic work **State and Revolution**, when he wrote: "Only he is a Marxist who (recognizes) the dictatorship of the proletariat."

The third of Marxism-Leninism's universals is the theory of the **revolutionary party**. Marx and Engels both warned that although the contradictions of capitalism were insoluble, no ruling class had ever abandoned the scene of history under its own free will and that socialism could be won only by the conscious class struggle of workers and their allies. Lenin again refined this discovery in his works **What Is To Be Done?** and **One Step Forward, Two Steps Back**, when he showed that revolutionary consciousness does not fall from the sky into workers' minds but must be brought consciously to them from the outside. He argued successfully that revolutionary ideas must be embodied in a revolutionary organization: a party whose fundamental goal is the seizure of workers' state power, whose cadre function as professional revolutionaries, and whose system of organization enables the working class to strike its enemy with undeviating unity under all circumstances. This system of organization is called democratic centralism.

The discoveries of surplus value, the inevitability of proletarian dictatorship, and the necessity of a revolutionary working class party constitute the inertial contributions of Marxism-Leninism to the realms of economics, history, and politics. Taken together, these concepts form the nucleus of **historical materialism**—the science of human social development. But although Marxism-Leninism's primary concern is rightly the transformation of society, the discoveries inherent in the theory of historical materialism also have profound implications for every area of science and all processes of development. If it can be proved that human history operates according to discoverable laws, then can it not be proved that the same **general laws of development** apply to natural history as well? Marxism-Leninism answers this question in the affirmative and in fact recognizes that the discoveries of historical materialism would have been impossible without prior discoveries of corresponding developmental laws in other branches of science. Marxism-Leninism's fourth universal feature is the philosophy of **dialectical materialism**: a total world outlook and an all-embracing method of comprehending and transforming reality.

The present paper will attempt to examine some of dialectical materialism's key features. As revolutionaries, we are not concerned with the accumulation of knowledge for its own sake but rather with the assimilation of knowledge and the honing of our critical faculties as weapons in the battle to understand and therefore win the class struggle. Everyone is a philosopher. The question becomes: what is the content of your philosophy? As revolutionaries, we must make sure that our world outlook and our politics are consistent.

In its simplest form, we can define philosophy as a conscious attempt to discover and systematize universals, in other words, to find truths that are applicable to and valid for everything. All philosophy takes this as its basic task—even

skepticism, which states that the one universal truth is that nothing is true. We must begin, therefore, by asking: **what is the source of knowledge?**

All of philosophy has throughout its history divided into two camps over the answer to this question. Is consciousness primary—that is, does it create and determine the external world, or are things the other way around? Is consciousness in fact a specific product of matter at a certain stage of its development? Put another way: what is most "real:" the subjective ideas we have in our heads or the totality of the world around us?

The point of view that considers consciousness primary is called **idealism**. At one point in the development of human history, idealism played a revolutionary role. The period of transition from primitive communism to slavery, which took an entire historical epoch, required the development of theories to utilize the advancing level of productive forces. Slavery was based on



Karl Marx, founder of science of dialectical materialism.

agriculture; agriculture required irrigation; irrigation required for the first time a primitive level of scientific understanding. The men who, for one reason or another, acquired this theoretical knowledge were considered to have semi-mystical powers and were treated as virtual deities. Of course, this state of affairs could not help but entrench the power of the slave-owning class, but it nonetheless had a revolutionary aspect. Previously, under primitive communism, the objective forces of nature had been literally incomprehensible. Now, even under a form of brutal exploitation, human knowledge was first beginning to understand them and could use this understanding to develop its productive forces.

However, after this transition had taken place, idealism turned into its opposite and became the unscientific, reactionary, incorrect world outlook of all exploiting classes. Its classic historic expression can be found in the phantasmagoric religious superstructures of all hitherto existing

societies. In the slave society of ancient Greece, there was a goddess of war, a god of the sea, a goddess of beauty and love, a god of the sun, a god of speed, a god of the vines, even a lame god who worked at a primitive forge. All the gods were presided over by Zeus, who was more a first among equals than an absolute monarch. In other words, the relations among gods in the imaginary world of Mount Olympus mirrored the real relations between slaveowning princes and kings in Greek society. The "oracle" at Delphi was thought to predict the future in riddles—provided you bribed him with adequate animal sacrifices. More to the point, however: this historic expression of idealism stood the real world on its head and made a mystery of observable phenomena. The Roman slave society that succeeded the Greeks had a similar religious superstructure. The Romans merely accepted most Greek gods and translated their names into Latin. The low level of productive forces in both societies made the development of exact natural science impossible and therefore enshrined idealism as the ruling philosophy.

Under feudalism, idealism assumed a different form to correspond with changing reality. Christianity originated as the revolutionary-critical ideology of oppressed slaves in the period of the Roman Empire's initial decline. Concepts such as those in the Sermon on the Mount and the Epistles of Paul (The kingdom of heaven belongs to the poor; charity—i.e. the love of fellow-man—is the greatest virtue, etc.) made grave indictments of the existing class structure. However, again because of limits in the productive forces, these indictments could not translate their full implications into reality: even in its revolutionary stage, Christianity was forced to look for a solution beyond the real world. The best it could offer to the oppressed masses of slaves was a reward in heaven.

For this reason, the emerging feudal ruling class of Europe was able to appropriate Christianity, turn it into its opposite, and use it as the state religion defending the *status quo*. First the latter Roman emperors and then the feudal kings and barons who succeeded them found a bonanza in a world outlook that told the serfs to disregard their wretched life on earth and concentrate instead on winning God to give them grace for eternity. After all, bad as serfdom was, the alternative to heaven was reputed to be a Hell of a lot worse. Like the Greek slave religion, European feudal Catholicism also invented a celestial pecking order that corresponded to the real relations among the ruling classes of the time. God the father had more power in heaven than Zeus on Mount Olympus, just as the king did over the nobles, but the angels and the nobles themselves weren't to be sneezed at either. We know that one of feudalism's fundamental ideological underpinnings was the concept of the "divine right" of kings: in other words, the idea that the crowned heads of state had the franchise from On High. One would be hard pressed to find a more classic

example of idealist philosophy than this religious rationalization of the oppressive feudal social order.

Like the slave-owners who had preceded them, the feudal kings and princes had very limited interest in developing productive forces and the science needed to harness them. However, like all previous societies, feudalism engendered its opposite in the guildsmen, town burghers, and mercantile traders who had a very great interest indeed in developing productive forces and the means of using them. Real natural science dates from the middle of the 15th century. Typically, great scientific advances have revolutionary social implications for the class structure of societies at all levels of development. This was surely true of Copernicus' theory of the solar system and Galileo's substantiation of it. For entire epochs, men had seen the earth as the center of the universe. Now it could be demonstrated that the earth revolved around the sun and not vice-versa. The emerging mercantile capitalists drew revolutionary social conclusions from Copernicus' and other discoveries. If the natural order of things is not what it has been thought to be, why should we accept as given the existing class structure? The so-called "Renaissance" was a period in which the idealist philosophy of feudalism—including official church Scholasticism and the doctrine of divine right—saw itself subjected to devastating criticism by the revolutionary bourgeoisie.

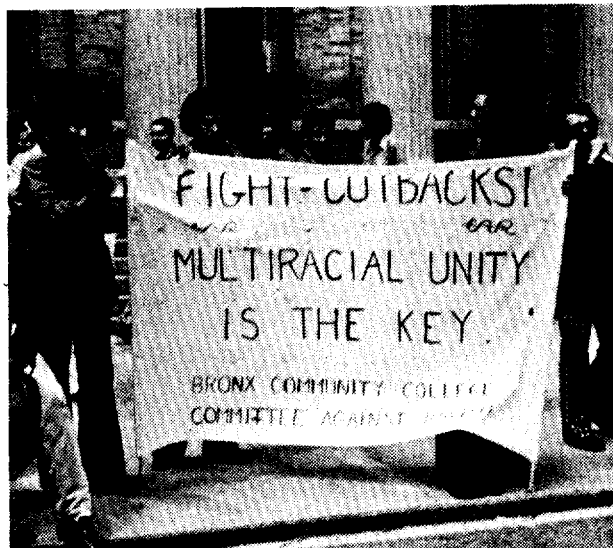
However, even this criticism was idealist in the last analysis. Jean Calvin, the Swiss Protestant theologian, was surely the most advanced bourgeois thinker of his day. His doctrine of predestination explained commercial success and social status as the products of forces beyond the subjective control or whim of individual men. In this respect, Calvin broke radically with the Catholic doctrine of grace as salvation attainable by human efforts to please God. Calvin went much further than Luther. Lutheran idealism limited itself to a call for absolute monarchy. The peasants from Northeastern Germany who left the Catholic church to join the Lutheran reformation were immediately transformed from freemen into serfs. Calvin's doctrine was far more thoroughly democratized: the Calvinish church was no longer subjected to the hierarchy of bishops, archbishops, cardinals and popes. As Engels pointed out: "...where the kingdom of God was republicanized, could the kingdoms of this world remain subject to monarchs, bishops, and lords?" Luther broke with Catholicism only to leap back into the arms of the German aristocracy, Calvin, on the other hand, founded a republic in Holland and active republican political parties in England and Scotland. Nonetheless, Calvinism could not break once and for all with idealism. It had left the theology of feudalism in the graveyard of history only to found a new theology and a new church. The theology and church served a different class, but the prime forces of movement and change were still viewed as belonging to the realm of the

spirit. The different Protestant creeds that emerged in Europe with the development of various local bourgeoisies were not exactly similar in their details, but they united nonetheless in accepting Christianity.

It took the French Revolution of 1789 for the class struggle to shed its specifically religious smokescreen. The most radical of the bourgeois revolutionaries consciously took 18th century anticlericalism one step further and called for the official abolition of the church and the confiscation of its land. St. -Just, Robespierre, Marat, and Babeuf had the most advanced understanding of state power yet developed and they saw the particular idealism of the Catholic church as an intolerable fetter on the development of the new republican capitalist society they sought to establish. Nonetheless, religion made a comeback in the 19th and 20th centuries. Once the capitalists had consolidated their power, they themselves turned into their opposite and from the principal force for social change, became the principal agent of counter-revolution. Specifically, their needs required a philosophic weapon in the war against the developing working class. And so religion was modernized and restored in virtually every capitalist country. Today, with U.S. imperialism in a period of decline and with the U.S. ruling class teetering on the verge of economic chaos and war, we have seen the recent revival of traditional organized religions as well as the emergence of a lunatic religious fringe (the Hare Krishnas, a motley gaggle of Gurus, etc.).

We have briefly considered the phenomenon of religion as the most classic, consistent historic expression of idealist philosophy. However, it should be clear that idealism, as a total world outlook, is by no means limited to religion. The political superstructure of U.S. capitalism, for example, is predicated thoroughly on non-religious idealist philosophy. We are told that ours is a society of "laws," and that ultimate contemporary legal authority resides in a scrap of paper put together by a group of slave-owning landlords two hundred years ago. Sycophants who parade as sociologists and who apologize for capitalism speak of social wealth and status as predetermined by some fantastic genetic structure. Our latest muttonhead president ignores the real world of the crisis he and his class find themselves in and beckons us with his "vision" of the golden age of U.S. capitalism. In one form or another, every feature of capitalist decadence, barbarism, and unworkability is explained away by leading "intellectuals" as the inevitable consequence of "human nature."

In our own party we can see many examples of reactionary idealism. Too many of us still harbor the illusion that just because we discuss a decision once at a meeting, the decision will automatically be implemented without careful, meticulous organization. Too many of us still operate with the false notion that we can win others to socialism simply by handing them a leaflet and that an all-embracing relationship with our fellow workers' and students' lives is un-



Bronx Community College Committee
Against Racism Sit-In, 1975.

necessary. Too many of us still evaluate developments in terms of our own euphoria or depression rather than in terms of the developments themselves.

If idealism has existed as a world outlook since the origin of human language and consciousness, so in one form or another, has its opposite, materialism. The decisive struggle for thousands of years in the realm of philosophy has taken place over the question of determining the primacy of the external world or of man's subjective consciousness.

In addition to their classical mythology, the ancient Greeks also produced a philosophy which, despite its necessary naivete, nonetheless contained the germ of modern materialism and dialectics. Thinkers like Heraclitus, reflecting upon nature and the world at large, saw a limitless sequence of relations, movements, reactions, and combinations in which nothing remained the same but was on the contrary forever changing. This superficial, primitive view of totality is fundamentally correct. It can be summarized in the slogan: "Panta rhei"—everything flows. Heraclitus' followers used to say that he likened "...things to a flowing river and (said) it was impossible to enter twice into the same stream." In his **Philosophic Notebooks**, Lenin cites the following typical passage from Heraclitus' work:

This order of things, the same for all, was not made by any God or man, but was and is and will be forever, a living fire kindled by measure and quenched by measure.

These statements represent the first faltering steps of human knowledge to free itself from the yoke of superstition and religion. Look at the real world, Heraclitus tells us, and you will see not a divinely determined eternal order of things, not a mysterious, unfathomable figment of the spirit-kingdom, but rather an endless development in which the one constant is change.

However, the low level of productive forces

and its correspondingly low level of social development limited Greek materialism in its investigation of reality. The Greek materialists could see change and movement as general phenomena but could not probe deeper to investigate the source of particular movement and specific change. They attributed the origin of things to fire, water, or air and could not show concretely how matter changed its form. Heraclitus wrote:

...the parts of the creation are divided into two halves, each one opposed to the other; the earth into mountains and plains, water into fresh and salt water... similarly, the atmosphere into winter and summer and also into spring and autumn...

Herein lie both the revolutionary character and the limit of Greek materialism: on the one hand, it chooses reality over dreams; on the other hand, it cannot make a profound systematic study of this reality but must stop at the point of external, empirical observation.

As slave-owners, the Greeks had no need to study the technique of developing production: all labor was performed by slaves who were viewed, literally, as sub-human. As colonizers, merchants, political administrators, and navigators, the ancient Greeks had no need for the detailed investigation of a process' inner workings.

However, with the development of production and discoveries that took place over hundreds of years, the need for the closer investigation of phenomena also developed. It started first, as Engels points out, in the later Alexandrian period of Greek science. It advanced during the "Middle Ages" and again during the Renaissance, and reached its zenith during the revolutionary bourgeois struggle of the 18th Century. The ancient Greeks had been able to perceive a totality in which all things were changing but could not separate specifics from the totality. The next phase in the development of human knowledge was the painstaking extraction of individual phenomena from the whole, the study of their specific properties, the accumulation of experimental data, and the formulation of an inventory of plants, animals, minerals, etc.

Developing feudal society produced a philosophy and science that diverted attention away from general connection and change and concentrated instead on the isolated characteristics of things. This approach inevitably led to the view that everything in nature was composed of a specific quantity of immutable properties. Take for example alchemy (medieval chemistry). The alchemists thought they had discovered the three basic properties of bodies: metallic glitter, combustibility, and durability. Ignorant of the laws of change, the alchemists thought all they had to do was figure how much glitter, combustibility, or durability a substance had and they then could effect change by adding or subtracting determined amounts of these "properties." Each property thus became an independent substance that functioned outside things as their extrinsic determinant. The alchemists thought that change itself

was a special force due to a "philosopher's stone," which, incidentally, also held the secret to the production of gold. For centuries, they concentrated their efforts on the discovery of this stone.

The development of productive forces and the scientific experimentation that took place under feudalism revealed a massive body of new substances. All were analyzed within the same general framework of absolute, rigid properties. Glass was thought to cut because of its "cutting" property; smoke was thought to rise because of its "rising" property, and so on. Here we have the essence of tautological reasoning: take a thing, divide it into its separate parts, and explain each in terms of itself, or, to put it another way, constantly bring the unknown back to the already-known.

The feudal landowners had a direct interest in perpetuating this ossified, one-sided method of viewing things. True, they had more stake than their slave-owning predecessors in advancing production, but the basic technical problems of feudalism revolved not so much around the creation of new things as in the perfecting and recombination of already existing techniques. To the supposed "immutability" of properties corresponded the feudal barons' need to preserve as immutable the rigid system of land parcelling that maintained their great estates and the particular form of peasant exploitation that corresponded to this division.

However, despite the whim of the landlords, all things do indeed change, and the development of merchant capital drove the serfs into the towns just as it disintegrated the feudal estates. The emerging bourgeoisie, as we have already seen, had a vital stake in fashioning a philosophy that would both examine a wealth of phenomena with an eye toward advancing the productive forces and at the same time break with the theory of immutable properties. However, even in its revolutionary stage, the bourgeoisie found itself trapped in an insoluble theoretical contradiction. On the one hand, it needed materialism in its battle against a dying feudal enemy. Great strides in science were made by 17th and 18th Century bourgeois materialists like Descartes, Linnaeus, and others. On the other hand, as we have pointed out above, the capitalists also needed idealism to maintain and increase their exploitation of the emerging proletariat. And so, even as the bourgeoisie consciously fought the idealism of the throne and altar, it also perpetuated its own idealism by encouraging religion for the masses. The greatest single scientific work of the European Enlightenment—the French **Encyclopedie**—was destined exclusively for the sons of merchants and manufacturers. The only thing considered fit for those of the masses who could read at all was still the Holy Scripture.

Correspondingly, the bourgeoisie also needed both to defend and to suppress a philosophy of change. On the one hand, the French 18th Century glitters with profound dialectical works such as



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Rousseau's *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality Among Men* and Diderot's *Rameau's Nephew* and *Letter on the Blind*. On the other hand, during its most revolutionary-critical stage, the bourgeoisie was still unable to break with the mechanistic, metaphysical "quality of properties." The classic embodiment of this contradiction is the 18th Century view of the so-called "Great Chain of Being," in which the feudal conception of God is replaced by a view of the universe as an enormous machine and God as a "first-cause" or celestial "watch-maker." The bourgeoisie looked up at the landlords and saw change everywhere. It looked down at the workers and scurried back to immutable properties. As capitalism made and consolidated its economic and then its political revolutions, the philosophy of immutable properties inevitably came back into pre-eminence, under new forms. With U.S. imperialism in decline, the bosses' intellectual sycophants today once again trot out the shop-worn theory of "factors." Why is there unemployment? The Friedmans and Samuelsons read us some litany about features of the "business cycle." What explains the collapse of the stock market? The market itself is said to possess "bullishness" or "bearishness." What explains air pollution and the system's inability to allocate resources in a rational manner? Here the bourgeoisie's scribblers regale us with twaddle about the "over-population factor," and so on.

Naturally, none of the philosophy inherent in contemporary bourgeois economics, sociology, or political theory appears as simple as the descriptions above. The fundamental world outlook of our Galbraiths, Moynihans, Kissingers, Herrnsteins, etc. lies buried beneath a mountain of academic jargon and "learned" gibberish. Yet if we take theories like the "genetic" determinant of intelligence in psychology, the notion of "countervailing forces" and "equilibrium" in international politics, or the reputed "matriarchal

structure" of the black working class family in sociology, we find little more than a decadent 20th Century rehash of the "durable force of salt," the "rising property of smoke," and so on.

The outlook that studies phenomena in this way can never break forth from the limits of mechanical materialism. Even when it seeks in its most advanced 18th Century form to abandon religious idealism, its fundamentally metaphysical character forces it to abandon the real world in search of non-existent, predetermined causes or factors—and thus, mechanical materialism completes a full circle by returning to the subjective idealism from which it started. The attributes of the mechanical-metaphysical world outlook are:

- an empirical, pragmatic method of viewing things that contents itself with the statement of properties as they first appear upon superficial examination;
- an insistence on considering properties as separated from each other;
- a belief that the properties in different things are immutable and absolutely identical to each other and that all things are merely different external combinations of various properties.

From our own experience in attempting to give political leadership to the class struggle, we can see that an arduous process of retraining is necessary if we are to leave behind the mechanical-metaphysical heritage the bosses have bequeathed to us. Many of us still view our political work in mechanical terms. We tend to view the party line as pre-existing property of the class struggle. This error prevents us from examining the specific dynamics of each situation that arises and determining thereby how the line must be brought into the struggle. Saddled with this view, we are unable to evaluate new developments and to carry out the essence of the line. For years, we functioned in the mass movement as though revolutionary politics were an inherent force of the struggle for reform. In



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the main, when we did introduce revolutionary socialist concepts, we did so mechanically, elaborating the details of the reform battle in question and then tacking on a line or two about socialism at the end. Although our intentions were good, our errors would eventually have led us to become the same type of pragmatic spontaneity-worshipping opportunists against whom Lenin directed the withering criticism of **What Is To Be Done?** Indeed, not only in our own party but throughout the history of the working class movement, there has been a persistent tendency to view the reform struggle as endowed with revolutionary characteristics. We have recognized this error and are attempting to correct it.

Another example of mechanistic thinking may further illuminate the reactionary role played by this outlook. For years, the old U.S. Communist Party prattled about so-called "American exceptionalism." The realities of life in the United States were reputed to possess some magical quality that rendered the laws of class struggle obsolete and that absolved the C.P. from fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Somehow or other, this special force made U.S. bosses different from others around the world and promised the advent of socialism by constitutional amendment. The only problem was that someone forgot to tip off the bosses, who remained ignorant of their "true" properties and went on as before raking in billions from human misery, clubbing strikers, shooting down ghetto rebels, and committing genocide in Vietnam.

Finally, one would be hard pressed to find a more blatant example of the mechanical-metaphysical "quality of properties" than the various racist stereotypes the bosses so diligently nourish to keep workers divided. Black people are reputed to have the qualities of "laziness" and "shiftlessness;" Latin American people are said to be "hot-tempered" and "happy-go-lucky;" the quality of "stinginess" is ascribed to Jews; etc. History shows where such a mechanistic outlook leads when it is applied to ideology and politics.

We have seen in this brief recapitulation that the struggle between materialism and idealism is as old as the class struggle. We have seen further that materialism, by itself, solves only one-half the problem of philosophy as science. The materialist world outlook directs human knowledge to look at universal facts rather than at its own fantasies. This is an enormous leap away from dogma and superstition. However, although it is absolutely correct to state that the "basis of the unity of the universe is objective being" (Engels), reality does not spontaneously supply us with its own interpretation. We have the real world of universal facts; we still require a universal method of interpreting, predicting, and transforming them. As we have pointed out above, bourgeois philosophy could not go beyond mechanical metaphysics and therefore appropriated materialism only to dress it up in an idealist cloak.

Directly opposed to the mechanical-metaphysical

physical world outlook is the **dialectical method.** Where metaphysics considers only the external, superficial aspect of things, dialectics seeks to discover the limitless internal complexities of self-movement. Where metaphysics sees all things as separated, dialectics views the entire universe as a series of interconnected developments linked together by the very fact of their existence. Where metaphysics views the properties in things as eternally determined and therefore immutable, dialectics sees endless movement, development, transformation, coming into being and going out of being.

The great scientific discoveries of the 19th Century proved the absolute superiority of dialectics over metaphysics. Charles Darwin smashed metaphysics in the natural sciences when he showed that every organism—from the lowliest tadpole to man himself—is the product of process spanning millions or hundreds of millions of years. He demonstrated thereby, in Engels' words, that "...nature works dialectically and not metaphysically... she does not move in the eternal oneness of a perpetually recurring circle but goes through a real historical evolution."

A scientifically correct representation of the universe, its evolution, the development of man and society, and the perception of this development in men's minds is therefore feasible only by the dialectical method. The philosophers who arose out of the German bourgeois revolution worked in this spirit. Immanuel Kant proved that the solar system was the product of an historic process and therefore that its ultimate death was inevitable. His theory was borne out by subsequent calculations and experiments. This particular school of German philosophy reached its zenith with the work of Hegel. In the Hegelian system, the totality of existence—nature, history, the human intellect—was seen as a constant process. Hegelian dialectics perceived existence as development, change, motion, evolution. It produced the intellectual categories of the dialectical method. Hegel's limit, however, was that he was in the last analysis an idealist. On the one hand, he saw all nature and history as a process that, **ipso facto**, could not be frozen in "absolute truth." On the other hand, he viewed life as the mere realized picture of the "Idea," which had existed timelessly in eternity before all forms of creation.

The job of philosophy, as Marx and Engels said, now became to stand "Hegel on his head," in other words to marry the dialectical method with the materialist world outlook. This new task could be accomplished only by working class revolutionaries, and it could be undertaken only after the working class itself had reached a sufficient point in its own historical development. This point was reached by the middle of the 19th Century, after the first workers' uprising in Lyons (France) of 1832 and after the organization of the first national workers' movement (the Chartists in England, 1838-42). By now, the struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat had reached center-stage in the most advanced countries of Europe

and was coming to the fore in others. The bourgeois cry of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," was exposed as a monstrous lie, and the antagonism between the interest of workers and that of capitalists was becoming increasingly clear. Marx and Engels took the best of materialism: the view that being determines consciousness. They took the best of dialectics: the view that everything is in constant flux. The resulting synthesis enabled them to unlock the secret of all previous societies and to show that human history, with the exception of the most primitive societies, was the history of class struggle. They demonstrated that antagonistic classes themselves are the products of existing economic conditions (the means of production, the mode of production, and the method of exchange). They proved that all features of a society's institutions and ideas depend for their existence upon this base. Finally, by applying dialectics to these discoveries, they traced the development of primitive communism



Friedrich Engels, Scientist of Revolution into slavery, of slavery into feudalism, of feudalism, of feudalism into capitalism, and of capitalism into socialism. For the first time, the fight for socialism and the struggle to end all forms of oppression were put on a scientific basis. For the first time, the inevitability of working class revolution was **demonstrable**.

If the mortality of the solar system was now a matter of proof; if dinosaurs, who had once ruled the earth, were turned into fossils; if man himself was now known to be the product of a millennial evolution; if every form of social organization prior to commodity production could now be observed in its genesis, fruition, and demise, then the ultimate fall of capitalism became an absolute certainty, not merely in the objective development of things, but, for the first time, also in man's mind as well. Herein lies the true significance of Marx' well-known statement that theory becomes material force when it is grasped by the masses:

sooner or later in its historical development, the working class will become conscious of its role as capitalism's grave-digger and will act upon that consciousness. This is indeed the primary new development that has emerged in the last 125 years both of human history and of science.

We can now turn our attention to the exposition of the categories and laws of dialectical materialism. Before doing so, however, one conclusion should be drawn from all of the above. **Like everything else, scientific truth itself is inseparable from the partisan alignments of the class struggle.** Bourgeois philosophy would have us believe that "justice is blind," in other words, that the truth about a thing somehow resides outside its history and development and outside its essential inter-relation with other things. Objectivity for bourgeois philosophy therefore is pictured as external to reality. We can see how this distortion develops as the intellectual tool of a class that needs to maintain a system of "eternal truths." In fact, however, we have seen from the brief survey above that all philosophy belongs to one social class or another. We saw idealism as the tool of slave-owners. We saw metaphysics as the world-view of the feudal barons. We saw mechanical materialism as the weapon of the emerging bourgeoisie in its revolutionary stage. Now as it wallows in the period of its decadence and decline, we see the bourgeoisie sinking deeper and deeper into subjective idealism. Philosophy belongs to the class struggle and is inseparable from it. The intellectual parasites who yap about the fundamentally abstract character of truth merely belie their own idealism and their allegiance to the capitalist system. Dialectical materialism is the philosophy of the revolutionary working class. It is our guide to action and the method by which we can carry out our historic mission. The sooner we master it, the sooner we can win.

THE CATEGORIES OF DIALECTICS

The examination of any object or process sees first its outer, limited surface; next, the duality between this outer aspect and its internal characteristics; and, finally, the inexhaustible variety of these inner aspects. As this examination unfolds, a series of distinct but interpenetrating thought categories clarifies the character of phenomena and of their reflection in our minds. We shall attempt to give a brief enumeration and description of these categories, all of which take shape as contradictory dualities.

I. The Finite and the Infinite.

Relativists, skeptics, and empiricists who belong to one or another school of bourgeois thought assert that we can know only the finite. This is perfectly correct, in a narrow, one-sided sense: the only things that can enter our sphere of knowledge are definite, limited objects. We cannot know

a thing that has no material existence. On the other hand, however, if we accept the idea that our knowledge is limited to things that stare us in the face, then our understanding is doomed to remain at an animal or, at best, an infantile level.

If, under the conditions that exist on earth, we take any quantity of water and apply heat to it, the water will boil when its own internal temperature reaches 212 degrees Fahrenheit. If a newborn baby is deprived of oxygen for a specified number of seconds, then it is certain that irreparable brain-damage or death will result, whether the experience takes place in Brooklyn, New Delhi, or Berlin. If the basic relations between social classes are those of commodity production, then, inevitably, surplus value will be produced by workers and appropriated by capitalists; antagonistic class contradictions will develop and sharpen; interimperialist rivalry will arise and lead to war; and the working class will take up revolutionary struggle. If our knowledge of a thing at a given point in history is limited by our own internal development, the development of contemporary productive forces, and the corresponding limits of contemporary science, by the same token, the **discoverable** knowledge of the thing in question has no such limits.

Reality, as we have seen, is constantly changing, dying, and being reborn. For this reason, our understanding of it is necessarily circumscribed and approximate. For the very same reason, however, in a universe where the one constant is change, both reality and its knowledge are inexhaustible. This is the scientific rationale for criticism and self-criticism in political work: our understanding of class struggle, in both its particular and its general forms, must lag at least a step behind the unfolding struggle itself.

On the one hand, the infinity of knowable matter is made up of the purely finite. For instance, when we speak of the growing antagonism between U.S. and Soviet imperialism we can begin to grasp its infinite complexity only by the incomplete, imperfect study of its specific manifestations—i.e. proxy wars in Turkey-Cyprus or Bangladesh; Soviet incursions in the mideast and western Europe; the shifting relation of forces in southern Africa, etc. This study of **singularities** enables us to advance our knowledge to a **particularity**: we can see that the proxy wars and Soviet ascendancy demonstrate growing U.S.-Soviet rivalry and U.S. decline. We can then elevate this particularity to a **universal**: under the conditions of monopoly capitalism, imperialist rivalry will intensify, will lead inevitably to war and fascism, and will present the working class with new opportunities for revolution. Contrary to bourgeois pragmatism, dialectical materialism understands the connection between the finite and infinite, the particular and universal. Our knowledge of the finite proves the infinity of the knowable.

On the other hand, for this very reason, knowledge of the universal is composed, as Engels

states, of an "...infinite number of finite human minds, working side by side and successively at this infinite knowledge, committing practical and theoretical blunders, setting out from erroneous, one-sided, and false premises, pursuing false, tortuous and uncertain paths, and often not even finding the right one when they run their noses against it." Nothing more clearly demonstrates this premise of dialectics than the history of proletarian revolution and revolutionary thought in the 19th and 20th centuries. The analysis of capitalism's amoeba—the commodity—unmasked surplus value as the secret of capitalist production and paved the way for the discovery of the universal law of workers' ultimate seizure of the means of production. Side by side and interlocked with this development was the conscious political action of the masses, which led to the Paris Commune, the discovery of the class nature of state power, and the deepening of this discovery by the revolutions of the 20th Century. By the same token, inevitable "practical and theoretical blunders" led to the reversal of workers' power in the Soviet Union and China. This bitter lesson in turn opened the door for even more profound insights into the nature of state power and class struggle.

All finite reality has infinite complexity. All finite knowledge has infinite perfectability. Therefore, as Engels says: "All true knowledge of nature is knowledge of the eternal, the infinite, and hence essentially absolute."

2. The Relative and the Absolute.

Metaphysics and dialectics both consider the question of the absolute but from completely contradictory viewpoints. For metaphysics, "absolutes" exist in and of themselves. The feudal alchemists believed that durability was an absolutely innate property of sale; the feudal kings thought their place atop society was divinely determined and therefore absolute; the Pope had only to speak and his word was "infallible." Today's bourgeois update of metaphysics contains essentially the same one-sided conception of absoluteness. Full unemployment, we are told, is an absolute inevitability—but the economists do not add: "of **capitalism**." The reactionary sociologists take various manifestations of ruling class barbarism or aggression and subsume them all under the supposedly absolute features of "human nature." The learned apologists of commodity production tell us that inequality of wealth and power is an absolute of human life. They fail to add: as long as society is divided into mutually antagonistic classes.

Dialectics, on the contrary, recognizes the relative and the absolute as two inseparable poles of every process. Reality and science show that nothing is absolute in and of itself but only in relation to other things.

For example, steel is hard in comparison to human flesh but soft in comparison to an industrial diamond. A hundred years are a long time in relation to a human life but hardly the wink of

an eye compared to the time required for the transition between ape and man. Imperialist war brings untold devastation and horror to the working class but also opens the door to revolution and the end of war. Capitalist dictatorship is an undeniable reality of life but only as long as the working class continues to tolerate the existence of bosses.

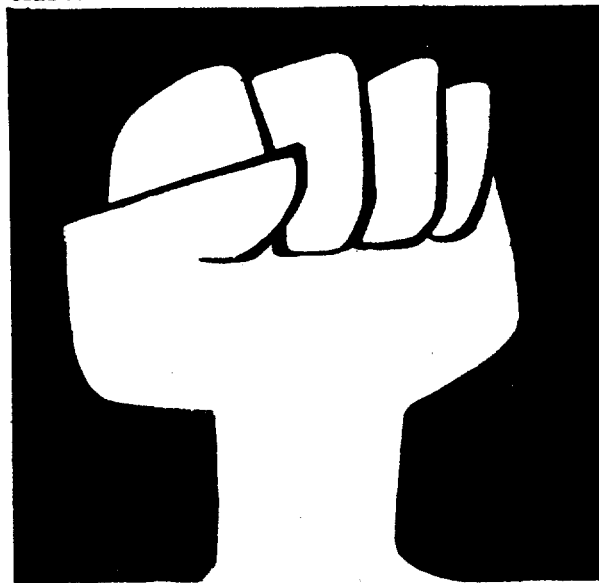
What dialectics says, in fact, is that everything is two-sided. If X is related to Y, then Y is also related to X. Under capitalism, our party fights for the program of the shorter work week—30 hours' work for 40 hours' pay. We say that as long as the bosses continue to rule and rob us, it is absolutely correct to spend less time grinding out surplus value for them. However, under socialism, as we have pointed out in **Reform and Revolution**, it is not at all clear that the working class should expect a shorter work week, at least as long as the worldwide fight against imperialism is still a necessity. This is so because of fundamental changes that will occur in economic and political conditions. A bad thing—working to produce surplus controlled by capitalists—becomes a good thing—working to produce surplus controlled by the working class and used in its own interest.

Every relative is at the same time an absolute when considered in its inter-relation with the universe. By the same token, every absolute is also relative. Bourgeois metaphysics denies this on both counts. On the one hand, in its blind devotion to the "eternal" truths of capitalism, it admits only its own absolutes. On the other hand, faced with the system's insoluble contradictions, it flies in the face of objective reality and considers everything relative.

Contemporary bourgeois culture is filled with examples of this second distortion. Faced with potential twin cataclysms in the revolt of black working class youth and student rebellions against the imperialist Vietnam war during the 1960s, the bosses came up with the slogan: "Do your own thing." Bourgeois metaphysics asserts that since the laws of history and nature are fundamentally undiscoverable, then every theory is potentially just as valid as every other theory. Therefore, we find the half-baked Linnaean taxonomy of E.O. Wilson dressed up in a \$20 edition of **Sociobiology** and prefaced with yet another version of the shopworn neo-nazi lies about the "hereditary" character of "entrepreneurship," "creativity," "spite," "selfishness," "altruism," and so on. Further: Wilson is by training an entomologist—i.e. a bug expert. He makes certain empirical observations about the genetic slave-owning tendencies of ants and then asserts that the same conditions prevail in human society. Aside from the obviously reactionary political and ideological character of this nonsense, we can see here a metaphysical confusion of the relative and the absolute. Of course, a relationship exists between ants and humans on some level of the evolutionary process. There is also an absolute distinction between the two, just as

there is a relationship and an absolute distinction between slave owners and slaves, lords and serfs, and bosses and workers.

In the course of carrying out political work, analyzing developments in the class struggle, and planning strategy and tactics at every level, our party must make correct evaluations of the relative and absolute character of all phenomena. For instance, when we begin to raise revolutionary ideas with a worker on the job, we know that just as capitalist consciousness and socialist consciousness are both absolute poles in the real world, so they are in his own mind as well. His own political movement to the left or the right must be related to this law. By the same token, regardless of what is in his head at a given moment, his objective class relationship to the means of production (the fact that he is a propertyless worker who produces expropriated surplus-value) is absolute. Therefore, the party can show him that his interests can be served only by fighting for socialism. On the other hand, however, nothing can be quite so cut and dry. We can state with absolute certainty that the process of winning the working class to make revolution has the inevitability of law, but our ability to win an individual worker is related to a complex series of variable phenomena; the objective conditions of class struggle at a given time on and off the job, the worker's own psychology, the quality of leadership provided inside the party, the political development of party members who come into contact with the worker, the frequency with which the worker reads **CHALLENGE-DESAFIO**, etc. Finally, as we mentioned, the worker's relation to the means of production is indeed absolute—under capitalism. This relation changes relatively as the worker joins the party and as the party grows and is able to launch sharper political and economic struggle against capitalism. It changes absolutely after the seizure of state power when the working class becomes the ruling class.



We need to apply this philosophical category to our understanding of international developments. We know that ultimately, the main contradiction in the world must be expressed in revolutionary class struggle. However, it is also possible for this contradiction to be expressed temporarily as inter-imperialist rivalry. This is the case today, when U.S.-Soviet antagonism and the preparations for war are intensifying. The inevitability of war and, with it, fascism, is absolute. By the same token, the duration of the war and the virulence of fascism are inextricably related to the strength of the international communist movement and, most particularly, to the growth of our own party. In the struggle between U.S. and Soviet bosses, the relative strength of the antagonists changes with great rapidity. The Soviets came out ahead in India. The U.S. appears to have won a tactical victory in the Mideast. The Soviets have made major incursions into southern Africa. The U.S. has succeeded in beating back the pro-Soviet forces in Chile and Thailand, at least for now. The U.S. was routed by Soviet imperialism's Vietnamese puppets but still plans to invest in Vietnam.

However, regardless of relative manifestations of strength in this process, the inter-imperialist tug of war nonetheless demonstrates an overall trend: U.S. decline and Soviet ascendancy. This is an absolute when viewed in relation to the U.S. ruling class' dreams of an "American Century" after World War II. Soviet supremacy is also relative: the reversion to capitalism in the U.S.S.R. and its development into imperialism cannot fail to generate and sharpen the same class antagonisms that are maturing in the U.S. No one has a crystal ball, but the laws of class struggle will eventually prevail. [The Soviet rulers, like their predecessors the Tsars, sow the seeds of their annihilation even as they stand atop the world. Here, as in everything, the relative and the absolute change places and become one another.]

3. The Potential and the Actual.

We have seen that metaphysics views quality and property as identical and describes all properties as the possessors of teleologically determined "forces." We have also seen that the mechanistic outlook considers properties in their relation to each other but determines only the external features of these relations.

By viewing things in their internal development and in their inter-connections with other things, dialectics reveals constant motion and development and shows that everything is simultaneously itself and something else. It asks, secondarily, the question: What is? and, primarily, the question: What is becoming? [Bourgeois idealism seeks to limit the unknown to the known; dialectics, on the contrary, views the known in its essential interrelation to the unknown. Pragmatism and idealism converge at and stumble over the immediate; dialectics looks beyond it and sees the essential character of the possible.]

Engels grasped this duality masterfully in his fragment **The Part Played by Labor in the**

Transition from Ape to Man. He showed that many hundreds of thousands of years ago, a highly developed group of anthropoid apes slowly began to walk on two legs. This erect posture enabled them to develop their hands in a fundamentally new way. The development of the hand and, specifically, the thumb, over many thousands of years, led to various simple forms of labor. This labor was decisive in transforming apes into men. It developed not only the hand as an individual organ but also the entire organism of which the hand is a mere part. [The work that for the first time had to be done and could be done to ensure survival led to mutual activity and then to primitive communication.] The act of communicating led to the exercise and development of the vocal chords, the production of speech, the development of the brain, and the growth of language. All the while, the establishment of labor as a constant of life led to the development and perfection of tools. Engels shows, therefore, that even in the pre-history of humanity, man is "... not only the organ of labor, (he) is also the product of labor."

The anthropoid who stood on two feet and walked erect for the first time was both himself and something else. The apes who joined together and grunted or screeched at each other to indicate needs or instructions were simultaneously emitting animal noises and something else. Ultimately, as the result of the ape's developing internal characteristics and their interrelation with the external world, the transition was completed, and the ape became a social animal. From this point on, the further development of man became inseparable from the parallel development of the means of production created by man and from man's transformation of society itself. Marx described this dialectic of potentiality and actuality in the following manner:

(Man) confronts nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, in order to appropriate nature's productions in a form suitable to his own wants. By thus acting on the external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature. He develops the potentialities that slumber within him and subjects these inner forces to his own control."

The ability to define a phenomenon's state of development at a specified point and then to ascertain the same phenomenon's inherent potential for future growth and transformation is central to the formulation of correct political strategy and tactics. By applying the concepts of potentiality and actuality to an analysis of U.S. imperialist adventures in Vietnam, our party was able to predict very early that the handful of military "advisers" in Vietnam during the early 1960s would soon swell into a massive invasion that would launch a genocidal war but that would also enmesh the U.S. ruling class in contradictions from which it could never fully recover. At the same time, we were able to predict that a mass movement with anti-imperialist aspirations

could also develop. For this reason, we were able to introduce the slogan: "U.S. Get Out of Vietnam NOW!" into this burgeoning movement. In a limited way and with many weaknesses, we succeeded in demonstrating the immense revolutionary potential of the worker-student alliance during the course of this anti-imperialist struggle. Aside from the many opportunist errors our party made in this period (which we have analyzed elsewhere), we learned and proved that a small number of people, armed with even a partially correct political line and acting decisively to carry it out, can indeed move masses leftward.

[Bourgeois mechanism sees only the actual and cannot recognize the potential. Bourgeois idealism, on the other hand, desperately longs for illusory potentialities that have no basis in reality.] Thus, the imperialists launched their Vietnam aggression without counting on either the militancy of the Vietnamese people or the class hatred of masses here at home. By the same token, for all his supposed "brilliance," most of Dr. Kissinger's miraculous solutions to U.S. bosses' foreign policy problems fall apart shortly after he concocts them, because no amount of wishful thinking can arrest the inexorable development of U.S. imperialist decline.

Marxist-Leninists know, therefore, that the patient, diligent, complex effort to put forward and carry out a revolutionary line must eventually bear fruit. All of our party's many-sided activities—the regular sale of CHALLENGE-DESAFIO at industrial concentrations and on campuses, the constant injection of revolutionary socialist, anti-racist, and internationalist concepts into the day-to-day class struggle, the organization of scores of small and large actions that raise these concepts among the masses—are geared to awaken the "potentialities that slumber within" the working class and to transform the ruled into the rulers of society.

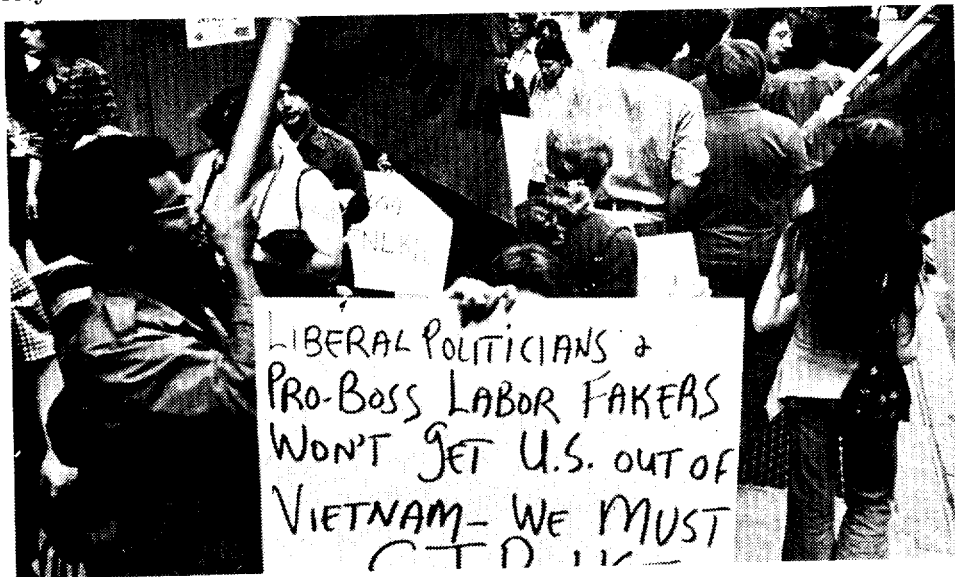
Our efforts to organize a movement against U.S. imperialist adventure in southern Africa can serve as a case in point. The bosses cannot do without the vast mineral resources and cheap labor in this area of the world. As their maneuverability diminishes, their ruthlessness will increase. Anti-racist rebellion in southern Africa is inevitable. The interests of the U.S. working class make revolutionary solidarity with the anti-apartheid fighters both possible and necessary. The time to vigorously introduce the concept of unity with southern African rebels is **now**—not months or years from now, when massive imperialist land invasions have become a **fait accompli**.

If we do this, the potential can become the actual, and the actual can become the potential. The mass anti-imperialist movement that is possible today can become a reality, and with correct political leadership from our party, this movement can in turn transform itself eventually into an armed struggle for the seizure of state power.

4. The Contingent and the Necessary.

Metaphysics further exposes its bankruptcy by its one-sided method of handling the contradiction between chance and necessity. Just as it denies that the relative and the absolute become each other and that the potential becomes the actual and again the potential, so it buries its head in the sand when faced with the idea that chance and necessity likewise are transformed into each other.

One branch of metaphysics asserts that only chance exists. Nature and society do not operate according to laws. Poverty, wars, natural disasters, etc. are all explained as "accidents." The bourgeoisie tries to get us to believe that JFK was assassinated by a "nut," and that his death had nothing to do with its own internal conflicts. The liberals pushed the idiotic idea that



PL and SDS protest Vietnam War

U.S. intervention in Vietnam was a "tragic mistake" that had nothing to do with the laws of imperialist development. Scientific breakthroughs are attributed to the individual "geniuses" who just "happened" to be in the right place at the right time. Therefore, for this branch of metaphysics, the only things that are rational are those it can explain. Everything else must be supernaturally determined.

On the other hand, metaphysics also serves up pure determinism. Everything—from the precise hour at which Vercingetorix invaded Rome to the size of Rockefeller's bank account—has the force of necessity. Here, too, a scientific conception of development is impossible, and we return to theology; if everything in nature and society is ordered for all time, then science is still imprisoned by religion, whether we call it Kismet, Calvinist predestination, or Wilsonian, Herrsteinian, and Jensenian "genetic determination."

In the natural sciences, Darwin was the first to shatter this dual one-sidedness. His studies threw into question all previous conceptions of rigidly determined species. As Engels wrote:

... the infinite, accidental differences within a single species, differences which become accentuated until they break through the character of the species, and whose immediate causes even can be demonstrated only in extremely few cases, compelled him to question the previous basis of all regularity in biology.

To this "necessity" of apes walking forever on all fours is now counterposed the "chance" of the first ape who stood erect. Over millenia, this new posture becomes necessity and then transforms itself into the "chance" of primitive manual labor.

In society as in nature, Marxism-Leninism shows that all previous conceptions of necessity break down when put to the litmus test of class struggle. Marx' "chance" discovery of surplus value rendered bourgeois social science and economics obsolete. The Bolshevik party's "chance" storming of the Winter Palace became the necessity of worldwide proletarian revolution. The "chance" of last summer's mass struggle against apartheid in South Africa presents revolutionaries and workers everywhere with both an obligation and a new opportunity.

For metaphysics, chance presents itself as an endless series of purely fortuitous happenings: nature and society are no more than a giant roulette game. Metaphysical necessity, on the other hand, imposes its dictatorial will from the outside, just like the 18th Century mechanical materialist view of God the Watchmaker. Dialectics, in contrast, sees that all living nature and society are imbued with their own living necessity, which operates according to specific laws but also departs from these laws for the precise reason that it is living, constantly changing, and therefore generating new laws.

Marxism's vulgar bourgeois opponents often

denigrate it as "economic determinism." Nothing could be further from the truth. Marxism says that, in the last analysis, the economic base of a given society determines the nature of its superstructure. Capitalist production relations will necessarily give rise to corresponding forms of state power, ideology, psychology, culture, law, science, etc. Enormous variations will develop as a matter of "chance" in the base and superstructure of given capitalist societies. By the same token, the superstructure that has been determined by the base can turn the tables and qualitatively affect the base itself. Out of the necessities of class struggle in the United States, arose the chance development of the Progressive Labor Party. We know that our party's existence was not decreed from on high and that we have a long road ahead before we can say that our subjective efforts have the authority of historical necessity. Yet our very existence as a political force proves the dialectical interpenetration of chance and necessity. We did not have to come into being, yet the laws of capitalism make the eventual development of a victorious communist party in the U.S. inevitable. Our errors can destroy us, yet the science of Marxism-Leninism enables us to correct them and to grow. Our further development is contingent upon changes in the objective situation and our own subjective improvement. By the same token, the objective situation will change sooner or later, and we can master it. If we do not, the working class' own needs will force it to produce another party.

Necessity arises out of chance. Chance becomes necessity. Accidents are inevitable. The inevitable is accidental. Dialectics rejects both the theory of chaos and the authority of written laws and prophets.

5. The Apparent and the Essential.

Cliches sometimes reveal the profound dialectical insight of the masses. One example is the notion that "You can't tell a book by its cover." The cover of a book will give us only the grossest, most superficial knowledge of the book's content. If we see a shark swimming by himself in the water, we catch only a one-sided glimpse of his true nature, which does not fully reveal itself until the shark pounces on another fish and thereby bares his predatory character. Two men the same age may appear to have a similar complexion and general demeanor, yet one may be perfectly healthy and the other may suffer from cancer.

Bourgeois humanism delights in confusing appearances with essences: this is its favorite method of obscuring capitalism's class character. Humanism, which emerged as a revolutionary world view in the Sixteenth Century when it struck an important blow at feudal scholasticism, has now turned into its opposite with the premise that "deep down, everyone is the same."

Superficially, of course, all men and women have many apparently identical traits: mortality,

organs, method of reproduction, capacity to perform labor, etc. On the one hand, while these observations help identify the essence of Man from, say, the essence of fish or dandelions, in reality they tell us very little beyond that. The essential characteristics of a Rockefeller do not become clear when we observe him as a foppish art "lover" or a self-proclaimed "public servant." We can understand his essence only after we have delved beneath the surface and analyzed the enormous wealth he and his family control. When we make this analysis, we learn a) that he is a capitalist who therefore exploits workers and b) that he is the leading capitalist in the U.S. and therefore the dominant single figure who determines U.S. imperialism's domestic and foreign policy. In this way, we can single him and his cohorts out in their primary quality as the main enemies of the working class.

The party does not evaluate its cadre by subjecting them to bourgeois academic standards. A worker may or may not be able to play the violin; he may or may not have studied Shakespeare; he may or may not know "all there is to know" about Picasso's "blue period." The essential questions to which the party and the working class must address itself have little to do with personal idiosyncrasies or matters of "style" that bourgeois culture considers paramount. Fighting for socialism, recruiting to the party, moving masses leftward against racism, building a base for Marxism-Leninism: these are essential questions. We make major errors when we confuse them with appearances.]

Some of Marxism's most vital concepts have developed only because of clarity about this dialectical category. Marx showed that while a commodity **appears** to be a simple self-sufficient thing, in fact it contains the germ of the entire capitalist system. He showed that while a worker appears to sell the boss his **labor**, in fact the transaction involves **labor power**. He showed that while money appears to measure the value of things, in fact its essential characteristic is to mask the true social relationship between the owning class and the working class.

We can understand the **essential** nature of things only when we observe them in their fundamental relation to other things. Thus, we can evaluate a mechanic when we see him working on a machine and not when we see him playing the piano; we can evaluate the quality of an automobile after we see its performance on the road and not when it sits in the showroom; we can best evaluate our party after we test it in the class struggle and not when we remove ourselves from the struggle.

Dialectics does not reject the knowledge of appearances as useless. On the contrary; it asserts that understanding the **apparent** constitutes an essential "moment" of human knowledge, (cf. Lenin's **Philosophical Notebooks**). Dialectics says that the most important thing about this "moment" is its transcendence—going beyond the limited aspects of the **apparent** to grasp the limitless complexities of the **essential**. This knowledge is possible only by the analysis of **practice**.

As essences change, they force a transforma-

tion in appearances as well. New content seeks out new form. The Paris Commune, the first proletarian struggle that seriously threw bourgeois rule into question, immediately generated new governmental forms that constituted revolutionary departures from bourgeois parliamentarianism. The leap from feudalism to capitalism brought with it the transformation of lords into bosses and of peasants into workers. The shifting fortunes of U.S.-Soviet imperialist rivalry are revealed in the presence of Soviet ships in the Indian Ocean and Soviet economic penetration in Asia and Africa.

Since it reached its zenith more than a hundred years ago, capitalist culture has sought an absolute separation of form and content, "Art for art's sake" first appeared as the slogan of French bourgeois poets during the 1830s. Since then, in one guise or another, the same concept has come forth to vindicate the decadentists of the 1880s, the dadaist nihilists of the 1920s, the "triumph of the will" fascists of the 1930s, and the pornographers of the 1970s. In each case, the appearance of technical "brilliance" serves as a cover for the essence of the exploitation and degradation of the masses.

Marxism-Leninism, on the other hand, recognizes the distinction between essence and appearance or form and content, but at the same time seeks their revolutionary reconciliation. Against the degenerate capitalist esthetic idea that the "medium is the message" stands Stalin's famous formulation that once the working class' communist party has settled on its political line, then organizing to carry out the line is "everything." For the bards of capitalism, the medium is irrelevant as long as it makes the message of profit. For workers and revolutionaries, the message of **socialism** must ring out loud and clear in all its forms of expression.

6. The External and the Internal.

Closely related to the question of the appearance of things and their essence is the matter of their external and internal aspects.

Mechanics, which limits its view to appearances, considers phenomena as the products of the external function of processes upon each other. Bourgeois social science and psychology provide insight into the one-sided character of this approach. For years, capitalist theorists have debated with each other over the primacy of "heredity" and "environment" in the determination of social realities.

On the one hand, the racist hereditarians tell us that oppressed **WORKERS AND MINORITIES** are doomed because of "inferior genes," and that no changes in the environment can alter nature's reputed unfairness. The pseudoscientific character of this Hitlerite twaddle is so blatant that every so often the bourgeois academic community has to clean house by getting rid of its over-exposed hereditarians. The recent "discovery" that the notorious English racist Cyril Burt was a quack provides a case in point.

On the other hand, we have racist "environmentalists," who tell us that culture generates

its own fatality and that oppression, rather than genes, makes people inferior. Leading spokesmen for this other side of the eugenics movement include Moynihan (the "matriarchal structure of the black family"), Oscar Lewis ("the culture of poverty"), Banfield (the theory that poverty exists because poor people like it), and Glazer (racism is just a figment of the liberal imagination: the real problem is the unfair advantages accorded to black people).

Both hereditarians and environmentalists pretend to explain the phenomenon of unequal wealth. Both concoct a theory that "blames the victim." Both start from a clearly partisan position to define poverty as the product of something completely external to poverty. Neither can come to grips with the dialectical proposition that poverty is merely the external manifestation of something else—the class struggle.

Dialectics says that the external is a specific form in which the internal manifests itself. In the 1960s, the Black Panther Party aroused the admiration of militant black working class youth. The Panthers called for armed struggle against the ruling class; they showed great individual courage, their outlook appeared to be anti-imperialist. Ultimately, however, the bosses' police smashed them. A mechanistic explanation of their development would say that an external phenomenon (ruling class terror) overwhelmed them. A dialectical explanation of their demise considers the ferocity of the bosses' attack as a significant factor in their failure but looks beyond

the external and internal and the primacy of the internal in the development of our own party. As we have pointed out above and elsewhere, for many years our mass political work has been characterized by reformism—the revisionist idea that revolutionary practice will arise spontaneously from the day-to-day struggle for concessions from the bosses. If we had analyzed this phenomenon mechanistically, we would have said that the opportunist influence of the mass movement on our members was too great to be overcome. By applying dialectics to our own case, we were able to ascertain that we were indeed susceptible to the right-wing influence of the reform struggle precisely because this was the nature of the training we received and gave inside the party. As soon as we began to change the internal character of our party's outlook we were able to observe a change in the political character of its external appearance. The change is not yet qualitative, but it can serve as an example of the superiority of dialectics over mechanics.

The mechanistic view that the external is primary and mutually exclusive of the internal pervades all categories of the bourgeois superstructure. Capitalist medicine, which elevates doctors to the prestige of guruhood and trains them as entrepreneurs, also makes a fetish out of drugs. Here again, we see the one-sided preponderance of the external: good health is made overwhelmingly dependent on pills, syrups, elixirs, and injections. Naturally, this approach is a bonanza for the drug companies, but it makes for rotten medical care. Capitalism can't admit that the major diseases are those it produces itself. Hypertension, cancer, heart disease, and a host of other ills are directly attributable to the unsafe, infested conditions under which the bosses force us to work and live. Capitalism cannot tolerate and will not develop health care in its rational, scientific form, the form that seeks to strengthen the human organism in its interaction with the outside world: preventive medicine. Preventive medicine welcomes advances in pharmacology, chemotherapy, and the like, but its primary concern is to make the organism free from disease and from the susceptibility to disease by eradicating the cause of disease.

Several years ago, the vicissitudes of the international capitalist economy forced a change in the method of distributing oil. The major aspects of this development were the decline of U.S. imperialism vis-a-vis the Soviets and the emergence of Arab and Iranian oil potentates as secondary competitive factors on the world market. The U.S. ruling class and the oil barons quadrupled gas prices and made us all line up for hours at service stations. Then they explained their internal economic and political debacle as a product of its external form and came up with a bit of brilliant circular reasoning to explain the "energy crisis:" it's harder to get oil because oil is harder to get. Further developments in the "energy crisis" provide a classic textbook example of the impasse inevitably reached by imple-

A Black OK For the Klan

CAMP PENDLETON, Cal. (AP)—The chairwoman of the Black Congressional Caucus says the Ku Klux Klan has a right to exist on the nation's military bases, but should operate in the open and ought to be watched.

The comment by Rep. Yvonne Brathwaite Burke (D-Cal.) came after she spent yesterday investigating racial conditions at Camp Pendleton, scene of a Nov. 13 raid by blacks on whites they suspected of being KKK members.

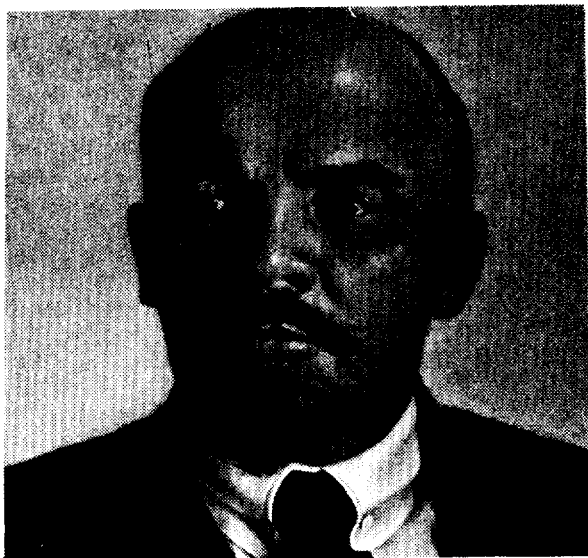
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it to their own internal characteristics (nationalism, the failure to build a base among workers, illusions about the ability of a handful of armed fighters with no mass ties to withstand the onslaught of the capitalist state apparatus, etc.).

We can see the dialectical interpenetration of



Vladimir Ilich Lenin

menting the mechanistic view that the external is primary. Several alternatives are available to U.S. bosses if they want to free themselves from dependency on imported oil. Coal and underground oil are both superabundant in the United States. But the profit and growth needs of U.S. capitalism make this transformation unfeasible. It is not technologically impossible: it is simply too expensive and would put the U.S. further and further behind the competition. Therefore, because Rockefeller and Co. are unable to strengthen their economic base internally, their dependency on outside help increases geometrically. Since the long gas lines of 1974, U.S. oil imports have zoomed to 40% of total domestic oil consumption. This development inevitably makes U.S. rulers all the more vulnerable to the whims of Middle Eastern oil barons and the incursions of Soviet imperialism. Internal self-sufficiency is approachable only under socialism.

The external and internal are two necessary phases of all development. Dialectics shows that the internal provides the basis of a phenomenon's existence and transformation, while the external supplies the conditions. No amount of cooking can make a chair edible. The president of Exxon is not winnable to socialism. Aspirin cannot cure terminal cancer.

On the other hand, masses of workers will respond to the party's revolutionary ideas. Exploited white workers have an interest in fighting racism. Students have a class basis for uniting with the proletariat. The external always plays its distinct role in development, but this role is incomprehensible without and secondary to the role played by the internal.

7. Likeness and Difference.

Bourgeois mechanism typically approaches phenomena in a one-sided manner. Because it is the philosophy of a class that cannot view things apart from their immediate profitability, it is unable to go beyond pragmatism. Capitalist phi-

losophy, like capitalist greed, never sees beyond the tip of its own nose. It grasps the relative but not the absolute; it understands the appearance of things but does not penetrate their essence; its comprehension of development stops at the external and never reaches the internal.

Because of this one-sidedness, the bourgeois world view paints itself into a dogmatic corner when confronted with the question of likeness and difference. On the one hand, bourgeois humanism tells us that all men are essentially the same. We have seen that this idea serves as a mask for the class antagonisms that arise in capitalist society. On the other hand, the same bourgeois philosophy also tells us that every human being is endowed with inalienable "uniqueness." In the same breath as that with which it promulgates all class unity, the capitalist world-view also endorses unbridled individualism. Somehow, the clothes we wear, the cars we drive, even the deodorant we use are supposed to make us "different." Of course, a system that could not exist without cut-throat competition has a great stake in artificially glorifying all forms of individualism and in denigrating the concept of collectivity for the working class.

In a philosophic sense, then, we can say that capitalism sees likeness only as likeness and difference only as difference. Furthermore, it also has an interest in convincing the working class that likeness is exclusively difference and that difference is exclusively likeness. The working class of any country is never totally homogeneous. Workers come from many different national backgrounds; they speak different languages; their skin pigmentation has many shades. The ruling class seizes upon these insignificant differences to promote racism by first asserting that differences among workers are more fundamental than similarities and then by attempting to elevate the differences to the level of absolute antagonism. The dual campaign to promote race war in Boston and to portray all of South Boston's workers as fascists is a case in point. The bosses' press blares lies about the incompatibility of black and white workers (fundamental likeness disguised as fundamental difference) and goes on to assert that all of South Boston's oppressed workers have the same outlook as fascist ROAR (fundamental difference disguised as fundamental likeness).

Dialectics alone is able to grasp the interconnection and interpenetration of likeness and difference in all phenomena, because dialectics alone among world outlooks does not shrink from the reality of contradiction. Dialectics shows that we see likeness first as likeness and difference first as difference, but that as our examination of phenomena proceeds from the superficial to the profound, we perceive that likeness and difference are ceaselessly transformed one into the other.

All bosses are alike in their essential exploitative relations with workers. However, not every capitalist agrees on the best methods for realizing maximum profits and exercising class dic-

tatorship. These differences are not merely subjective: they also reflect the selfish interest generated by capitalist competition. This duality was clear in the internal struggle that took place within the U.S. ruling class around the "Water-gate" caper. By applying the dialectical category of likeness and difference to this development, our party was able to show that "old" money had successfully thwarted the challenge of "new" money upstarts, that this billionaires' dogfight took place in the context of rapid U.S. imperialist decline, and that workers' interest lay in using the bosses' collective weakness to attack them all in a revolutionary way.

The new Arab and African oil moguls who have emerged as secondary forces on the international economic scene are alike in their greed, their willingness to rob their "own" workers and the international working class, and their need to develop an industrial base. This likeness finds its organizational expression in OPEC—the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, which enables them to unite in setting astronomical oil price increases. However, the nature of capitalist development in the Mideast and the world at large limits this likeness. The oil princes are also in competition with each other, more or less in contradiction to either the U.S. or the Soviet ruling class depending upon circumstances, and therefore unable to unite on much more than the question of price. Now, they cannot even reach full unanimity on that. This difference is most readily apparent in the OPEC rulers' mad scramble to build formidable military apparatuses for use against Israeli bosses and, in many cases, against each other.

In the history of the international communist movement, the Bolshevik party has surely furnished the greatest example for other revolutionary parties to emulate, and Lenin has provided the greatest theoretical and practical leadership. In their uncompromising pursuit of proletarian dictatorship and socialism they stand as the absolute antithesis of today's fascist "C"PSU and its new "red" bosses Brezhnev and Co. However, as our party pointed out in **Road To Revolution III**, the stork did not bring revisionism full-blown to the Soviet Union. The difference between Lenin and Brezhnev is readily visible to anyone: however, only an understanding of their likeness can lead to an objective explanation of capitalist restoration's roots. We know now that in the New Economic Policy, in the various five-year plans, and in the conduct of the struggle against the Nazi beasts, the Bolsheviks pursued a policy of concessions to bourgeois forces and bourgeois ideas. These concessions led to a nationalist line, to alliances with various imperialists, and eventually to the redevelopment of commodity production on socialist soil. To be sure, the main aspect of comparison between the Bolsheviks and today's "C"PSU scabs is difference, but failure to grasp the germ of likeness dooms us to an idealist "devil theory" explanation of revisionism both in the history of the movement and in our own party today.

Many similarities exist between the Great Depression of the 1930s and the shock waves buffeting the international capitalist economy today. In each case world capitalism is in a profound crisis; millions are unemployed; the threat of war looms larger daily. On the other hand, crucial differences also exist: the U.S. ruling class emerged from the earlier crisis to become the leader of the imperialist camp, and today it is on the decline; in the 1930s, the Soviet Union, for all its limitations, was still a workers' dictatorship, and today it is the world's top imperialist; in the 1930s the communist movement had a center, and today the urgent task of revolutionaries is to rebuild that center; the world war of 1933-45 saw capitalism eventually restored to every country in the world, and today if communists struggle correctly against world war and fascism, the outcome can be universal revolution (see December 1976 CHALLENGE-DESAFIO editorials).

Like all dialectical categories, the concept of likeness and difference provides crucial insights into all levels of reality. It is indispensable to the physical sciences, to technology, and to political work. Engels applied this concept to science when he wrote in **Anti-Duhring**:

By calling physics the mechanics of molecules, chemistry the physics of atoms, biology the chemistry of albumens, I wish to express the transition of each one of these sciences into the other and therefore the connection, the continuity and also the distinction, the break between the two fields. Biology does not in this way amount to chemistry yet at the same time is not something absolutely separated from it. In our analysis of life we find definite chemical processes. But these latter are now not chemical in the proper sense of the word; to understand them there must be a transition from ordinary chemical action to the chemistry of albumens, which we call, life.

Chemistry and biology are separate yet converge at specific points of identity; the study of mathematics and of language are obviously different yet share many structural similarities; a strike and an insurrection are two distinct methods of class struggle, yet the former can serve as an admirable training ground for the latter.

In the party and among the masses, an understanding of likeness and difference enables us to make essential decisions that affect strategy and tactics. Without this distinction, we cannot separate friends from enemies; we cannot properly apply the same general line to specific shop, campus, and community situations; we cannot conduct correct inner-party struggle. One comrade may react only to the most strident criticism; another may wilt under it: yet both may respond well to criticism that is commensurate with their political development and psychology. The overall conditions of class struggle in a given period must operate according to the same general laws, yet enormous variations will nonetheless develop

within this context. Understanding the precise nature of these variations enables the party to plan for breakthroughs and to avoid opportunism and adventurism in tactics.

In this brief survey of the major dialectical categories, we have tried to show that each one exists as a function of its opposite and that these opposites take shape both in their distinction from each other and in their tendency to become transformed into each other. We also attempted beforehand to show that dialectics takes the real world as it is and observes it as a process of constant change and development. We are now in a position to ask: **What is the source of change and motion?** The categories provide us with different windows from which motion is perceived at different angles. By posing the question of **motion's origin**, we have reached the threshold of the **first law of dialectics**.

I. THE UNITY AND CONFLICT OF OPPOSITES.

As we hope to have shown above, all essential knowledge presupposes the study of a phenomenon's internal characteristics. Furthermore, we saw that nothing is frozen in space and time, but that all things are rather related to all other things and their development. Development, by definition, is motion. The bourgeois-mechanical view considers motion as the product of external causes. Dialectics, on the contrary, sees motion as internal and, therefore, as **self-movement**.

In our study of the categories, we discovered that everything was simultaneously "itself and something else." In this perception lies the germ of the first law of dialectical materialism: the law of universal contradiction. This law tells us that everything—all phenomena of nature, society, and thought—is the product of mutually exclusive opposites, their interdependence, and their struggle with each other. On the one hand, contradiction exists in all things. On the other hand, in all phases of the development of all processes, a specific struggle between opposites takes place from beginning to end.

Lenin summarized this law:

In mathematics: plus and minus. Differential and integral.

In mechanics: action and reaction.

In physics: positive and negative electricity.

In chemistry: the combination and dissociation of atoms.

In social science: the class struggle.

Plant life requires both sun and rain; illness is incomprehensible without health; defeat for one army means victory for another; darkness cannot exist without light; exchange value presupposes use value; capitalism needs workers; profit for one capitalist is loss for another; theory requires practice. In all these examples of contradiction and in an infinite number of others, each aspect is defined in its unity and conflict with the other. Neither could exist without the other; each develops only through its struggle with the other.

Just as the infinite is knowable only in the finite, the absolute only in the relative, the internal only in its external manifestation, and the potential only in the actual, so is the universal truth of contradiction observable only in **specific contradictions**. The ability to identify and analyze the particular characteristics in given contradictions draws the dividing line between metaphysical whimsy and the scientific application of dialectics to revolutionary struggle. Dialectics tells us that if we want to know a thing, we must define it in its essential contradictoriness. Materialism tells us that this contradictoriness must be studied in the reality of practice.

It may be useful for the sake of clarity to identify several of history's key contradictions. Marx and Engels showed in their major works that "all history is the history of class struggle." This formulation means that human society develops as the result of conflict between the "means" of production and the "mode" of production—between the sum of productive forces available to sustain and expand life and the social relations engendered by this base. Further, the founders of scientific socialism demonstrated that as the qualitative nature of a society changes, the qualitative nature of this contradiction also changes. Thus, the contradiction in classless primitive communism is between man and nature; the contradiction in slavery is between slave and master; the contradiction in feudalism is between serf and lord; the contradiction in capitalism is between labor and capital.

The basic contradiction of capitalism, then, may be defined as the conflict between the social character of production (armies of workers herded into factories, offices, etc. and organized into a highly complex division of labor) and the private means of appropriation (the concentration of ownership of productive forces into the hands of an infinitesimal minority of capitalists). This contradiction between bosses and workers, in the words of Engels; "...includes in itself all



those contradictions which surround modern society and are especially evident in heavy industry."

A number of important contradictions in modern capitalism that flow from this one:

1) **The contradiction between the advanced organization of production in an individual factory and the anarchy of capitalist production as a whole.** Thus, the ruling class is capable of developing advanced computer technology but cannot put it to use to pick up city garbage or provide adequate medical care. The jobs on a Ford assembly line are scientifically differentiated, yet the profit system cannot develop a rational network of mass transportation.

2) **Capitalism requires the perfection of machinery and the instruments of labor as well as the general increase of production.** On the other side of this contradiction, however, are **the growth of unemployment and the recurrent crises of over-production** that accompany each technological advance.

3) **Within capitalism there is the distinction between ownership of property in capital and the control of production itself.** For instance, millions of people, including workers, may own shares of stock and receive dividends from the accumulated surplus produced by the workers of a given company. On the other hand, the control over production, the financial purse-strings for expansion, and the allocation and distribution of profit remain under the tight grip of a small group of financial moguls. As this contradiction develops, the concentration of capital in the hands of this ruling group intensifies and leads to the further impoverishment of all other social classes. This is the Marxist law of the "grinding down" of the petty bourgeoisie into the ranks of the working class. Its specific manifestation is apparent today in developments like the abolition of tenure for many college professors, the growing number of house staff doctors' strikes, and the rebellion of California private practitioners against the malpractice insurance boondoggle.

4) **The contradiction between the ruling class of a given country and the most oppressed sections of the working class.** Capitalism's need to amass maximum profits spontaneously gives rise to the **unequal development of exploitation. This is the economic basis of racism.** This contradiction is a feature of the profit system's fundamental boss-worker antagonism. Understanding it is crucial to the revolutionary process. Various revisionists and scribblers on the left who take a nationalist approach to the struggle against racism hopelessly obscure the class origin of the contradiction and therefore can find no basis for unity between oppressed "majority" workers and superoppressed "minority" workers. Dialectics and Marxism teach that racism is the capitalist system's "Achilles' heel" and that all workers have a vital stake in smashing it. The fight against racism is a universal aspect of our party's political activity.

5) **The contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed workers of countries to which it exports capital.** This contradiction is merely the repetition of racism on an international scale. As with racism, revisionists distort its aspects and urge all-class unity for illusory "national liberation." Socialist revolution alone can wipe out the super-exploitation of imperialism.

6) **The contradiction between monopoly and competition.** This is the major contradiction within the international capitalist class. It manifests itself in three ways:

a) **The contradiction within a given local ruling class.** Examples are the "old money"—"new money" Watergate dogfight or the current struggle between the mining wing and the agriculture-state capital wing of South Africa's racist bosses.

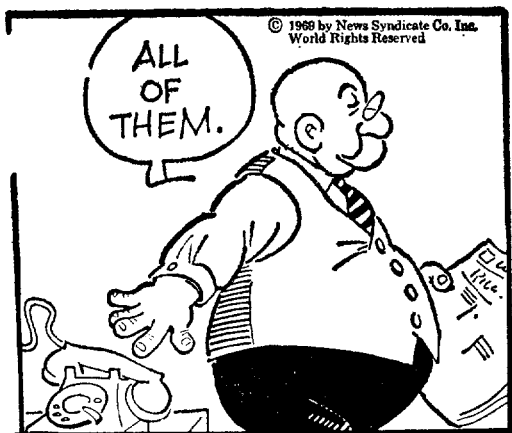
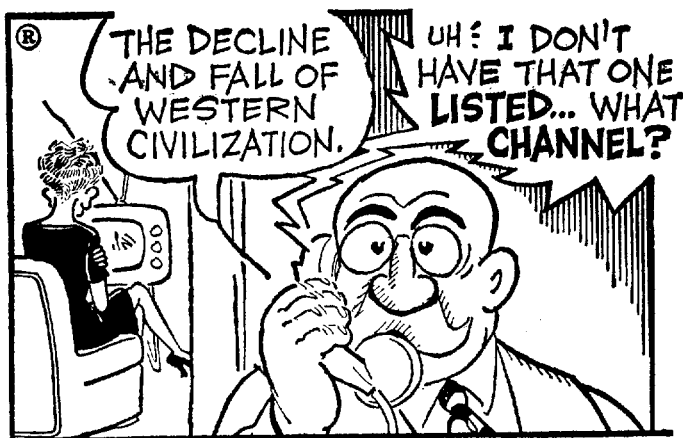
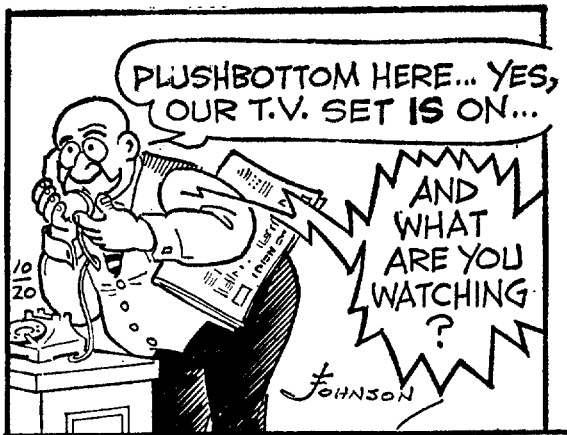
b) **The contradiction between major imperialist powers and secondary imperialists or newly emerging capitalist forces.** Examples of this contradiction are the lessened maneuverability of U.S. rulers vis-a-vis OPEC, growing trade rivalry between the U.S. and Japan, the independent nuclear strike force developed by French bosses, the flirtation between U.S. imperialism and Romanian revisionists and the apparent return of the latter to the Soviet bloc, etc.

c) **The contradiction between imperialist super-powers.** Marx and Lenin proved that the conflict between monopoly and competition inevitably leads to world war. For several years, our party has pointed out that the specific modern application of this general law is the intensification of rivalry between U.S. and Soviet imperialists. We have written at great length about the inevitability of war and fascism and the working class' ability to transform them into their opposite.

Many other contradictions exist within modern capitalism. We have tried to list only a few of the major ones to demonstrate the first law of dialectics.

However, we cannot understand the law of contradiction if we limit ourselves to the statement that contradiction exists in all things and the citation of several important contradictions. The laws of dialectics are laws of **motion**. Therefore the simple definition of a contradiction does not enable us to know it: we must also grasp its dynamics.

1) When dialectics states that things are composites of opposites, it means that opposites are "equal" only in the superficial sense, that is, only in their unity and conflict with each other. The study of any contradiction reveals that one aspect is **principal** and the other subordinate, one primary and the other secondary. Failure to grasp this law in practice dooms us to subjectivity and dogmatism. Combining the fight for reforms with the fight for revolution is a contradiction. We cannot escape this fact and should not try to. However, every day, our political work forces us to decide which is primary: "improving" the



profit system or destroying it. We can lead the working class to socialism only to the extent that we view the revolutionary aspect of this contradiction as primary and act upon our understanding.

Democratic-centralism, the method of our party's organization, also embodies a contradiction. There must be democracy in inner-party discussion because the party can move forward only in an atmosphere of frank, comradely struggle, criticism and self-criticism. By the same token, if we are to crush an enemy with vast relative superiority, we must carry out decisions with absolute single-mindedness of purpose once they have been reached. Thus, centralism is the main aspect of this contradiction.

The worker-student alliance is the party's main strategy for uniting the masses in the revolutionary process. Both forces are indispensable, but because only the working class can seize and hold state power and because communists must therefore fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the working class is the primary aspect of this contradiction. This is why our party attaches high priority to its own internal proletarianization and trains workers, particularly minorities and women for leadership.

Every worker, every student, every party has weaknesses. These weaknesses exist on many levels. Politically, however, they all reflect the class struggle that rages within each of us between the bourgeois and the working class. Correct communist work requires not only that we ascertain which aspect is primary at a given moment but also which has the potential to become primary. For example, a worker who deplores violence in the abstract may give exemplary leadership in fighting scabs and cops during a strike. White postal workers, many of whom doubtless were infected with racist ideas, nonetheless followed the leadership of black and latin wildcatters during the 1971 walkout. Someone who expresses profound cynicism about achieving a better life **under the present system** may well respond with vigor to communist ideas. A comrade or a leader with many faults may make vital contributions to the party and the working class. On the other hand, the machinations of Soviet and Chinese revisionism have long since ceased to be mere "errors" committed by revolutionaries in the course of fighting capitalism. Factionalism inside the party must be handled as the work of the class enemy. One cannot be a drug addict and a communist at the same time.

This distinction between primary and secondary aspects of particular contradictions applies also to the sum of contradictions in a given process and to the totality of universal contradictions. Thus, when our party defines the intensifying rivalry between Soviet and U.S. imperialism as the main contradiction in the world **at the present time**, it also identifies this contradiction as the primary determinant of all other contradictions that devolve from it. With this frame of reference, we can see the common elements of such apparently disparate events as the proxy wars in the

Mideast, Bangla Desh, and Cyprus; fascist takeovers in Thailand and Chile; Jimmy Carter's call for a return to the salad days of U.S. imperialism, etc.

When cancer cells attack a body, their destructive potential is such that, once their development reaches a given point, the body is so greatly weakened that it becomes susceptible to many other seemingly unrelated diseases. A person suffering from terminal bone cancer may "actually" die of pneumonia.

The mode of production throughout the world is capitalist. Even in non-industrial countries where feudal vestiges may persist in the superstructure, capitalist production relations nonetheless characterize the base. Contrary to various revisionist theories like "New Democracy" or "Two-Stage Revolution," there is no such mode of production as "semi-feudalism." This false concept is merely a theoretical fig-leaf for the betrayal of Marxism-Leninism. Where capitalist relations are dominant, the principal antagonism **between** classes is the struggle between capital and labor. This is always true potentially even when inter-imperialist rivalry predominates actually. Therefore, concepts like the "state of the whole people" and "shared power" belong in the septic tank of history. If capitalism is the main contradiction in the world—**regardless of its specific forms**—the fight for revolution must be the universal line of the international communist movement.

2) The unity of opposites in a contradiction is "conditional, temporary, transitory, relative." The struggle between them is "absolute, just as development and motion are absolute." (Lenin) The stability of a given contradiction, which depends upon the inseparability of the opposites that define it, is therefore temporary and **apparent**. The **essential** dynamic of contradiction is the mutual mobility of opposites and their tendency to interpenetrate, first relatively, then absolutely.

Guerrilla warfare against imperialism provides deep insight into this feature of contradictions. When the U.S. imperialists initially invaded Vietnam, the relationship of forces seemed hopelessly one-sided. The U.S. was an industrial behemoth with the greatest land and sea armada in history. The workers of Vietnam had little more—or so it appeared—than the clothes on their back and a few primitive instruments of labor. Yet by concentrating their forces on the enemy's weakest flanks, the Vietnamese anti-imperialists were able to seize the initiative and attack when they were strong and their antagonist was weak. If your enemy has 600,000 troops and you have but a few thousand, you do not meet him head-on in positional warfare. Rather, you hit him when he least expects it and in particular situations where you outnumber him. By applying this principle, the Vietnamese anti-imperialists were able to become the major aspect of the contradiction between themselves and the U.S. invaders in specific skirmishes and then in the war as a whole. This rich lesson is not invalidated by the betrayal of

revisionists in Hanoi and the so-called Provisional "Revolutionary" Government.

The mobility and interpenetration of opposites is evident in the most common daily occurrences: when a warm weather system produces spring temperatures in January; when a normally healthy person becomes sick with fever; when, on the contrary, someone terminally ill has a remission; when a participant in battle retreats, then counter-attacks; when workers strike, shut down production to win reform demands, and then return to work only to have the boss take back their temporary gains by the various means at his disposal; when a wave of working class struggle and rebellion erupts as it did in the 1960s, subsides, and then begins to breathe new fire.

The mutual interpenetration of opposites is again evident in the daily experiences of our party's political work. It would be absurd to pretend that at the present time we are the main aspect of the contradiction between ourselves and the ruling class. We understand that for all his weaknesses, which must eventually lead to his doom, the enemy nonetheless remains strong in the short run: he continues to retain state power and all that goes with it. Nonetheless, regardless of our numbers at any given time, our party has always been able to act from the strategic viewpoint of taking the offensive. This was the case when we helped launch the mass movement to get U.S. imperialism out of Vietnam; it was the case when we and others revived the mass movement for a shorter work week; it was the case when we called for an all-out offensive against the new breed of academic racists and the consequences of their theories; it was the case when in 1975, PLP's May Day march raised the cry of "Death to Fascism" in the stronghold of ROAR; it is the case today, as we attempt to make revolution the main lesson drawn by workers from all battles in the class struggle.

The ruling class has the upper hand—but opposites interpenetrate. This is true every time a worker joins the party, every time a new communist fraction is formed inside a shop, every time the broadened circulation of CHALLENGE-DESAFIO exposes socialist concepts to a larger audience than before. When we say that each new recruit to the party is a "nail in the bosses' coffin," we apply to the class struggle a specific feature of the first law of dialectical materialism.

3) Finally, all contradictions develop in one of two ways: antagonistically or non-antagonistically. We have not fully grasped a contradiction if we understand it merely as the unity and conflict of interpenetrating opposites. We must also understand the fundamental nature of the conflict involved and, therefore, the method of struggle required to complete the process.

a) **Antagonistic contradictions** are those in which the resolution of a process is its intensification and ultimate annihilation. One aspect of the contradiction destroys the other. In class society, the major social contradictions are antagonistic. History proves this beyond a shadow of a doubt.

Regardless of the mode of production, ruling classes have always ruthlessly sought to suppress the masses' efforts to obtain a better life. This antagonism underlies the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state as the "special" apparatus for the violent exercise of power by one class over another.

All of the specific contradictions mentioned in the outline above are antagonistic by nature. None of them can change without the destruction of capitalism and the simultaneous overthrow of bourgeois state power by proletarian dictatorship.

Pacifism is a reactionary political doctrine because it is unscientific. It denies the violence inherent in all class struggle and pretends to placate absolutely irreconcilable enemies. This is the philosophic essence of revisionism; by repudiating revolution and workers' dictatorship, it makes a farce of dialectics. Mao Tse-tung's book *On Contradiction*, which contains many valuable portions, nonetheless makes a serious right wing deviation on precisely this point. Mao says correctly that the contradiction between the Chinese working class and Chiang Kai-shek's fascist Kuomintang was antagonistic before the invasion of the Japanese imperialists. However, he goes on to assert that the Japanese changed all that. Somehow, because Japanese bosses were in contradiction to Chinese bosses, the Chinese bosses could become the friends of the Chinese working class for the duration. This misapplication of dialectics helped lay the seeds of the reversal of socialism in China, as it justified many concessions to the Kuomintang bourgeoisie and, later, to any imperialist or fascist who opposed the revisionist Soviet Union.

To determine whether a contradiction is antagonistic, we must make what Lenin called the "concrete analysis of concrete conditions." We must evaluate each contradiction in terms of its own aspects. The idea that the "enemy of my enemy is always my friend" is an absurdity. I must always know the character of his relation to me. This is as true of nature as it is of society. Two predatory animals may fight each other to the death over their prey; yet the beast they seek to devour has as much to fear from one as from the other. In politics, revisionism makes a mockery of objectivity and dresses wolves in sheep's clothing. This is the underlying rationale for its incessant cavorting with "lesser-evil" forces in the ruling class. In the past decade, the fake "left" in our country has denied the role of antagonism in class struggle at several critical junctures: when it united with ruling class liberals to divert the anti-Vietnam war movement from a militant alliance with the working class; when it pushed the line of nationalism and class collaboration to mitigate the potentially revolutionary black ghetto rebellions of the 1960s; when it called for reliance on piecards and sellouts rather than on the rank-and-file during the strike wave of the early 1970s; and when it offered prayers of thanks to the Rockefeller-Morgan wing of the bourgeoisie

for "preserving the Constitution" in the face of Nixonite "fascism." In the near future, as contradictions between U.S. and Soviet bosses sharpen over the Mideast and southern Africa, we should expect the "Communist" Party, various Trotskyite groups, and the Maoists to betray the cause of revolution by glorifying any nationalist who happens to be in conflict with the sinking U.S. ship. To some extent this development is already underway.

The contradictions of capitalism are antagonistic. They cannot be resolved without violence and the annihilation of the ruling class. No verbal contortion, no external force, no mysterious "exceptional" quality can alter the laws of development.

On the other hand, antagonism is not the eternally dominant form of social relations. Man has been on earth for many hundreds of thousands of years, yet the class war *per se*—the violent struggle between owning classes and exploited classes—began barely 10,000 years ago with the advent of slavery. With the victory of socialism, with the worldwide consolidation of proletarian dictatorship, the basis will be laid for the abolition of violence as the necessary means of resolving social conflict.

b) Non-antagonistic contradictions are those in which development is resolution rather than annihilation. One aspect of the contradiction does not destroy the other; rather, the "conflict" between the two opposites impels both forward, transforms them, and generates a new, higher contradiction.

Contradictions within the party are non-antagonistic. If a comrade is seriously committed to the party and the working class, then struggle and criticism must always seek to strengthen him and correct his weaknesses, not to drive him away or undermine his ability to carry out communist work. Sharpness and objectivity in identifying errors are necessary; however, ruthlessness or



viciousness have no place in inner party struggle. They must be reserved—uncompromisingly—for the class enemy.

Democratic-centralism, the method of communist organization, also embodies a non-antagonistic contradiction. Democracy excludes centralism; centralism excludes democracy. These two opposites unite and enable the party to assess the broadest possible range of collective experience in the class struggle, to make an objective evaluation of this experience, and to transform this evaluation into a line which, when it is carried out **universally** in the party's practice, organizes the working class into "one army, under one flag, with one aim."

Contradictions within the working class are **non-antagonistic**. As we tried to show in our discussion of likeness and difference, capitalism cannot rule unless it divides. Therefore, it seeks to sow as much discord as possible within the ranks of the working class. Its main weapon in this regard is racism, the ideology that seeks to transform infinitesimal differences of skin color or national origin into antagonisms. The apparent contradiction that does exist between "minority" and white workers is in reality a difference of degree between super-exploitation and exploitation, which are both qualitative expressions of the same phenomenon. When white workers are misled into opposing the aspirations of their more oppressed class brothers and sisters, they act against their own best interest by unwittingly covering up the antagonism that all workers share with the boss.

Many genuine contradictions exist within the working class: employed and unemployed, men and women, factory and office labor, manufacturing and service labor, industrial and agricultural labor, contradictions within individual industries and within individual factories, between two workers side by side on an assembly line: They are infinite—and each is **non-antagonistic**. Under capitalism, each can be resolved only by strengthening the unity of the working class as a whole and its commitment to socialism. The contradiction between workers and students, which is the same as the contradiction between mental and manual labor, is also non-antagonistic. It is embodied and propelled forward in the worker-student alliance. It is resolved under socialism.

Socialism and communism will not abolish contradiction. To pretend otherwise is to fly in the face of natural and historical law. The dictatorship of the proletariat—the most concentrated form of state power in history—paves the way for the abolition of the state, which is possible only as the result of the long-term process that leads to the abolition of classes. After this development, which will comprise an entire historical epoch, contradiction will continue to characterize all phases of man's existence. We cannot predict the specific forms it will assume, but we can state with assurance that the unity and conflict of opposites, their mutual interpenetration, and their non-antagonistic resolution into the unity and conflict of new opposites at a more advanced

level, will remain the abstract form of all forward motion.

II. THE TRANSITION OF QUANTITY INTO QUALITY AND QUALITY INTO QUANTITY.

The first law of dialectics teaches us the qualitative definiteness of a given process. When we understand the specific character of opposites in a contradiction, as well as its main and secondary aspects, we can answer the question: **What is this?** However, no process can exist without two opposite quantitative limits. In fact, the word "define" comes from the Latin word for "limit."

The mutual interpenetration of quantity and quality is the second law of dialectics.

At first, quantity and quality seem independent of each other. Up to a certain point, a thing can grow larger or smaller without changing into something new. Yet, upon further investigation, we discover that quality cannot be determined without quantity. Thus, water remains qualitatively the same within a specified temperature range. It freezes at 0 degrees Centigrade and boils at 100. Take away or add a specific quantity of an element in a chemical compound and the compound can change completely, as in the case of carbon dioxide and the lethal gas carbon monoxide. Ford Motor Company and a single Ford dealership are both capitalist enterprises. In this sense, their qualities are identical. However, their difference, which defines them as much as their likeness, depends upon quantity: the amount of capital controlled by Ford bosses gives them a voice in the ruling class, whereas the capital controlled by even the most affluent individual dealer places him at best in the upper stratum of the petty bourgeoisie.

In a battle, victory and defeat are determined by measurable criteria: the amount of territory conquered, the number of enemy soldiers killed, the number of miles one advances or retreats. In all phases of its political work, our party must take quantity into account. Our growth depends upon clearly measurable factors: the increase of the party press' circulation, particularly CHALLENGE-DESAFIO; the number and size of party shop fractions; the number of new recruits to the party; the size and frequency of independent party actions, such as May Day.

The upper and lower limits of a process therefore constitute the first key feature of the second dialectical law. Every phenomenon becomes itself at a specified quantitative point and becomes something else at another quantitative point. Understanding the precise moment of these limits is a vital feature of all science and an indispensable weapon in the conduct of revolutionary political activity. Disputes over the question of limits rage even within bourgeois science, whose more serious practitioners are forced willy-nilly to base their research upon elements of dialectics. A recent example is the debate between leading gerontologists about the question of aging. As recently as the late 1950s and early 1960s, the

prevailing belief was that cells in tissue culture could survive indefinitely. The leading spokesman for this theory was Alexis Carrel of the Rockefeller Institute. Carrel maintained that his experiments with chicken-heart fibroblasts (embryonic cells that later gave rise to connective tissue and then multiplied in culture after culture) proved the immortality of the cell. Many scientists questioned this concept, but their ideas were usually attributed to their own "sloppiness." It turned out, in a development strongly reminiscent of Cyril Burt's quackery, that Carrel's own cultures were proved to have been contaminated.

In contrast, a researcher named Leonard Hayflick set out to study the effects of cancer-causing viruses on normal cells. He found that in the cell populations under scrutiny, growth and perfect division over a period of months would ultimately slow down, that division would cease, and that the cells would die. Hayflick found that the cells consistently underwent about fifty divisions before they stopped dividing altogether. Variations of these experiments have been repeated in hundreds of laboratories around the world.

Other experiments tended to confirm the accuracy of "Hayflick's limit," as it came to be known. A number of cells were placed in frozen storage at varying "ages" (i.e. after a specified number of divisions) and then thawed a few at a time over a period of years. In each case the cells "remembered" where their lives had been suspended. A cell that had been frozen after twenty divisions proceeded to double roughly another thirty times before stopping at about fifty—thereby attesting to the validity of "Hayflick's limit." This limit is applied only to normal cells, not to cancer cells, for which no limit has yet been found.

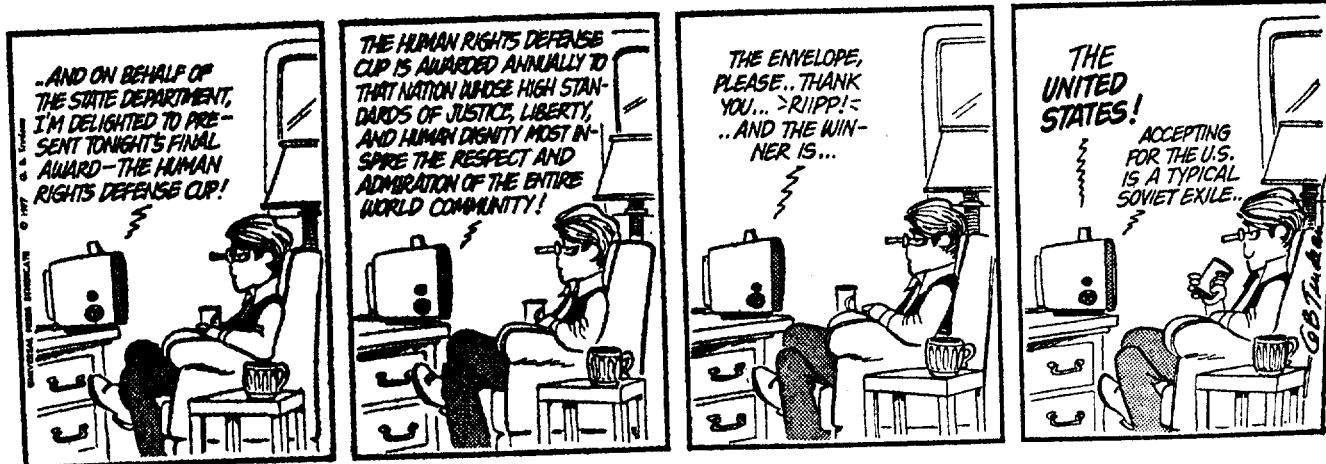
Hayflick's conclusions have recently been challenged by a gerontologist named W. Donner Denckla, who contends that the clock of aging does not lie within individual cells but rather within the brain. Denckla has received a lot of favorable publicity, while Hayflick is the subject of a major scandal. We wouldn't presume to attribute these developments to overtly political causes, but it does seem consistent that the U.S. ruling

class would cotton to any theory of immortality. By the same token, Denckla has failed to account for the central fact that in Hayflick's cultured cells, which are, by definition, *in vitro*, and therefore beyond the control of any brain, divisions cease after roughly fifty. It would seem that here too, materialism and metaphysics are locked in struggle even if they do not understand their true identities.

An understanding of the upper and lower limits in political phenomena is vital to revolutionary strategy and practice. We are not adventurers: we recognize the futility of attempting to challenge the bosses' state apparatus for power with an undermanned and unprepared army. We know all too well the fate of groups like the Panthers and Che's *focos*, which attempted to crush a vastly superior enemy with a handful of armed fighters who had no mass ties. At best, they are sincere, misguided, and doomed to failure. At worst, they are vulnerable to ruling class infiltration that in turn serves as a pretext for police terror against the people.

On the other hand, however, communists must lead the class struggle under all conditions. A party that does not fight withers and eventually dies. Understanding our limitations vis-a-vis the ruling class enables us to determine tactics that utilize our forces to the maximum without over-extending them. This was clearly the case in 1975, when our party organized its annual May Day march in the heart of ROAR's fascist Boston stronghold. Every fake-radical clique from the "Communist" party to the Trotskyites said that it couldn't and shouldn't be done, but by relying on the people and by making a correct estimate of the relationship of forces, our party was able to repulse attacks by both ROAR and the police and to hand the racists a tactical defeat. The same was true when we and others launched a militant offensive against the fascists in December of 1976.

The strategy of building party shop fractions provides further insight into the law of limits. By definition, a fraction is a part of something, a quotient of two quantities. A party fraction of three in a shop of, say, 10,000 workers must obviously operate within relatively narrow limits. However, regardless of its actual size, it has the



potential to grow and therefore to expand the limits of revolutionary activity inside the shop. Here, as in everything, quantity and quality are inter-related.

The second feature of the second law is the actual transformation of quantity into quality and the conditions under which this transformation takes place.

One of metaphysics' favorite slogans is the old French proverb that "the more things change the more they remain the same." This is its way of denying the development of quantity into quality. The universe is seen as a simple series of greater or smaller increases or decreases, as endless repetition. Dialectics, as we have tried to show, sees reality as **development** that takes place through the unity and conflict of opposites.

Each time opposites in a contradiction interpenetrate, something new is produced. It may not be obvious to the naked eye, but it is discoverable nonetheless. The development of a fetus in the womb, from the moment of conception to the moment of birth, provides a classic example.

We all know that babies don't come from the stork. Nor are they simply placed full-grown inside the womb for nine months. The sperm fertilizes the egg; the contradictions inside the newly-formed embryo generate new cells, which transform themselves into organs. When the fetus is fully-formed, it must gain weight and strength so that it can survive outside the uterine environment. All this development is inconceivable without a vast complex of transitions from quantity into quality.

The denial of this transition is one of reformism's distinguishing characteristics. The best the reformists can offer is patch-work—puny quantitative measures to keep their system going. They cannot see or will not admit that the solution to capitalist contradictions lies outside the limits of capitalism. Therefore, they pose as champions of "gradualism," the notion that things will somehow get better if only the workers remain patient and keep the faith. Of course, this pseudo-religious gibberish flies in the face of reality: how can you reform a system in which one-third of all the dog-food produced is eaten by people while modern technology is capable of putting TV cameras on Mars?

As far back as the 1930s, when the still-socialist Soviet Union stood as a beacon of hope to workers everywhere while hundreds of millions suffered the onslaughts of a capitalist crisis, Marxists at the Leningrad Institute of Philosophy wrote:

... an irreconcilable struggle for the dialectical understanding of development, a pitiless showing-up of the hypocrisy of gradualism (the acknowledgement of development in words, the denial of it in action)—is the actual political task of our philosophic front.

This is the essence of the Progressive Labor Party's main slogan today: Revolution—not Reform! The day to day battles of the working class (quantitative aspects of the class struggle) must

lead to a qualitative understanding of the necessity for revolution. This will not happen by itself: only a Marxist-Leninist party can guarantee that revolution becomes the main aspect of the contradiction between itself and reform.

Gradualism is incorrect on two counts. First, it denies the interpenetration of quantity and quality. Second, when reality forces it to admit that development does indeed take place, it denies development again in a new way, by covering over the intense struggle that always takes place when a new quality emerges.

Dialectics calls this the moment of the leap. This is the third feature of the second law. New qualities emerge in the midst of great turbulence, not at all with things going on in the old way. Birth itself again provides a fine example of the leap. The myriad of changes that take place inside the womb finally convert themselves into a human infant, but the infant comes into the world screaming; it must literally be cut away from its mother's body; and even the easiest labor represents a traumatic departure from the mother's normal routine. As Hegel pointed out when he sought to illustrate this law, water does not freeze gradually when it reaches 0 degrees centigrade: it freezes all at once, and even when it remains liquid in its initial frozen period, the slightest tap will convert it into a solid. A child does not learn to walk all at once: first he must sit up, crawl, and begin to pull himself erect by his hands. None of these tasks is accomplished without failure and physical pain. However, once he walks, he walks once and for all.

Leaps can be relatively simple, as in the examples given above. They can be highly complex as in the case of the formation of new solar systems or the emergence of new species. They may take a moment (the death of a fly) or an epoch (the rise of mammal life, the transition from ape to man). In all processes, however, the leap brings with it a **heightening** of the conflicts in a given contradiction and a clear break with the past. This is true of both antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions, although by definition, violence and destruction are the major aspect of antagonisms, whereas non-antagonistic contradictions preserve aspects of the old in a new way. Nonetheless, in all transitions from quantity into quality, something dies and something else is born.

In social science, the revolutionary process itself is the clearest example of the leap. The violent, revolutionary seizure of power characterizes the emergence of all new societies. There are no exceptions and can be none as long as classes continue to exist. Slavery was destroyed on the battlefield. Commodity production triumphed with the guillotine. The history of workers' struggles for socialism from the Paris Commune to Chile proves the theory of leaps and exposes the line of "peaceful transition" as a bankrupt figleaf for capitalist atrocity.

However, by attacking the one-sidedness of revisionist gradualism, dialectics does not commit

the converse one-sided error of explaining all development by leaps alone. It views leaps as radical breaks with the past that are nonetheless rooted in history. The anarchist, who does not analyze the internal contradictions in things, thinks he can pull rabbits out of hats. The dialectician knows that leaps are inevitable in politics, but that they must also be carefully and painstakingly prepared. The revolutionary repudiation of gradualism by no means constitutes a repudiation of the complex, patient work that must be performed on all fronts to ripen the conditions for the seizure of power. As Lenin wrote over 60 years ago:

The revisionist regards as mere phrases all arguments about "leaps" and about the opposition (on principle) of the workers' movement to the old society as a whole. They accept reform as a partial realization of socialism. On the other hand, the anarchist-syndicalist repudiates "petty tasks" . . . As a fact, this . . . amounts to a mere waiting for "great days" without and knowledge of how to marshal or prepare the forces that create great events.

Both the "right" and the "left" grasp at only one aspect of development and, by turning it into a whole, create reactionary metaphysical theories.

But real life, real history, includes in itself these different tendencies in just the same way that life and development in nature include in themselves both slow evolution and sudden leaps, sudden interruptions of gradualness.

When our party asks its cadre to function as communists 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and when it issues the call to make "every day May Day," it is acknowledging the dialectical premise that only the consistent carrying out of many "petty tasks" can lead to the arrival of "great days."

The fourth feature of the second law is the transition of quality into quantity. We have seen that quantitative development leads to qualitative development. However, new qualities do not emerge simply as the result of abstract increases or decreases. "Pure" quantity is an illusion. The number 5,867,765 can describe both the number of shares traded on the stock exchange in a given day and the number of industrial workers prepared to seize state power at a given historical moment. Numbers without quality are meaningless.

By the same token, qualitative changes at all levels of a process return to quantity. As in all contradictions, opposites interpenetrate. Let us take the rise of world imperialism as a concrete example. According to Lenin's formula, between 1800 and 1870, "free" capitalist competition reached its limit and began the transition into monopoly. This was, initially, a quantitative development whose tempo increased over the next thirty years with the emergence of the first cartels. However, by the close of the 19th century,

quantity had become quality: the cartels were now the dominant form of commodity production, and capitalism had become imperialism. Competition between the cartels led to World War I, which in turn engendered its opposite: the first successful proletarian revolution and the development of Soviet socialism.

With the emergence of these new qualities, new quantities and tempos also emerged. The intensity of inter-imperialist rivalry grew stronger than ever and led to World War II. However, international capital also had to contend with Soviet socialist state power as its major strategic enemy. At the same time, revisionist errors present from the earliest days of the communist movement were not corrected. At first, these were quantitative phenomena, but they led to major qualitative developments. The revolution of 1917 and the Civil War of 1919-21 were essentially communist-led movements for proletarian dictatorship. The heroic battle of the Soviet working class against the Nazis, which ranks as one of the greatest class struggles in history, was nonetheless organized around a line of all-class unity and nationalism! the opposite of proletarian internationalism and socialism.

After World War II, one significant quantitative and one significant qualitative development took place. First the U.S. ruling class began to decline as the world's imperialist colossus. This development was dramatized by Sputnik in 1957 and accelerated by the U.S. rout in Vietnam 18 years later. Second, the Soviet Union ceased to be a socialist society with glaring revisionist weaknesses and by 1956 had reverted to capitalism on a formerly socialist base. The U.S.S.R. had thus become an imperialist power in its own right. The same process unfolded in China and other once-socialist states. Further quantitative developments saw the explosive rise of the Soviet empire and the continued skid of its U.S. competition. Much can be said about whether the Soviets are absolutely or relatively the stronger of the two imperialist titans, but two conclusions are inescapable at this point (January 1977). First, while U.S. decline and Soviet ascendancy were in their initial quantitative stages, the main aspect of the contradiction between the two was still collusion, with antagonism always present but secondary. Second, now that the Soviet rise is virtually completed and U.S. decline has gone much further down the road, the main aspect of the contradiction has shifted to antagonism, with collusion still present but shrinking daily. These quantitative developments have arrived at the brink of a leap. When our party asserts that U.S.-Soviet imperialist rivalry has reached the "count-down" stage, it is saying in effect that the international class struggle has now all but exhausted the quantitative limits of its present phase and that a major new quality—world war—is about to emerge. When this happens, quality will again become transformed into quantity, as possible or probable "local" wars in southern Africa, the Mideast, and elsewhere ignite, expand, and lead

to a direct U.S.-U.S.S.R. confrontation.

The task of the working class and of our party will be to transform this contradiction into its opposite by "turning the imperialist war into a civil war" for revolution and proletarian dictatorship.

Here, too, the mutual interpenetration of quality and quantity will characterize developments and help us to understand them. For example, the party is now in a stage of quantitative development as far as its ability to lead the class struggle is concerned. We can grow but we cannot yet challenge the bosses for state power. However, we would commit a grave error if we one-sidedly evaluated the revolutionary process as a series of uninterrupted quantitative increases. We must **also analyze the quality of everything we do.** If we view our shop fractions **merely** in terms of their numbers and the number of workers in them, we will never organize **communist** fractions. In every fraction from the largest to the smallest we must also pay scrupulous attention to internal and external political questions. Does the fraction engage in class struggle from a communist viewpoint and link every feature of the issues at hand to the capitalist system? Does it introduce major political issues (fascism, war, racism, South Africa and U.S. imperialism, etc.) that **seem** unrelated to the workers' economic struggle? Does it broaden the sales of CHALLENGE-DESAFIO and other party literature? Do the workers in the fraction understand the party line on major questions and the elements of Marxism-Leninism? Does the fraction recruit to the party? Does this recruitment lead to the broadening and proletarianization of the party leadership?

In the course of a year, our party organizes many hundreds of actions, from streetcorner rallies to May Day demonstrations. These actions are still at the quantitative stage. **Yet quality is present in every one of them**, and if we did not recognize this, we would be unable to organize our way out of a paper bag. What is the quality of the agitational literature produced for these events? What is the political line put forth at them? Do we show up on time for them or straggle in? If defense is needed, is it organized? If transportation and food are required, are they adequate? Are organizing responsibilities delegated as broadly as possible under centralized leadership? Are new participants consolidated into party-led collectives? Does the sale of party literature increase during and after these actions?

All quality has limits. All quantity leaps into new quality. New quality in turn becomes transformed into quantity. This is the nature of development. To achieve scientific knowledge and to carry out correct revolutionary practice, we must first study the specific contradictions of given qualities, then analyze quantity, and finally return to the evaluation of quality based on all the facts that have been accumulated. The second law of dialectics provides the key to the **measurement** of all processes and the **connection** between the emergence, disappearance, and transformation of all phenomena.

III. THE NEGATION OF THE NEGATION.

The laws of development of nature, society, and thought are not limited to the unity and conflict of opposites and the mutual interpenetration of quantity and quality. After a contradiction has been defined, after its limits have been ascertained, science must still look ahead toward the emergency of new qualities: it must seek out the connection between the old and the new and at the same time show what is dying out and what is being born in the course of development.

Hence, there is a third basic law of dialectical materialism: the **negation of the negation.**

This law can best be grasped in its classic Marxist application to the study of small scale industry's transformation into large-scale capitalism and thence into socialism. In *Capital*, Marx shows that before the full development of capitalism in England, small-scale industry decended upon the private property of individual laborers who owned means of production. Obviously, this type of society could function only within narrow technological and scientific bounds. When it developed to a certain point, it produced the seeds of its own destruction. At this point began what Marx calls the "primitive accumulation" of capital. At first gradually, then at an accelerated pace, and always with much violence, the individual owners of productive forces were expropriated, driven off the land, and herded into town, where they became propertyless proletarians: slaves of a new type.

Once this process had been completed, the target of expropriation was no longer the individual artisan and his tools but the capitalist who exploited many workers. As the productive forces developed under capitalism, the control over them became increasingly centralized. "One capitalist," as Marx writes, "always kills many." However, at exactly the same time as greater and greater amounts of wealth are gobbled up by a shrinking minority of capitalists, the socialization of all phases of the labor process also increases. Thus, the antagonistic contradiction between the private ownership of the means of production and the collective nature of the production process intensifies. With this intensification, comes the numerical growth of the working class, its debasement and oppression by the bosses—but also its rebellion. Capitalism ceases to stimulate rational production and in fact becomes the main obstacle to the advancement of science and society. It produces its own gravedigger in the very working class without which it cannot survive. At a specified point in its development, the working class produces the theoretical knowledge that will enable it to destroy the system of commodity production. Eventually this theory is grasped by masses and becomes a material force. In a protracted, violent, and inevitable process, "The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated." (*Capital*, Vol. 1, p. 834-7.)

At this point, a whole new epoch of history

MARCHE
EL DIA DEL
TRABAJO

MARCH
ON
MAYDAY

Partido Laboral
Progesista
Progressive
Labor Party



WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

***FIGHT FOR SOCIALIST REVOLUTION
SMASH RACISM IN U.S. & SO. AFRICA***

**SATURDAY/APRIL 30th/12:00 NOON
NYC-ASSEMBLE AT 110th ST. & BROADWAY**

JOIN THE PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

ATLANTA: 606-6260; BALTIMORE: 410-2146; BOSTON: 622-3620; DURHAM: 608-7694; NEW JERSEY: (201) 884-9339; PHILA.: 472-5169
WASH. DC: 802-2602; WORCESTER: 757-4853 New York: 685-3650

begins. The newly victorious working class can enjoy the broadest democracy in history only by exercising a ruthless dictatorship over its former oppressors. It thus develops a completely new type of state apparatus: the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is the specific political content of socialism. Under socialism classes and, therefore, the class struggle, continue. However, in another protracted and complex process that includes much violence, the workers' dictatorship gradually eliminates capitalist production relations and the capitalist superstructure until nothing is left of either. At this point, social antagonism and therefore social classes cease to exist. The state, as the form for the violent suppression of one class by another, also ceases to exist. At a time far in the future, well beyond the worldwide consolidation of revolutionary socialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat itself will become an obstacle to the development of society. What Marx calls the "pre-history of man" will have ended, and the final, non-violent transition to classless communism will be completed.

Man's social existence begins in a state of primitive, classless communism. This society of deprivation is negated by slavery. Slavery is negated by feudalism. Feudalism is negated by capitalism. Capitalism is negated by socialism. The final negation—communism—represents both a revolutionary break with the entire past and a return to aspects of the original negation's appearance. In both primitive communism and the communism born out of the workers' dictatorship, social antagonism and social classes do not exist. However, the former is a "communism" of want in which the contradiction between man and nature holds sway. The latter is the communism of abundance, which retains the appearances of its initial state, but is also fundamentally transformed by all the intervening content of history and science.

From the above, we can attempt an abstract analysis of the third dialectical law:

- [1] In the development of a process, one key contradiction emerges as both the starting-point of a new contradiction and the negation of the old contradiction. The negation of the negation is thus the result of a contradiction's development.]
 - [2] The negation of the negation then becomes the development of the new contradiction thus generated.]
 - [3] Aspects of the old contradiction still survive in the negation of the negation. What is old and useless dies out, but certain features of the original contradiction are preserved and absorbed by the new contradiction. This process is called "sublation."]]
 - [4] A new key contradiction emerges in the course of this process. The negation of the negation is in turn negated. Forward motion continues.]]
- Here a word of caution is in order. Marxism's vulgar opponents delight in reducing the concept of "negation" to a weak-minded denial of what is. This is not the case. Denial, as Lenin wrote, is only a feature of this complex process. "Negation in dialectics does not mean simply saying

no, or declaring that something does not exist, or destroying it in any way that one likes." (Engels, *Anti-Duhring*.) If you squash a cocoon, you have negated something, but you have also made the transformation of caterpillar into butterfly impossible. The party must call for the brutal extermination of capitalists, but if it does not at the same time win workers to other socialist ideas, then it cannot lead the fight for proletarian dictatorship. The key to the negation of the negation lies in the constant emergence of the new out of the old and in the historical connection between the two.

Casting off the old and at the same time preserving it characterize the contradictory development not only of social history but also of science and the history of thought. Thus, the philosophy of the ancients was primitive materialism. However, because of limitations in the productive forces of the time, this world view could not penetrate the internal essence of phenomena and therefore could not grasp their contradictions. Religion developed and brought with the birth of idealism—an outlook that negated the old materialism. Idealism was in turn negated by the development of science and modern materialism, which both preserved certain aspects of primitive materialism and overcame its deficiencies. Modern materialism is no longer a philosophy in the old sense of the term. It does not stand apart from the rest of knowledge or science but acts rather as a guide for the development of all science. Thus, it preserves and goes beyond bourgeois science.

A similar development took place in the social sciences. Marxist materialism stood Hegel's idealist dialectics on its head but at the same time preserved it. The *Communist Manifesto* showed for the first time that workers' revolution was an inevitability. This discovery, was in turn sublated by Marx' discovery of the inner contradictions in the capitalist system. The Marxist analysis of the Paris Commune both preserved and advanced this new knowledge by revealing the dictatorship of the proletariat as the essential political expression of socialist revolution. The Bolshevik revolution both affirmed and transformed Marx' work with its contributions to the theory of the party, of state power, and of imperialism.

Our own party's existence and development confirm the law of the negation of the negation. The Progressive Labor Party was born out of the old communist movement. It represented both a clear break from certain errors of the past and at the same time an attempt to return to the core of Marxism-Leninism. The history of major revolutionary movements embodies a fundamental contradiction: the fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat compromised by concessions to the local and international bourgeoisie. This contradiction characterized the Paris Commune, the Bolshevik Revolution, the Chinese Revolution, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. In *Road to Revolution III*, we said that we wanted to learn from the overwhelmingly positive ex-

periences of these titanic class struggles and to cast aside the negative features that led back to capitalism.

Road to Revolution III was an important point in our development, but it was only a point. Like everything else, it had to be negated. We had accumulated enough knowledge and practice to grasp certain key contradictions in revolutionary history; however, these discoveries still had to be applied to our own experiences. In this sense, **Reform and Revolution** represents a negation of **Road to Revolution III**. The dictatorship of the proletariat and the fight against revisionism are preserved. Our own reformism is rejected, at least in theory.

The crucial test is practice, carrying out and advancing the line of **Reform and Revolution**. Our own work as revolutionaries in the shops, the communities, and the campuses must be negated today. The third dialectical law will be present as a feature of this entire process, at every step of the way. When a worker joins the party, he remains a worker, but he has gone beyond himself to become a communist worker. Arthur Jensen and the KKK in the Marines are both examples of U.S. bosses' racism, but the fight against the KKK goes beyond the battle against reactionary ideas and poses a sharper challenge to the system. The war that looms between U.S. and Soviet bosses will be an imperialist bloodbath. By turning it into a civil war for socialism, the communist movement can both preserve class struggle and its inevitable violence and also break decisively with the necessity of capitalist carnage.

The history of science, technology and nature confirm this law as a feature of all forward motion. Because development is uneven and because contradiction exists in everything, not all motion is forward. Regression is also a feature of any process. This is especially true at the initial appearance of qualitatively new developments, which are relatively weak at first. We can see regression in the history of the international communist movement: the defeat of the Paris Commune, the restoration of capitalism in Russia and China, the corruption of liberation movements by nationalism, etc. We can see regression as a feature of the PLP's development.

However, recognizing regression does not mean succumbing to it. The 129 years that have passed since the **Communist Manifesto** correspond barely to one tick of history's clock. During that period, capitalism has been partially negated not once but many times. The child who is still too weak to walk may crawl for a few months after it has fallen on its face—but eventually, it stops crawling and stands on two sturdy legs. The same course of development must inevitably characterize the fight for socialism and can characterize the development of our party.

Forward motion—the negation of the negation—is a general law of history. In all societies, the weak have become strong; the ruled have transformed themselves into rulers; the new has replaced the old.

The laws of dialectics enable us to analyze the

innermost contradictions of reality, to show both their limits and their connection to history, and to predict the course of future developments. Dialectics is neither a dogma nor a mechanical primer for rote learning but rather a guide to action that takes into account the specific character of everything and also demonstrates its relation to everything else.

By applying dialectics to history in general, we know that the working class must eventually triumph. By applying it to our party and the class struggle in the world today, we can help bring about this eventuality in our own lifetime.

The contradictions of capitalism can only intensify. The solution to the problems created by commodity production lies outside the system. Capitalism no longer has a shred of historical usefulness. The time has come for its complete negation. The time has come for the working class to take power and dominate the stage of history.

Our party can play a decisive role in this inevitable process.

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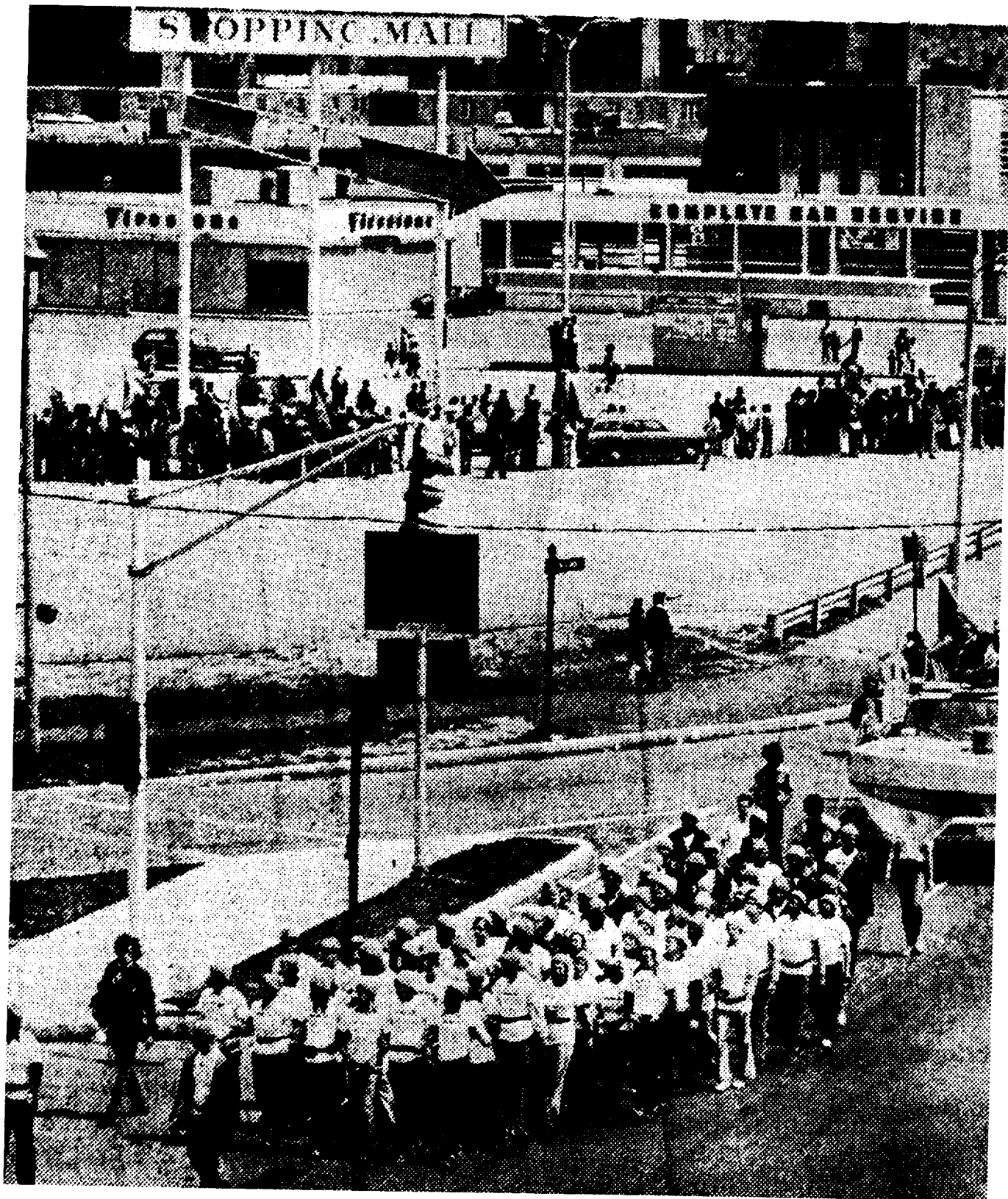
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MAY DAY 1975

by H. G.

MAY DAY. USA. Millions of grade school children are weaving yellow construction paper into baskets. Dandelions and other cut flowers go in helter-skelter. On the way home the paper handle breaks. It still smells like spring, though, and mother will like the flowers. According to the cover of the song book, somewhere in another land, there are maypoles, but maybe that takes too much crepe paper. Or we don't know that dance.



MAY DAY. 1890. The first international workers day. 250,000 marched in London alone, joining workers marching in Austria, Australia, Belgium, Chile, Cuba, Denmark, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Hungary, Italy, Peru, Switzerland...

In 1894 the government of the USA declared that Labor Day should be moved to the first Monday in September, which represents nothing.



FIRST SPEAKER:

"So what difference does it make if Labor Day is on May 1 or the first Monday in September?"

SECOND SPEAKER:

"'Bout the only thing I can see is, makes a place for school to start."

When school starts right after Labor Day now in Boston and other places, children get rocks and bottles thrown at them by Louise Day Hicks' ROAR members, or

Hicks, a founder of ROAR, was a member of the US House of Representatives for 2 years. She was named woman of the year in 1964 and "outstanding citizen" by the City Council of Boston in 1965.

So that whites can't buy into a "changing" neighborhood, the landlords and the banks (not only in Boston) "redline" mortgages. Some of Boston's industries are 97% white and 3% black; others are 3% white and integrated PTA's are illegal in Boston.

On October 7, 1974, ROAR brutally gang-beat a young Haitian worker, Andrea Jean Louis. In the spring of '75, ROAR broke up a meeting of women on pro-abortion. In 1975, ROAR attacked workers of an integrated meat-cutters local that supports busing.

R-O-A-R appeared in the windows of Boston's City Council in June 1975.

Across the USA, not only in Boston, the government and the bosses work together using racism to divide working people. If we're fighting each other we can't make gains like the 8 hour day or more money for our schools.

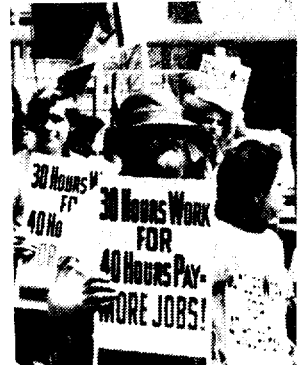
3 out of 68 Boston schools have gym facilities. In a survey in 1970, 296 Boston teachers reported that no textbooks were available.

FIRST SPEAKER:

"So now it's a holiday when the government says people should fight each other?"

SECOND SPEAKER:

"Sure thing the government or somebody is saving money if we're scrapin' over a handful of jobs or some rotten school."



MAY DAY. 1975. The Progressive Labor Party plans a march against racism, for busing, the 30 hour work week and for socialism, to be held in Boston. In January 1975 the NYC members and friends met.

Before the meeting started, two women stood in back of the rows of folding chairs. One of them, the shorter, spoke, "I think it's terrific," Alice shook her shoulder-length, dark blond hair restlessly. "The very place where things are the sharpest, that's where May Day has to be this year." Alice's daughter, Naomi, stood by her side, looking up, a small, thin face with large glasses.

"Alice, you're very enthusiastic, and I also think it's something we should do. But I spoke to some case aids at work already. They said, 'Are you crazy... ME go to Boston?'" Sonia Bakala stood a head taller than Alice Foster. Her brown hair was curled to look like an afro and made her seem even taller than she was. She was very pretty and spoke with a lot of confidence.

Alice narrowed her eyes. "I think it's easy for US to think of Boston as being a unique place. Are you sure it's in YOUR interest to go to Boston? Otherwise you'll never convince other people. Tell them about the anti-busing Morris Park Association in The Bronx. Or the fire bombs thrown at black homes in Rosedale."

"I am convinced." Sonia rested the palms of

her hands on her hip bones. "But they are afraid. Can you blame them?"

Alice shifted her weight to her other leg. How heavy she felt, suddenly. (She thought how it had been a long time since she'd been able to feel the bones through her fleshy hips.) "The woman who works next to me is going, but it's probably partly out of friendship."

Sonia made a grimace with the side of her full mouth. "I'd just like to know how we're getting hundreds of people there, that's all."

"I want to go because my school will get worse if I don't." Ten year old Naomi had managed to wiggle between the two women. She stood there with her head tilted back after she spoke.

"We have to start now," Louis Herrera announced from the front. Louis was on the May Day Committee. He was Dominican. He had very thick glasses and always read with the paper close to his eyes. But you could find out the latest news about South America and Latin America by asking Louis.

"We have a big job ahead of us. We'll not only be in Boston on May Day to demonstrate the unity of black and Latin and white workers. Not only will we carry the red flag that day that spells life for us and our children and death to the bosses. The flag of socialism. But our march on May Day will be only the beginning of a summer-long project in Boston. Students and faculty in and around the party will arrive there this summer from all over the country. They will live and work in Boston to organize around a program for more schools, more teachers. May Day will open the door for the months to come. We don't intend to march and run!"

Some people clapped. Some talked to each other. Here was a new proposal to most of them.

Louis continued, "Before we discuss the proposal, I'd like to introduce comrade Paul Green from Boston to tell you about the situation there."

Paul turned to face Louis and then looked directly at the last row in the audience. His steady, brown eyes didn't move as he spoke. His voice was soft, "I want to tell you what's been going on in Boston." People grew quieter.

"We've been collecting signatures at the subway stops and speaking several times a week in shopping districts about unity around the schools' issues. Last week we picketed the ROAR office in Dorchester they'd just set up. They threatened to beat us into the ground if we came back. We came back last Saturday. They stood around the office and called us everything you can think of. But they didn't even try to beat us into the ground!"

The brief outburst of laughter stopped when Paul kept talking.

"Two days later we left our van parked while

we were leafletting the subway stop at Andrew's station. They stole our van. We picked it up later at police headquarters. It had swastikas and KKK signs painted on it."

Paul now began to look around the room. There was nothing imposing about this man who had been leading the Boston work for two years. His small nose and plain features blended into coffee-light skin. But the urgency in his voice combined with what he was saying so that you wanted to let him finish. Yet at the same time he made you want to talk.

"We've found the people of South Boston aren't so sure they like the strong-arm tactics or ROAR. The hoodlums who've been attacking us are mainly off-duty cops or kids, many of them the sons of cops." He paused and ran long fingers over his hair, somewhat nervously.

"I want you all to spend at least one weekend in Boston before May Day. We need your help in door-to-door canvassing, stickering, street rallies. But I don't know what your questions are. Do you think busing is a good thing? Maybe we're sticking our necks out for nothing?" Paul's voice trailed off. At once there were objections.

Keith Coleman spoke, "I was with you on the first day of school last year. There were only six of us."

Keith's heavy British accent called attention to what he said. When he emphasized certain words whenever he spoke you got ready for a story. More than the way his voice sounded, there was the drama and feeling of reality behind his words.

"We stood together. But we couldn't protect those kids. Later that fall there were 30 of us. We collected \$25 from white workers and black workers shopping in downtown Boston. Many of them were from South Boston. 150 people gathered when the cops tried to stop us from speaking. These fascists can be had."

Arms went into the air. Paul picked the first one that shot up. Sonia stood, "I think we have to consider the people we're bringing. I mean I'm scared, but these people don't live there that we will have with us, and the shit is really going to hit the fan."

Paul's face remained a blank. Rather than answer her point he called on another hand at random.

"I disagree. If we don't go up there, who's going to confront those creeps in their own back yard. We have to bring a couple thousand people up there."

The woman who spoke, named Chris Porter, was almost as tall as Sonia. Her face was slightly pock-marked. The way she stood conveyed enthusiasm: her calves were firm, and she stood very straight, like a dancer.

Chris had, in fact, worked at ballet dancing



Strikers at McCormick's reaper works battle cops, May 3, 1886

for a number of years before she developed a spinal cyst. Now, it was as though her taut skin still contained the energy of dances that would not be danced. She now worked as a rehabilitation therapist. "I have a plan, floor by floor, of how I'm going to approach people I know in the hospital."

Paul broke in, "Before we get to concrete plans, I think this whole political question needs more discussion." He called on a young Dominican man in the second row.

"It's pretty clear the fascists will only become more powerful unless they're stopped now. In my country we have a dictatorship." He spoke quietly but clearly. "You all might think this name of ROAR sounds like a yoke. You may say they're only a handful of drunken punks. But that's how the nazis started; a bunch of silly looking characters with swastika bands on their arms. Or green shirts, or black shirts. Who could take them seriously?"

Paulino faced the rest of the audience. "We only see these animals on the streets. But there is a machine behind their every move. The button is pressed by big business and the name politicians. Believe me. I'm talking about what I saw in my own country."

People clapped. A woman got up quickly from two rows behind Paulino. She had on a straight skirt and pullover sweater that had lasted a long time. She had round cheeks and her hair pulled back. She worked in a bookbindery and raised her three daughters by herself. "What do you think we have in Puerto Rico. A democracy? We've got the US army stationed down there. And they draft in our children and we can't vote. That's a dictatorship. We've got to fight them here and there."

More people clapped. Keith began speaking again before anyone else was called, "I tell you they

can be beaten. In England the Mosely fascist movement culminated in a huge demonstration. They rented double decker buses. They had tens of thousands of people. But the Communist Party in England mobilized even more people by going from house to house in that working class neighborhood. They organized these people to fight back. My father fought that day."

The room was very quiet. The men and women in the room listened to Keith's story. It might have been fiction because they had never been taught this history in their textbooks. Except here was a man whose father had fought!

"And the cops stood protecting the fascists. But there were more of us. All those men and women who had been organized to fight tipped those buses over! The streets were a battleground. But we beat the fascists. They never raised their bloody heads in a demonstration again!"

People clapped and cheered. History was a convincing speaker.

"How could we NOT have May Day in Boston?" Alice spoke, "WE know there are only two choices for us as workers: fascism or socialism. What makes us unwilling to demonstrate this to the people of Boston. Do we think they won't understand? We think we're the only ones that can understand this?" Alice sat down, feeling unable to say more.

Paul was about to call on another person, but Louis put his hand on Paul's arm.

"I'm glad everyone is enthusiastic," he said, "but I don't think we're getting at the main point."

He went on. "I hear too much agreement. I can't believe Sonia here is the only dissenter. I'm not singling you out, Sonia. There are a lot of people who are inspired by good speeches and then won't build for May Day tomorrow. Not because they're dishonest but because we haven't brought out their disagreements."

"I think the issue is racism." Chris's hand had been the only one up at that moment. She stood now, "Fighting racism and the question of busing

aren't moral issues any longer, like the civil rights movement was, for integration. Perhaps, she paused, "integration never should have been a matter of civil rights. Just that the leadership at that time made it into a constitutional fight."

Chris held onto the chair in front of her. "The bosses, on the other hand, have always used racism to cut the backbone of the working class. They're getting us to fight each other about busing to be sure of robbing us of our schools while we fight. But schools are only one place they make use of racism. For years they pay black people less so white workers are held back from decent raises, too. Blacks' unemployment is twice as high: 'you'd better work for less because there's a black worker out there willing to take your job for lower pay.'"

She looked around the room. "Then tomorrow we'll be asked to fight the bosses' wars against the dark arabs or the slant-eyed Asians or the blacks in Africa." Her voice was strong. There were murmurings, but no one clapped.

"I'm no racist." It was Jerry Patterson from a corner of the room. He was a transit worker: a big, powerful man. "But I don't think we have to support busing. After all, it's the politicians who began this policy of busing. Why should we back something they started? I'm not against having May Day in Boston, but I think we should modify our line on busing."

"I agree. Let the parents decide." Coralee Brown was speaking. She was a heavy-set woman with deep, black skin. "You're only going to get people fighting each other even more over this busing. We should say let people send their kids to the school of their choice. You can't expect people to agree with sending kids miles away. It should be up to the parents."

"Most parents NOW don't have a choice where to send their kids." Alice spoke without being called on. "Millions of kids have been bussed for years in more rural areas. Of course it would be nice if they'd build hundreds of nearby schools tomorrow. But they won't."

"I don't think it's the distance. What some of you are objecting to is the politically different situation of another school. I say that's GOOD to be in an integrated school." Alice's voice broke with a surge of emotion, "especially in a city where housing and jobs are so sharply segregated. People have to begin to unite **someplace**."

A white teacher, Frank Donovan, from a school in Harlem interrupted Alice, "I don't mind saying it's that political situation I'm afraid of. Those people in Boston are crazy. We're not going to change them with one march."

"The Boston PL isn't going to move out after the march. And there's the summer project," an older, white woman spoke. She was a small person, but her voice could be heard all over the room. "The trouble with you is you don't see the need to fight fascism when it hits you right in the face. Maybe they're not building the gas ovens on our front steps. But to be against busing is to say that black people should stay in their place. In the

ghetto, like Germany with the Jews. It's no different."

"How do you talk about busing far from home," someone spoke out, "when there's so many drugs today?"

"There's drugs in every neighborhood; you know that," someone else said.

People began to talk to each other. "Why not demand additions to existing schools?" One voice was louder. "The separate but equal business."

"They've got us chasing our tails over that one," someone said. "The working class has to be united so we're strong enough to win better schools. With a demand for separate facilities, you guarantee only deeper division. The politicians aren't going to give up one cent of our tax money for better schools without a mass, integrated struggle. Even then, maybe they won't under this system. But fighting alone, or whites or blacks alone insures we'll be too weak to accomplish anything."

Paul had begun to speak. At first you couldn't hear him, but he continued to talk and didn't use the microphone. He didn't raise his voice. Perhaps that was why everyone soon was listening to him.

"Just because the bosses have passed laws about this busing thing is no reason for us not to fight for working class unity in Boston. Just because we don't all live in Boston. Perhaps we think it won't happen here," he stopped. The room was quiet.

"You have all heard about the Bronx Morris Park Association. Their anti-busing program. But did you know there's a ROAR chapter starting in Queens, in Rosedale?" Paul held up a page of a newspaper. "They took out an ad in the daily news. It's got some of the same wording as the anti-busing ad in the Morris Park paper."

The ads were passed around the room. The talk between people was lower.

"But suppose they weren't in your back yard. The whole busing program is a forced response from the politicians to the struggles of black people for better schools. We tend to forget those struggles because the politicians talk like it comes from the goodness of their hearts. Any law they pass is because they've been losing sleep worrying about how best to help us."

"Black and Latin people put their kids on the buses for some reason. We support this result of their struggles. Just as we supported the rebellions for better living conditions in Watts and Detroit and Harlem and Newark. Even though some of us didn't live there. We supported Attica. Even though we weren't there."

"The point is, the time has come for us to LEAD these fights. Unless we call for socialism and lead the struggles where working people are on the line, then we're saying it's all right to be armchair revolutionaries. We can relax, for example, and let the NAACP lead people to picnics where the cops are waiting, like they did in response to those six black ministers who were beaten up on Carson Beach.

"Not leading these struggles and putting forth the need to fight for socialism is to say it's all right for the bosses to blame the rotting school system on minority children. Let's follow the bosses' logic for a minute. They will say, 'We tried, but all that money we poured into the headstart program didn't maintain better IQs. All those black people do is start trouble.' Of course they neglect to mention the kids were dumped into over-crowded classrooms following headstart."

"The city bosses will take more and more money out of the schools while workers scramble over the crumbs. The politicians will say, 'see... we told you so: the schools get worse when there's integration.' And they'll stop busing. All the schools, white and black, will be worse. And there will be two armed camps of workers."

He continued, "I say it's ABOUT TIME that we began an all out fight for black-white unity. We should have begun years ago in Boston when Hicks first mounted her campaign. We should have fought the Mayor's referendum two years ago when he asked, 'Shall Boston public school children be assigned to schools on the basis of race, sex or creed without the consent of their parents or guardian?' There was no mention on that referendum of questions on improvements desperately needed throughout the school system. That referendum was calculated to produce the most racist possible response."

"We're late as it is today. The politicians have already stopped putting more money into the schools. On June 21, 1974, when Judge Garrity handed down the busing ruling, he also enjoined the School Committee from constructing a single new school building or addition to an existing school!

"We sat back two years ago. A year ago. 'We're too busy. We're publishing a pamphlet on Jensen.' But we could have linked the issues together. Or pointed out one reason for the step-up in racism is the trouble the bosses are having over profits in the middle east. Since they're not getting as much abroad, they're going to get it from us at home."

He paused, "I'm not trying to put you all on a guilt trip over what we should have done. All I'm saying is it's TIME we did something now." Paul looked somewhat embarrassed, "I didn't mean to talk so long."

The applause for him was not loud. There was no cheering. Alice got up immediately, even while the spattered clapping continued.

"I think," she began, "that our feelings on busing won't be resolved completely tonight. I mean it's important to keep discussing our disagreements. But are we going to have this march or not? Are we going to build for May Day and fight racism?"

"Damn straight!" "Yes!" Their applause showed they had agreed with what Paul said, but Paul had a way of stopping his talks which left you wondering if he'd finished or not. Their applause for him had been mostly thoughtful. But it was Alice who brought out their enthusiasm.

"I'd like to hear some ideas on how to build for this march on my job. Do people have any ideas for fund raising events?"

The tone of the meeting shifted once more. The room was still noisy and some people continued talking, but others gave specific suggestions. There was to be a dance. A quota of tickets for each club for the next month had been set, and agreed on. There was a restlessness and a seriousness that had not been in the meeting at the start.

Louis concluded, "I'm glad to see us still debating over the ideas of this march. But let's bring these questions up with people on our jobs instead of talking with ourselves. This is a hot issue. And our politics on racism weren't meant to be a guarded secret. Boston... Morris Park... Rosedale... may they become opportunities to win people to join the march and the Progressive Labor Party."

Chris was one of the first to leave the meeting. She was excited over the questions: would she want her kids to be bused miles away? Why did those politicians spend hours figuring how to cut the school's budget. A march for socialism through South Boston! She was proud of all the men and women in the room she just left as she put her head into the wind.

It was January. And they said it was going to get even colder tomorrow. Partly, Chris's mind was leaving the troubling ideas and looking forward to seeing Lawrence.

He would be so glad to see her. Hold her safely from the world. Warm. She was escaping from the week of work at the hospital. It's Thursday, and Friday might as well be the end of the week. Work and politics are over. Now Lawrence, she felt her pulse in her chest. She put the token in the slot. One bit further toward seeing him. He loved her, and she loved the way he looked. He wanted to get married. At 28, Chris was ready for marriage.

May Day Is Every Day

No different must we be
Today, September, marching
The rhythm of state power
When red day has two meanings
And always must we note
Working class readiness
To meet self consciousness
Comrades, unite our minds
And clear away confusion.
May Day means that our muscles
Are building the class' life
Killing the racist privileges
By daily practice leading
To the red life of skill
That brings May Day on every day.

Larry Cutler

The subway was cold, waiting. A chill went up the sleeves of her pea coat. Chris shivered. These goddamned trains. Posters of Seagrams 7 in the half gallon, a movie ad about one good cop against the world. The train came, and there was no heat on it.

34, 42, 50, 59, 72, 81, 86, 103. Up the stairs and the smell of urine and hamburgers. On the street sleet and wind. Where are the keys. Open the door. The elevator is broken again. Walk to the 123456 floor. Open the door. Lawrence where are you.

He lay on the bed watching television. He had on a soft, brown sweater and faded jeans. His hair was curly. He looked at Chris with calm, green eyes that didn't smile. Chris went over and took off her coat and lay on the bed putting her arms around the soft sweater. He held her with his arms firmly.

Chris raised her head and looked at his small nose and profile. Curly lashes, watching television. "It was a good meeting," she offered.

"They're always good to you." He moved his leg so that it lay between hers.

"They mostly are."

"How many of the decisions did you make tonight?" He continued to focus on the TV set. "Or did you go there to rubber stamp a decision that was essentially already made?"

"We agree to have the march, if that's what you mean." But this busing issue is a tough one. A lot of people don't agree. The whole question of racism.

But you're still going to have the march regardless. And when there's a revolution you'll run off and get killed regardless."

"Why do you come back to the same things always?" Chris had not wanted to come home to this.

"Because you still do what they tell you, the leaders. I'm so tired of talking about it. I'm afraid for you because I love you." He kissed her forehead by the hairline. His fingertips were warm and firm on her scalp. "I want us to get closer together, and the party moves you more and more in danger."

"But I am in the leadership. I'm a club chairman, and minority women more and more are on the national committee. Louis isn't the chairman of the party, but he chaired the meeting tonight. You should come and see how people debate these things."

"All I would do is argue. I have to be perfectly honest with you. I would only join in activities the better to try to convince you to leave. Life to me is more than drudging and meetings and marching."

It was late. She had to work the next day. Chris undressed and brushed her teeth. When she came back to the bedroom, the light was out. There was only the green glow over the room from the television, and Lawrence was already under the covers. She slid over the cold sheets to reach the warmth of him. His lean arms went around her smooth. They fit her body. Her leg slid over

his. He warmed her feet. The curves of his body fit her ankle. Her hand felt his lower back. He was so slim, and his skin was more textured than hers, and his hand was between her legs where the skin was the most smooth, and the lower part of their bodies met. There was only the feeling. They slept back to front, two spoons.

Chris heard the alarm clock the next morning and Lawrence made a face. She lay there and thought about who she was going to talk with that day. It was nice being in bed, and the thought of talking with people about going to Boston made her insides quicken.

"Do you have to go in today?"

"Of course."

"What do you mean, 'of course'?"

"Let's not discuss it. You know I don't like to take sick days unless I really have to. I never know when I might have to do something."

"It's enough you work weekends. Your life is not your own."

"Look, I don't mind going to work. I mean it's not the work, but the people there I actually enjoy seeing. I'd go nuts staying at home."

"Mindless. Back and forth to work. You can't take a day off you're so much in a rut." His handsome face twisted in a kind of snarl and disdain.

In her own mind Chris felt suddenly stupid for getting up so early day in and day out. She forced herself to think of how everyone would have to work under socialism. And doing work well made you feel good about yourself. But that thought was only on one side of her mind. It did not connect with the dislike she felt toward herself for what Lawrence had said.

He went on, "Some people need to turn off their minds, to go to work just so they don't have to think."

That was partly true. She didn't have to think much about her job when she was there. Or about herself. There were too many patients to take care of. And talking with them about their problems came easily. You got them to think.

"What about you? What do you think about?"

"Us. I spend a great deal of time thinking about you. Where we're going. That takes most of the energy I have."

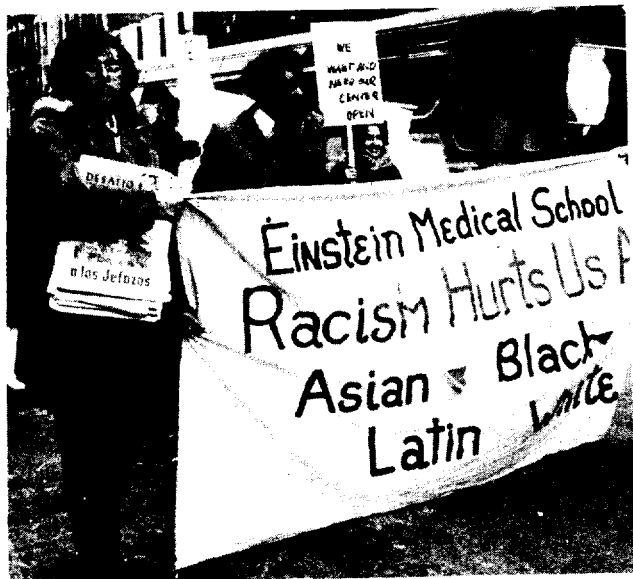
The guilt feeling. She didn't think about their relationship much at all. It was too painful, the contradictions in their political lives. Why wouldn't he join the party. Laura decided she would have to talk with Keith Coleman about the situation. And to Janice Thompson, her best friend at work. She would have lunch with Janice today and bring up Boston and talk about this Lawrence business. Janice should come over again soon and really get a chance to meet Lawrence over dinner.

"OK if I have Janice over for dinner soon?"

Chris took a uniform from the closet.

"Why not?"

The security squad was assembling where the



sound truck was. Ever since 9:30 the ROAR people had been gathering in the park half a mile away. PL had scouts noting their position. And to see what kind of weapons they had. They had baseball bats and sticks. They were staying in one place so far.

The cops were in view, over to the left of the parking lot where the buses would come in. It formed an irregular triangle, the cops, the sound truck, and the ROAR punks. The security squad was dressed in red wool hats and T-shirts. The cops weren't doing anything. Rick talked with Keith.

"You know, the cops and ROAR work together. Do you suppose they're going to try to get us in a squeeze?"

Keith rubbed at his large, sweating forehead. His hair was sticking straight up from the moisture and the subbing. He pushed his glasses further up his nose. His full face was tense. His mouth was in a line.

"I don't think so. The cops know the people in the Columbia Point housing will be watching them. I don't think they want to expose themselves so blatantly. They just might let ROAR attack us first, and then come in. In fact, I think they'd love to come in while ROAR was attacking our sound truck. That way, there would be no center for the buses to mobilize around when they start to arrive. We'd be sitting ducks."

"Unless we meet the ROAR attack before they get here."

"That's it. And leave a few people to guard the sound truck. But that'll mean most of us will have to be fighting here." Keith pointed with a stick, moving part way along the legs of the triangle leading from the sound truck.

"Do you think our people will stay together? Do you think they'll charge?"

"My own knees are knocking together."

A scout came from over the hill hiding the park. She didn't wait to catch her breath. "They're

moving. There's about 75 of them moving and about 150 altogether."

Keith got on the bullhorn. "Now listen, everybody. These slimy bastards are hoping to get us in a trap. Their friends in blue over there would love nothing better than to break us up right here. And finish off the sound truck so there would be nothing waiting for the buses. And they'd tell the buses one by one to go home. We've got to meet them instead. We've got to stop them in their tracks, just like we're going to smash their racist ideas. These pigs would like to throw things at defenseless children. They like to beat up isolated individuals. So they're going to be in for a surprise when we go at them. These scum ARE racism. Get in your squads. When I yell "charge" you'll go straight up the hill and they'll be scared shit to see a bunch of red hats coming at them. That's the last thing they suspect."

The red hats and T-shirts moved with an awareness of order. So it seemed from the sound truck. People knew where their positions were. They knew who was on the outside, who was in the front row. And they looked like an army.

A few talked to each other. "I've never taken a baseball bat away from anyone in my life." He was a medical school student with clear brown eyes and an athletic build.

"At least you're tall." The woman who spoke was shorter than average.

"They think twice about hitting a woman anyway, these chauvinist bastards."

"You just got to get on top of them." A Latin woman spoke. "You pull them down." Her fists were clenched. "I mean, I'm scared too, but they'll never stop their shit unless we stop them first." Her eyes blazed.

Another scout ran up to the sound truck. "They're crossing the road."

"CHARGE."

Yet even before Chris got to work that day, the hospital had already announced they laid off two hundred workers. Everyone was talking about it. Chris met the elevator operator first.

"Which of us is it going to be next?" Hermel Jones was a stocky, well-built West Indian man. There was something strong about his smooth, rounded forehead, gleaming darkly. "I guess I'm safe for awhile. It sounds like they're hitting the housekeeping department and the aides first."

Nevertheless he was distressed, and moved restlessly in from the control buttons.

Chris was an aide, in the psychiatric wing. She hurried to her floor to talk with Joe Nesbitt, a housekeeping worker. He was a much older man, from the south. His wife, who stayed in the house, was sick. Chris looked in the porter's closet. There was no one. He was always in there at this time. She went down the halls looking for his mop and pail cart. The halls were empty. She went up to five. There was Henrietta, lively with small spectacles.

"Where's Joe?"

"I haven't seen him. Did you hear that some of the ones who got laid off were sent a telegram

this morning? I heard from Karla who spoke with Mrs. Simmons this morning."

"They didn't want them to come in because they knew a lot of people would be upset. I'm going to call Joe at home."

She had only two minutes before work started. Joe's wife answered. "No, he's not here. He went on into work anyway after getting the telegram. He was going to meet another couple by the front door."

Chris opened the door of the nursing station. "I'm here. But I've got to go back downstairs." She looked around the station. A panicky feeling. "Where's Janice?"

"We got a call. Her and Bennie's told not to come in."

"Oh shit."

"We'll cover for you. Tell us what's going on downstairs."

"Is there something I can do up here?" Santana, the ward clerk.

"Damn straight. Call Janice, and Bennie. Tell them to come in. Go to the front door first."

"Watch out for Sister Kennedy."

"Don't be too long." The head nurse.

Breathlessly she ran down the stairs instead of waiting for the elevator. Through the basement and to the time clocks. Up the ramp to the front door. The housekeeping supervisor was standing in the middle of a group of men.

"For the third time, I don't know what you're all doing here. Weren't you all sent telegrams not to come in?" The men were all black and Latin. The supervisor was also black, but he wore a white shirt and tie. "I'm going to do all I can for you. Go back home and wait."

"Don't go home." Chris shouted from the lobby. "The last thing they want is you all standing around here. That's why they sent the telegrams." She would get a corrective action for this. But if she could organize other departments for support...

"You don't know what you're talking about." The supervisor shouted.

"We just didn't want these good people to make the trip for nothing. I mean, we ourselves weren't told by the city until last night." He pulled up his pants by the sides of his belt. "I want you all to go home and wait until we contact you..."

"Don't go home. Picket the hospital. I'll start a petition inside. On the lunch hour we'll join you. Maybe some people will walk out now."

"I'm going to call a few more people at home," one of the men announced. Another very thin, pale Latin man headed for the front door. "We're wasting our time talking to this jalone," he said. "Let's start the line moving."

Chris' heart pounded joyfully. These people responded so fully. However, it was all spontaneous. It would fall apart unless she could gather some support from within the hospital. She had to call her club chairman. She began making plans in her mind.

"Hello Gloria?" Gloria was an aide in another hospital; she was off that day. Gloria answered with a murmur. "I'm sorry if I woke you. But

this place is really jumping today. Two hundred people were laid off, and they didn't even want them to come into work. They're going to picket and call up some of the others laid off. I'm going to start a petition and get some people to walk with them at least on their lunch hour. What else can you think of?"

"I think I can get some shop stewards who are in 1199 to come down. We should turn this thing into a union drive. Sounds like you've been busy already. How have you planned to raise the Boston march in all of this?"

"Oh my god. It never even entered my mind. Now if this was a school..."

"Sounds like out-and-out racism to me." "I know, but I'm afraid it will confuse the issue. I'm already going to be asking people to come out on the picket line. How can I ask them to do something else? They won't see that it has anything to do with busing." She could see from the pay phone that Sister Kennedy was coming out of the elevator. Chris had to make it to the nursing station before Kennedy got the door open.

"You'll figure out how to link them up. But remember, what good is it going to do these people even if some of them are hired back? The rest of the jobs are gone. And where are the rest going to go? Unskilled black people are the last hired, first fired."

"I've gotta go. Thanks." Chris hung up the phone with a crash and with the other arm pushed open the door to the nursing station. She was inside as the supervisor rounded the corner.

"I have to tell you all. Two hundred people have been laid off. They're picketing out front. Kennedy is coming to tell me Dugan saw me downstairs when I was supposed to be up here. I'll probably get a corrective action. But we have to start a petition. I want you all to help me word it..." The door opened.

Kennedy glared as she spoke. "MISS Porter. WHAT were you doing down by the front door when you were supposed to be up here for report. Don't you KNOW you're supposed to be on time. I don't want to have to tell you. HERE is a corrective action." She handed Chris an envelope and swept back through the door, her low-heeled pumps making a lot of noise down the hall.

Everything had happened so fast—in this first 20 minutes of work—the other people in the station crowded close. Lily and Ruth seemed the most enthusiastic.

"We're disgusted with this administration. That was a sneaky thing to do, sending people telegrams to fire them."

The assistant head nurse was much more cautious. "We don't want the rest of us to get in trouble too. They've already given out one corrective action. They're not afraid of us."

Pat, the head nurse, chimed in, "I know it affects all of us, but honestly, they got these orders from the city, and you can't fight city hall."

"We're already in trouble if two hundred workers are laid off," Steve spoke sharply. He was the ward clerk. He'd been trying to transfer out for

a year.

"City Hall likes to make us think we can't fight back. Who are they but a bunch of crooked politicians? It's us who do all the city's work for them. And there's more of us. They make policies. But we can decide if they're carried out or not.

Chris spoke with increasing confidence. "Let me give you a for-instance about Boston City Hall. They're out and out racists. They hand down busing hoping people will fight each other. Then they take money out of the schools. It's racism, like here where they're taking money out of the city hospitals by laying off blacks and Latins first. They figure we'll be glad—if we're white—it's not us.

"People in Boston are beginning to organize against racism, by demanding integrated PTA's and MORE integrated schools." Chris realized the truth of her ideas the more she talked. "YOU CAN fight City Hall. This petition should mention what City Hall is doing in other places. Seeing the pattern will make people better able to fight back with more understanding."

They got the petition around:

We, the undersigned, think the layoffs of 200 aides and housekeeping people to be part of a racist campaign to lower the number of jobs for us all. We think this racist policy of City Hall is planned deliberately so that the budget can be cut while we fight each other for the crumbs. (This policy has been used by Boston City Hall lately, where they cut the school budget while busing was made the scapegoat. "These kids can't learn. All they do is fight each other.") Therefore, we demand of this hospital administration and City Hall that immediate rehiring be followed by payment for the day and no retribution for any picketers."



Thirty-five people came out on their lunch hour. At 2 o'clock the hospital workers were informed that most of the 200 would be reinstated. Janice was rehired. Bennie was not. Joe Nesbitt was not. They said he was past retirement age. Chris didn't know what to say to him afterwards.

"We're going to keep fighting until everyone is rehired," she said, and then added, "Would you join our march in Boston?"

"I'd consider it a privilege." He held out his hand. His face was calm. "I'd like to kill the motherfuckers. Excuse me," he said.

Chris felt a rush of warmth and closeness at the same time she wanted to cry. "Someday we'll kill them for sure," she smiled at him.

That day the pneumatic tube system for the hospital communications carried other than administration's memos to certain ward clerks:

We must get all jobs back.

Demo at noon tomorrow.

Tomorrow morning.

And so the fight continued...

Later, Chris found Janice. They didn't have much time to talk, but Chris invited her for dinner that night.

Janice waited for Chris by the time clocks. Janice had an ageless kind of face, without lines. She could be twenty or forty; her full mouth added flexibility to her years. And when she spoke, her supple body moved forward, making you watch more than just her face. Now, as she walked forward with her hands in front of her, she greeted Chris, "Hi. I got out a little early." Her warmth made everyone she met feel special.

"Am I glad to see you. These people don't give us enough time to TALK here." Chris looked distracted. Her head turned as different people walked by them to the door. ("Any more news? Did you hear everyone will be paid for the day as well?")

"You know," said Janice, putting her arm around Chris's back, "the supervisors met with the housekeeping today and said they were planning to hire back everyone without our petition." She turned Chris to face her, "And they said picket lines out front only hurt the cause of the workers. That was NOT why they got rehired." Janice began to laugh her deep chuckle. "And they said the petition came to them AFTER they had made the decision." She clapped her hands together.

Chris had to laugh, and the tension left her face.

"Let me tell you what ELSE they said. That rabble rouser, Chris Porter, she's trying to USE you all to get ahead.' As if they haven't been using the workers for years and years and years." Janice leaned for a moment on the bannister.

"Next they'll be saying it's your fault they got fired in the first place." This last comment seemed hysterically funny to Chris after a day of pressure, and the two women continued laughing, unable to climb the stairs. The workers behind them passed, curious as to what could be so funny at the end of a hard day of work.

They got on the subway.

Janice spoke above the rattle of the train. "Listen. It was a terrific fight. You were really good."

"Thanks. But it's not because I'm some kind of superwoman. Communists know an 'injury to a few' isn't just a bunch of words. And all those black, Latin and white people out there on the line. They made the bosses give in. I also think we won because the petition brought out the racism."

"They are afraid, the administration, of bringing out the whole story about the system." Janice stared across the isle, looking through the far windows. A puzzled look came on her face. "Why do you suppose they fired me. I've been there three years longer than Bennie. And then they hired me back and left him out. We work on the same unit. It doesn't make sense."

"I think they tried to get rid of you because you're my close friend. They try to isolate communists because they know that together with fighting workers it's an unbeatable combination in the long run. If they fired you, they could try to pick me off later at their leisure, hoping I'd have less support. But you fought back by pushing that anti-racist petition, even during the hours when I had to be on the floor. And you got your other friends to pass it. It became a very mass thing. But Bennie stayed home."

"I never saw such a look on Dugan's face."

"Black and white makes him sick to his stomach for some reason."

They laughed, until the other passengers gave them odd looks.

Chris wiped the tears from her eyes. "So why don't you join PL, Janice? You agree with the need for socialism. You already contribute money to the party."

"I see the need to get together, to have a Vanguard party and to give leadership. But I feel blacks have to get ourselves together first. Or we'll get swallowed up."

"That's happened when certain parties don't want to get rid of capitalism. But right now, minorities, and minority women especially—even without being in the party—are in the forefront of the working class. They'll give the most leadership, and the most militant. We need you in the party, though, to give communist leadership, toward smashing this whole system."

"Well, it's a gut feeling I have, to get ourselves together, after all these years."

Chris knew that only experience would change her friend's mind. But she noted in the back of her mind not to let the subject drop between them. "OK with you if we continue this next time we get together, for lunch, when it's not so noisy?"

Janice agreed. The train rattled on uptown.

"Now, about Lawrence," Chris turned to face Janice, "it's pretty much as I've told you. I mean the guy loves me very much and he's gorgeous. And he's good in bed. But he's always harping about the politics. I can understand why it upsets him. He sees me moving toward my destruction."

"I don't understand. Doesn't he ever compli-

ment you when you've worked so hard? And about your ideas which he can see would benefit everyone? Everyone except the Sister Kennedys and the Dugans of the world," she added.

"Sometimes he says, 'that's nice.' But usually he's constantly grinding away about the party. He **should** be more supportive." Chris stuck her feet out into the isle and folded her arms.

"Do you think he's jealous of the party?" Janice turned sideways on the seat, "I mean, do you think chauvinism has anything to do with it?" She looked into Chris's eyes with her hazel eyes, and she seemed to stare through Chris.

"You know, that could very well be," Chris said slowly, pulling her feet up to the seat. "He inquires about decision-making in the party as though I haven't thought through the line myself. And...he may also be jealous of the men who lead the party, even though there are women in the leadership, too. And there Lawrence sits, not wanting to do the things we do. And he won't come to any meetings to see what it's like."

"That changed my mind about a communist party, being invited to club meetings and seeing what they're like." Janice fingered her earring, sliding it back and forth through the hole in her ear. "But I think it's more than jealousy with him. He IS 29 years old. Why didn't he fall in love with someone before this who wasn't so **active**?"

"I think that's a lot of it. Not that I didn't suspect, but he doesn't want, really, to become active. Fear, or whatever. He even says he identifies with the rich people more in the world. Even though he'll have to work all his life! Mind you. He would rather be rich than fight on the side of the working class, that's for sure. So meantime, not being rich, he does nothing. He's his own contradiction."

"There's a lot of people like him. I used to think something along those lines." Janice put her hand on Chris's arm.

"Here's our stop. I have to pick up some dessert. What would you like?"

"Let me get it. I'd like something gooey and upper class!"

Chris smiled, "Let them eat cake. Seriously, this has been a help to me. We haven't spent enough time together since I've been going with Lawrence."

"That's what happens."

"But it shouldn't be. Anyway, I'll be curious as to what you think of him."

"Even if I do like him. Shouldn't you be thinking about someone more political?"

"They're either too young in the party or all the ones my own age I'd be interested in are married. But I think you're right. I need at least someone who's active."

"But, of course, where are they who aren't married. At least you've got Lawrence."

"That's what makes it so hard. And how do I know I'm going to **like** someone else..."

The elevator stopped on the fifth floor, below Chris's. "You never know where the damn thing's

going to stop. On Sunday's it doesn't work at all. It knows the Super isn't around Sunday's."

They walked up the remaining stairs. "Goddamn this system," said Janice. She looked at the other doors, "What do the little old ladies do?"

Chris turned the key in the lock. "They die sadly, but more quickly," said Chris. (Where the hell was Lawrence?)

"Hi. We're here."

"Oh. I'm in here." He stayed in the front room while they took off their coats.

"You did a lot to this apartment since I saw it last."

"Thanks. Come on in the living room. I got a couple more big plants in the hall here."

Lawrence remained with his feet stretched on the couch as they came in. The TV was on. "Hi."

"Janice works with me, I told you. She's really the closest person to me. She works in psych. also, but on another floor."

"Did Chris tell you yet what happened today?"

"You just walked in. How could she tell me."

Lawrence smiled as if to show he hadn't meant anything by the remark.

"She might have called you from the job."

Janice sat opposite from Lawrence on a chair and straightened her back rigidly, not leaning back.

"I didn't have time," Chris said apologetically.

Janice waved her arm in a dismissing motion. She began to tell the story, Chris filling in. As the two women talked, one remembering to say what the other had forgotten, they wove the story. At one point Lawrence asked.

"Don't you think it's better some people get laid off than all your wages cut. I mean, the city doesn't have the money. You heard yourselves they're bankrupt."

"They HAVE the money." Chris hated when Lawrence played the devil's advocate. He knew better. They'd discussed this one before. "Profits are higher than ever. The military budget is up to \$100 billion now. They have the money in the capital budget. But in order to keep their profits protected, they take from us more and more. The US is not the undisputed ruler of the world anymore. You know that."

"Don't we still have the highest standard of living in the world?"

"Who's this 'we'?" Maybe the Duponts and Rockefellers live better than the Shah. But millions of people live in shacks in this country. Most of the rest of the cars and houses of the 'middle' class are really owned by the banks. The national debt is the biggest symptom of the US's unhealthy economy... but we've talked about all that before." Chris was annoyed. She didn't feel like being angry now, either. "Let me start supper." She was also somewhat upset Lawrence hadn't even started to cook.

She boiled the water and laid the big lasagne strips in it. The sausage was frying. She moved away from the stove. For the first time she could hear what they were talking about in the living room.

"What do you think socialism is?" It was Lawrence talking.

Chris could only hear parts of Janice's reply. "Workers have control over their lives... the lives of people who want to make themselves bosses again..."

"Don't you know that the party's really going to be in control?"

"You're going to need leadership under socialism. But don't you think we have a dictatorship now?"

The sausage had to be turned. As it sizzled, Chris could feel her skin crawl. She got out the lettuce and began to pull it apart viciously. She felt like a voyeur on her own life.

"Do you know Chris wants you to join the party? That's one of the reasons she's such a good friend of yours."

(How did he think she couldn't hear?) Chris went to the window and looked out on the park. Children were playing baseball. Her insides hurt. It was a beautiful sunset. She thought why communists relied on people to come through. And how necessary it was to become close friends with people so that you fully understood each other, the ideas of the party, how everything was linked together. Basebuilding, the party called it.

Not basebuilding was the big mistake of the old communist party. Chris rubbed her forehead on the glass. Cold. Not opening themselves and their ideas to the masses of working people. They produced card-carrying members. That was why the red-baiting of the fifties had been so successful.

She watched the sunset and calmly laid the strips of lasagne in the pan. Ricotta cheese, sausage strips, more lasagne. Her stomach unknotted. She put the stuff in the oven and came into the living room smiling. "Hi. Aren't you people tired of talking about politics?"

Lawrence became his charming self. Chris still thought him good looking, but there was something about the tightness of his face she hadn't noticed before. Was that the way his face had always been?

(We'll just have a nice dinner, Chris thought. I won't even bring up May Day tonight.)

Janice leaned forward, looking first at Chris and then at Lawrence. "You mentioned this Boston march, for busing."

"Don't look at me," Lawrence said. "I've been trying to persuade Chris NOT to go. It's too dangerous with those thugs walking around."

The fifty red wool caps ran up the hill. The cops signalled each other. The ROAR goons began to swing their bats. They could not see the wool hats yet. There was a road to cross and then they would go down the hill.

They pictured the communists like sitting ducks huddled around the sound truck. Their buddies, the cops, would be there quick to finish the job. But they would get a few good licks in before. They felt confident with the bats. The solid feel

of wood in their hands. Then over the hill from out of nowhere came waves of red hats and white T-shirts.

They had no bats but were swinging garrison belts. Some were still taking the belts off their waists. It was more frightening to see the belts come unrolled, wrapped around a fist. Some of the thugs didn't even cross the road. They didn't



want to get a belt buckle in the face. They ran. More waves of red hats.

One of the goons' bats connected. Three T-shirts were on him. He went down. A lot of blood ran from the red wool hat, staining it a different red. A belt buckle cut into the cheek of one goon. He dropped his bat, eyes wide.

A T-shirt picked up the bat, swinging. The other bats and goons were scattered. Many had run. They were big guys. Some of the red wool hats were women. The plan was for a group of three to attack one dug with a bat. They were getting one down. Another crack of the bat. And more blood. A red hat was dazed, lurching back.

A group of three: one went in to hold the bat before it could swing again. One pushed the back of the goon's knees with her shoulders. The guy went down, and the third red hat kicked him between the legs. Another goon saw this and wheeled around, holding his bat by the wrong end, stumbling in his haste to get back across the road.

Two men struggled over a bat, swaying back and forth. The blood of one was running over his face, but he hung on. He had lost his red hat, but that would have been no protection against the billy club that now came smashing down on the back of his head. He let go the bat. The goon now swung the bat across his ear, and two cops hit at his arms and legs with the clubs.

Cops were all over the place. They held the arms back of the red wool hats. They hit their heads. There was no more fight.

"The buses are arriving."

The red hats had done their job. Some of them

were being held in the cop cars. There were no goons arrested. One of the doctors in the party said the head wounds were not serious even though there was a lot of blood. There are a lot of blood vessels near the surface he said. Only one person would need stitches. The ambulance came.

One fellow took off his red hat and rubbed the sweat off his forehead. He turned to the woman next to him, who had been by his side before the charge. "You know, I didn't have time to be scared," he said.

It's not that I'm not afraid," Janice said, "but it seems to me somebody has to stand up to these creeps. The cops aren't going to, or they would have stepped in when they beat up that West Indian fellow in Boston."

"You're sure right." Chris's mouth was full of lasagne. It was good and spicy-hot. "During the rise of fascism, the cops did nothing against the roving bands in Italy, Hungary, Austria or Germany."

Lawrence looked up, "The communists, the parties, in those countries were even bigger by far than the PL. How do you expect to win with your little group?"

Janice and Chris looked at each other. Chris spoke, "It's not strictly a numbers game, though numbers count."

"Look what we accomplished today, starting with a few to give a little leadership." Janice put a cherry tomato in her mouth as if to indicate she had finished speaking.

Chris went on, "Look at history. The CP of Germany with all its numbers relied on the support of the bourgeoisie politicians, the Social Democrats. The Social Democrats controlled the trade union leadership, too, by about 90%. They made concession after concession to the fascists."

"Meanwhile, the CP as a party organized through elections. They were gaining in the polls but not leading the people to physically confront the nazis. The CP actually gained more votes than the social democrats between 1930 and 1932, but they never organized these forces to fight back. That's why the fascists were eventually able to walk into office and rig elections."

The buses came in one after the other, and the marchers were organized into lines of six abreast. You could see the ROAR individuals creeping out of the woods of the park. The cops stood alongside the road, as if to protect the thousands of marchers from the several hundred goons.

There were three women and three men on the sound truck. They were familiar faces to many of the marchers, reassuring. The security forces with red arm bands tried to see that people stood six abreast, a continual reshuffling.

At one point, a woman dressed in a turban and long African dress swept up to the line with two men at her side: a boat with a wake. The woman

came next to the line. She pointed her finger at Chris.

"You, Whitey. Where do you think you're taking my brothers and sisters?"

One of the marshalls, a young, black woman, cautioned Chris and the marchers there. "She's in the NAACP. I was at a meeting of theirs around the Carson Beach affair. She'll try to disrupt the march. Ignore her, if that's possible." The marshall glanced at the marchers and then at the woman. "Let me make the decision if we have to get rid of her physically."

"We don't need you to fight our battles for us." The woman directed herself to Chris.

Chris clenched her fists, looking at the marshall out of the corner of her eye.

"And you, sister," the woman addressed Janice. "We've been watching you. Get away from the line. They want to make this march look integrated. Get smart."

Janice narrowed her eyes. She put her hands on her hips. "You're no sister of mine," she said sharply. "I saw you over there talking with the cops earlier. Get back with your buddies." Janice didn't move from her spot in line but leaned forward, hands ready.

"Get back with your buddies," chimed Chris.

The woman pushed in and stood between the rows, with her feet spread apart. The people in the row in front of Janice and Chris turned their heads, surprised at the push. Their arms were still linked. The woman made another step so she stood directly in front of Chris. She spit in Chris's face.

As one, Chris and Janice grabbed each arm of the stout woman. Janice's knee came up and hit her in the stomach. The woman made a grunting sound and spit again, unable to move her arms. Chris hit her in the face with the side of her arm, pushing her body back, twisting her arm hard. Janice pulled at the chin, back. The woman's head snapped back when Janice pushed her chin, and she went down.

Six marshalls grabbed the two bodyguards. They went as quietly as they had come. The woman was on her knees, pawing for her turban among the legs of the other marchers. Janice kicked her in the rear, and her face went into the road, outside the line. The turban, its insides stuffed with tissue paper, rolled away in the wind. The woman scrambled after it, half-crawling, half-stumbling.

"I didn't even see her talking to the cops," Chris panted, brushing herself at the knees.

"I notice those things," Janice said. A member of the medical team brought her some antiseptic and a gauze square. Her arm was scraped, and some gravel had gotten under her skin. She grimaced as the nurse picked it out. "I was thinking while I was watching her, how we all get fooled by dress and uniforms. And fancy slogans. How you can hardly tell one group from the other when they all call themselves socialists or communists or black liberationists."

"And I was thinking about this march, and the summer project . . . And I

watched the woman talking with the cops, and I thought how it really matters what you DO."

Chris looked at her friend. She felt proud of what Janice was saying. It was things that had taken her, Chris, years to realize, and here was someone saying them out loud, her friend.

"I think," Janice said in her careful way, "I should join the party." She tightened the bandage on her arm. "I definitely think so."

Chris gave her friend's shoulder a little push. "It's about damn time," she tried to joke, but tears came to her eyes too fast. "Shit. I'm glad," she said.

"We're starting." The chanting grew loud.

"FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM. POWER TO THE WORKERS."

The ROAR youths behind the cops had rocks in their hands. The march began. The rocks started. The security squad handed out the stiff, cardboard signs reading, "30 Hours Work for 40 Hours Pay." The marchers held the signs and kept walking in straight rows.

"SMASH RACISM. DEMAND MORE JOBS." The chants rolled.

"30 HOURS WORK FOR 40 HOURS PAY."

A skinny, young girl came running and giggling up to the line with a big rock in her hand. One of the cops put his arms carefully around her breasts and led her away. She screamed after the crowd, "I'll get you, you fucking commie bastards!"

The line crossed over a bridge. Below the bridge, the goons were throwing rocks up. No one was hurt because of the cardboard signs. In fact, the goons had no aim, throwing as they did from under the bridge, and the cops who were nearest the side of the bridge were getting the heaviest rain of rocks. They revved up the engines on their motor cycles, ducking. You could hear the rocks hit their helmets. Clank. They drove off the bridge, but not in single file, bumping into each other. The marchers laughed.

Chris helped herself to a second of lasagne. Lawrence could eat no more than one helping. He even left some of that on his plate. Janice tore off another slice of garlic bread. It was still warm.

The chill Chris had felt in the kitchen, she no longer remembered. It had been a shudder, like the shedding of old, dead skin. Lawrence represented another life altogether, one without struggle. He offered her deep sea fishing, a house in the country. But in reality, there was a great deal of tension in a life like his. You had to stay justified on the side of the ruling class.

The march passed through the all-white area of South Boston. Mostly, the bystanders were curious, pausing in their errands to stare at the march.

"MEN AND WOMEN, BLACK AND WHITE WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!"

One woman nodded and took a leaflet. The march passed corner bars in South Boston. Some men

with big bellies watched from the doorways. They huddled, jeering. The march went on, and the further they went—seeing for themselves the Boston working class on the sidewalks and on their front porches—the more cheerful the marchers became.

Janice left Chris's apartment early. Her boyfriend worked the swing shift, and she wanted to get some rest to be up to tell him all the news of the day when he got home.

As soon as the door closed behind Janice it started: "You don't make friends like I do. You pick people who're militant or who you can fight their battles for."

"What the hell are you talking about?"

"These people can't be your real friends. Most of them aren't as bright as you. These aren't the people you'd ordinarily make friends with."

"Do you, are you saying blacks have inferior intelligence?" Chris kept her voice low, deliberate.

"Not all but most. You're making contrived friendships. That's what I object to. Making friends so the person will join the party. That's manipulating. It's not natural."

Chris felt her mind twisting in the contortions of his arguments. She searched for the secure feeling she'd had minutes ago during dinner. The strength of her friendship with Janice. She thought about how she needed, like air and food, to be one with the history of working people. She needed the party for her own survival. And somewhere else out there in the world would be another man waiting to share in this struggle with her by his side.

"Who made YOU judge of what's natural. Lack of **unity** among working people—that's what's unnatural. Class struggle's been going on since before feudalism. It's the bosses would like to think it's **natural** to **divide** and **conquer**."

"I think struggle and fighting for socialism deepens a friendship. You can **have** your gossip and your tea and your three friends. I mean to keep bringing politics into my relationships. It's my **life**. It's not **natural** for me to shut my mouth!"

"You know what you're saying," Lawrence spoke dryly, "that we won't see each other again."

Always before, this threat had made the sadness and fear of loneliness overcome her. Now his racism burned through a door in her brain like hot lava. The way he had treated Janice!

"Good bye Lawrence." Good bye beautiful face.

"FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM!" The marchers entered the integrated area of Dorchester. They sold **Challenge**, the PL newspaper, by the hundreds on the streets. People leaned from their windows, swaying. The marchers had won.

"FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM!" "POWER TO THE WORKERS!" The chants rang off the apartment

houses. The park was just ahead.

Chris stopped selling the paper for a minute and looked at the line of marchers. The red flags glowed. They were satin and shining. Yellow "30 Hours Work for 40 Hours Pay" flags bounced along. The people in the march were both young and old. Black, white and Latin on the line together, "FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM!"

She saw Joe Nesbitt marching on the outside line, holding a large picture of Marx he had brought.

They went into the park, still in formation.

"HITLER. HICKS. SAME OLD TRICKS!"

The security squad formed a giant circle around the marchers, who now began to spread out, sit down on a hill. Kids were draping the red flags over their backs. The sun shone through the young leaves.

Some of the security passed out the box lunches and soda. A teacher from Madison, Wisconsin, was giving a talk from the sound truck. The speech was about the history of the fight against fascism.

"Katherine!"

"Chris!"

Chris hadn't seen her friend, Katherine, for over half a year since Katherine had been sent to Jersey to help give leadership there. (Why did New York seem so far from New Jersey?) It was good to see her friend.

Katherine got up from the grass and hugged Chris. "It's really great to see you. It's ridiculous we haven't gotten together. I've been so busy, you can't imagine. And we're going to have another baby! Katherine's intense, large brown eyes were shining. For a second she looked past Chris, even while she was talking.

"Gary, come here. I want you to meet a good friend of mine."

The man was not so handsome but Chris thought he had a pleasant, freckled face and friendly smile.

"Gary Brewster works with Leo. He's thinking of joining the party he was so impressed with this march."

Gary put out his hand, and Chris felt its slight roughness.

"I know," Katherine bubbled on, hardly letting the other two speak. "I'll have you both over to dinner."

I was just thinking, if it wasn't for the march we might not have seen each other for another six months."

Chris nodded. "A lot can happen in six months. Let's make a day while we're together here."

"I have to write it down." Gary took a pencil from the fold of his red, wool hat.

While he was writing, Chris looked at the masses of people, some sitting, some standing, and at the other red hats among the people. How bright they were against the green spring day.



POWER TO THE WORKING CLASS!

Report On Industrial Concentration to the June 1977 National Committee Meeting of P.L.P.

(With additions from the discussion at the meeting)

Ever since the founding of the Progressive Labor Movement (forerunner of PLP) in 1962, PL has been turned towards the working class—towards factory workers generally and towards the basic industries specifically. In fact, one of the reasons PLM was formed in the first place was because the “Communist” Party had abandoned the working class politically, making it easy for the ruling class to separate one from the other. The CPUSA did have an industrial concentration (IC) policy: this is what led it to organize the basic mass production industries—auto, steel, electrical, etc. But by the time the CIO was formed in 1935-6, the CP had abandoned the goal of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Then it was just a question of time until the ruling class would be able to render it ineffective as a force for revolution within the working class, although it lasted some time afterwards as a force for reform.

The point is that “industrial concentration” does not exist as a thing unto itself. An IC policy that does not put forward revolution and building a revolutionary party as its **MAIN** goal will eventually turn into its opposite; that is, those carrying it out will get caught up on an endless treadmill of reform struggle and will either “grow tired” and quit the struggle as hopeless, or will see the reform struggle as everything and therefore see no need for a party or a revolution. In both cases they will abandon the party and revolution because they will no longer see them as **THE** class needs of the working class.

On the one hand, PLP has attempted to maintain the goal of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of building a revolutionary party based in the working class as our central goal. Therefore, there has always been an element of industrial concentration in our practice—from the outside concentration of the early and middle '60s, to the (essentially) "students-into-the-factories" of the late '60s, to the workers' and unemployment councils of the early '70s—along with the mass sale of Challenge-Desatio (C-D) at plant gates—to the slates and caucuses, followed by building the Workers Action Movement (WAM) from '72 to '75.

Yet, while there was a positive side to each one of these developments, as we have analyzed in the document *Revolution Not Reform*, there was one common thread to all: in practice we became overly enmeshed in reform struggle so that winning workers, at the point of production or elsewhere, to the Party on a revolutionary line became either secondary or non-existent. While we had said in *Road to Revolution III* that workers could and should be won directly to revolution, that the big contribution of the Cultural Revolution in China had been the idea that **ideology can become a material force among the masses**, it was not until the advent of the "fraction" idea in late '75 that we really started **doing** something about this very correct and essential concept.

Grappling with the necessity to organize fractions at the point of production (again, industrial concentration), and the need to win workers directly to communist ideas and into the Party, led to seeing the negative side of our past history in the working class: we had always operated in the reform struggle in a **reformist** way. The point was not to absent ourselves from the reform struggle, but to operate in a revolutionary manner, put revolution and building the Party as the **MAIN** goal, not "winning" the reform struggle itself; that, in fact, "winning" was not achieving the immediate (usually economic) advance, but "winning" was moving people, especially workers, in the reform struggle closer to revolutionary ideas and into the Party. It is not a question of what revolutionaries can contribute to the reform struggle, but rather what can the reform struggle—with communists operating within it in a revolutionary way—contribute to the revolutionary process, to **real** victory, to emancipation of the working class from capitalism.

It was out of this struggle with our past shortcomings that the document **Revolution-Not-Reform** was born, in effect the first operating strategy—with all its imperfections—to put *Road to Revolution III* into practice. While we have always tried to keep the dictatorship of the proletariat in the forefront, how far we have come can be seen by looking back at the first "operating strategy" of the PLM: a "2nd federation of labor" made up of the Teamsters, Harry Bridges and formerly left-led unions to oppose the Meany-Reuther forces in the labor movement.

So we can see that merely putting forward a policy of "industrial concentration" is not enough.

IC is not some magic cure-all. The CP pursued it and had a large base in the working class, and at the point of production, also, but, with a reformist/revisionist line, it ended up on the outside looking in, and at one point (1944-45) even dissolved the party itself. But carrying out an IC policy within the framework of a revolution-not-reform line would give us, for the first time, the opportunity to establish a **mass base for Socialism** within the working class and to have the first gleanings of **actually organizing for revolution**. So now when we discuss industrial concentration, we must realize that its **political content** is far different, far more advanced, than at any time in our history. Perhaps, at this point, it would be in order to review the reasons that communists have an industrial concentration policy.

The essential contradiction of capitalism is social production vs. private appropriation; that is, millions of workers brought together in the production process, with nothing to sell but their labor power, which creates all value, but with the private appropriators stealing as much of that value as they can (profit), re-investing it at home and abroad to repeat and intensify the contradiction. The ability of the private appropriators—capitalists, the ruling class—to continue to extract this surplus value depends on their control of the state apparatus, which has always been used in class society as the weapon of one class to oppress another.

Everything else under capitalism flows from this central contradiction: **racism** (needed by the ruling class both ideologically to divide the working class and prevent it from organizing against its oppression, and as a source of super-profit); **imperialism** (in the quest for new groups of workers from whom to extract surplus value with the capital gained from the exploitation of the domestic working class; **depression and mass unemployment** (when the anarchy of capitalism, resting on such an insoluble contradiction, overproduces and at the same time inevitably places the working class in a position from which it cannot buy back this production); **all other inequalities**, based on sex, national origin, etc. (needed for the same reasons as racism); **war** (to settle the conflict between competing imperialists for the "right" to extract surplus value from colonial workers); and **fascism** (needed as the contradictions get sharper at home, preventing the state apparatus from functioning in the old "democratic" way).

Without this central contradiction of capitalism, there would be no reason or basis for any of these other evils. The discovery of surplus value by Karl Marx was one of the greatest contributions to the advancement of the human race, but as Marx himself said, it is not enough to understand what makes the world tick; the point is to **change** it.

Every modern capitalist country rests on its economic base and its ability to develop an ideology and a state power to keep that base in line and functioning to produce surplus value.



Soviet workers in cement factory, 1940's

The decisive area of that economic base is in the basic industries, without which modern capitalism could not function: auto, steel, electrical, machine tools and other heavy industry, communications, transportation, mining and energy. An important corollary is arms production for the weapons used by the capitalist state apparatus to enforce exploitation of the working class at home and imperialist exploitation abroad and to defend against other imperialists in wars—all this depends on the production and inter-relationships, of these basic industries.

When the owners of these basic industries are attacked, it is the **ruling class** which is being attacked, the capitalists who control the state apparatus, and the political parties, who are responsible for racism; who are exploiting workers in South Africa, Latin America, Asia, etc.; who organize for fascism. This is **THE** class enemy.

The capitalist economy lives or dies based on what happens in and to these industries. That is why they try to exercise such a tight control over these workers; why the biggest traitors to the working class are the mis-leaders of the unions in these industries; why it's much more difficult for communists to become a committeeman/woman or steward, much less a local president, in one of these basic unions. This is where the main surplus value is produced, where the contradictions are the sharpest, where the source of the weapons of the state apparatus exists. This is why what happens to the working class in the basic industries usually determines what happens to the whole working class; what happens to the capitalists in these industries will determine what they will try to do to the whole working class.

Consequently, this is also why, even if a minority of the working class or of the whole population are in the basic industries, they can lead the whole class, the whole non-capitalist population, to revolution. (In Russia in 1917 there were only 6,000,000 industrial workers out of a total population of 170,000,000.) To win the workers in these

industries to revolution is to chop down the underpinnings of capitalism from which all exploitation and oppression flows.

When we say that a relatively small communist party can give leadership and have an influence far beyond its numbers, and, in fact, make a revolution, it is only because: 1) it has a revolutionary line; (2) it recognizes these central contradictions of capitalism; and 3) it **concentrates** in that area of capitalism—the industrial workers—which can move the whole revolutionary process and destroy capitalism.

This does not mean that by merely seizing the factories capitalism will be destroyed. That act does not destroy its state apparatus with which it enforces its class ownership of the means of production. Therefore, winning workers at the point of production solely on the basis of the exploitation that exists there is not enough. Many other influences must be understood, especially of the state as an instrument of the ruling class (not being some "neutral" entity), as well as the whole gamut of oppression in all areas of society—schools, culture, medical care, imperialism, fascism (the Nazis, Klan, etc.). You name it, capitalism's got it, to spread capitalist **ideology** and organize the forces around that ideology to keep the working class divided and powerless to organize against its class enemy.

Therefore, industrial workers must be won to a **world** view, not just to understanding the contradictions on an assembly line, although that is certainly an important part of this process. They must be won to recognize their own world importance as the keystone of capitalism, taking the world view into the plants (fractions) and organizing for **revolution**, not just seizing the plants (although that may very well be an important part of the process), but seizing **state power** with which to overturn **all** the exploitation that flows from the contradiction at the point of production.

Therefore, for the first time, we must discuss industrial concentration within the context of Revolution-not-Reform, within a revolutionary operating strategy. What does this mean and how would we carry it out?

Understanding that the contradictions of capitalism go far beyond the daily grievance or union election, we must: 1) link that reform struggle to capitalism as a whole; 2) tie in all other political concepts that both affect workers in the other aspects of their lives as well as strengthen them in the fight against their own boss and enable workers to see that they are not just battling a foreman or even a particular company but a **whole class** (more easily understood when opposing an international giant like GM); that they are fighting a **system**; that the solution is revolution, which requires a communist party, and therefore they must join it; and 3) since not all—or even a majority—will join, the ideology must be presented in a mass way to move **masses** of workers from the Right or Center to the Left, as they begin to view themselves as a **class** and recognize where their class interests lie.

For instance, supposing a boss made one worker perform two jobs and laid off another worker. We could file a grievance, raise it at a union meeting, mount a campaign within the local against speed-up, even organize a work stoppage or a strike—all of which might be “good” and might even win the particular job back; only to have, the boss turn it around some other way (even repeat it in another, weaker, department).

On the other hand, we could also explain **why** this happens (surplus value, bosses’ economic crisis, etc.); how and why racism plays its part and why it exists; how a mass campaign for 30 for 40 would put the working class on the offensive around the question of jobs and unemployment, etc. Inevitably the bosses’ and/or union leaders’ reaction to any militant struggle would be “answers” like “foreign competition” or the “illegal alien”, or “bad times” is stealing ‘our’ jobs

Then, if not before, we would explain the international character of capitalism, about imperialism; why the lies about immigrant workers: why the ruling class is forced to do all this; that it is a **class**, not just one foreman, one department, one boss or “bad times.” We could also explain how the school system and the culture in that city, and in capitalism generally, “educates” us to accept the bosses’ explanations. We could show how the local KKK/Nazis/ROAR, etc. are used by the ruling class against workers mounting such a struggle, and against a working class ideology. And, of course, we could put out a Party leaflet, run an article in C-D and sell it in a mass way, take workers to a PLP activity, win them to a fraction and/or a CAR (Committee Against Racism) industrial chapter, and try to recruit them to the Party.

To win workers in this way we must be prepared to answer a lot of bosses’ ideology (such as the sexism of “my wife or husband won’t let me participate”). We would have to build a base with a working-class family and deal with all the problems thrust upon working-class people by capitalism, problems they are taught to blame themselves for, or blame “fate” and/or seek the “solution” in religion or some current capitalist-inspired cult. In other words, we would really have to demonstrate how communist ideas are a world view that can explain every contradiction in our lives.

All this from the grievance of one worker? Yes, and all this alongside the militant on-the-job struggle, the campaign against speed-up, the work stoppage or strike. But if we don’t emerge from this struggle with workers won to communist ideology, to a **class** understanding, and into—or closer to—an organized formation to fight the class enemy (a PL fraction or study-group; a CAR on-the-job chapter; or the Party itself), then essentially the Party and the working class has lost that class struggle—we will be starting all over again when the next attack comes and will be no closer to making a socialist revolution.

Now all, or part, of this example could and should be applied to any and every situation in

which Party members find themselves. But to base an industrial concentration policy on this type of political content, to win industrial workers in this fashion, would mean we are really upping the ante in the class struggle, because of the power of industrial workers and their role in capitalist society as outlined earlier.

When we carry out industrial concentration, it should not be merely a question of working in key industries, organizing militant struggles, strikes, etc., and telling workers we are in PLP and stand for revolution (all of which has been done before). This Revolution-not-reform content of industrial concentration is unleashing a force that will not only fight the ruling class at the point of production. As a cohesive, organized power, it can and will move beyond the factories, first in all the other working-class battles—against racism in the schools and on the campuses; against racist medical care; against police brutality and in support of ghetto rebellions; against capitalist pornographic “culture”; to destroy the budding Nazi/Klan/ROAR storm troopers—on to general strikes in support of any group of workers battling the state apparatus of the ruling class and finally into the streets to the seats of capitalist power itself. After all, in virtually all cases it is workers who carry out the “work” of this state power—from manufacturing the weapons to constructing the jails to bearing the arms. What better way to turn that around—and thereby smash the bosses’ state power—than through the force of industrial workers already organized “socially” by capitalism at the point of production and politically by the Party and steered in class struggle against their own bosses (the very ones who hold that state power and use it, or the threat of it, against these workers daily)?

So an industrial concentration policy within the framework of Revolution-not-reform is a whole new ball game and absolutely essential to fight war and fascism. If we are fighting only for reform among industrial workers, what happens when a **political** answer is needed to mount a struggle against imperialist war? Will industrial workers use their power to strike against exploitation and war in South Africa (when the ruling class says it is “necessary” to “protect” or “create” jobs or to “defend ourselves against communism”)? What happens when a **political** answer is needed to oppose fascism as an instrument of extreme oppression against the working class? The answer to war and fascism cannot come from merely fighting for militant reform.

When we say fight racism on the job; build internationalism; use on-the-job struggles to raise political consciousness and build the Party, organizing fractions and industrial CAR chapters; fight sexism; put 30 for 40 in the forefront and unify the working class around it; organize mass sales of C-D and C-D distribution networks of non-Party workers in the factories; and recruit, especially minority workers, to the Party—when we apply all this to industrial workers, as the heart of an industrial concentration policy, we are winning industrial workers—with all their

potential power—to revolutionary ideology and to the Party. We are changing the whole relationship of forces between the classes as well as between the Party and the working class and therefore creating the potential for revolution.

How should we actually organize and carry out this industrial concentration strategy?

(1) Win the Party membership and our base ideologically to the reasons for it. (That may seem like the most “self-evident” and therefore the easiest part of it; it may be the hardest.)

(2) Develop a **national** strategy and **national** concentrations. This means not only concentrating on national industrial concentrations in those cities where they are present (and where it’s feasible) but also means at certain points directing the **whole** party’s attention in every city to that industry or to a city that’s a focal point of that industry.

(3) City-wide concentrations within the national strategy. Some areas won’t have the national concentration present in their city, but there are other industries that are key to that city, that will move it the most **politically**; that’s the one on which to concentrate.

Even within a national industrial concentration strategy, we possibly could decide where—given our forces and the importance—we should try to make a **particular breakthrough**, which would have ramifications far beyond the immediate city or industry. (Similarly, each area concentration can try to pick out a spot within that industry in their city where a breakthrough is most likely and could have influence throughout the entire area of concentration. It can even start from a single department.)

(4) Make an analysis of the industry, its past history and our past role, and the current status. (Of course, in some industries we have a head start, as in auto and steel; we are not necessarily starting from scratch.)

(5) Apply **ALL** Party forces in an area to the concentration, in varying degrees, depending on the individual. This may mean applying ourselves more intensively to an already-existing concentration. It may mean entering the concentration now, for the first time. Or it may mean building the Party in another area of work with the outlook of strengthening the Party over-all in that city to the point where we would be able to build all-out in the actual industrial concentration there in the near future. (This is especially true for smaller Party areas.)

(6) No Party member should be looked on as “2nd rate” if not working inside “the” plant. There are only aspiring revolutionaries. Party members not actually working in the concentration itself would:

(a) play some kind of role in it in the forms outlined below;

(b) use the understanding and power to be gained from developing industrial workers and apply it to the workers and students in their own

area of work to win **them** to revolution and to join the Party;

(c) develop **their own class battles** to which industrial workers can be drawn, to politicize them around the Party’s line even more than in the shop (such as against racism in the schools or against racist medical care or against local fascists, etc.)

(d) help the industrial concentration policy by locating, following up and winning industrial workers through the normal course of their own work (such as teachers with parents of their students—what kind of work do they do?; college students and college teachers with students who work in industry while attending school—we have met and recruited a number of industrial workers from first meeting them in that way; any person we work with whose family has members working in industry). We are all in **one** Party working collectively to make a revolution. There is no such thing as “our thing.” There is only our responsibility to the Party and the working class to play the best possible role, from our vantage point, towards the goal of seizing state power.

(7) Among members actually working inside the concentration:

(a) Spread the Party’s line through C-D, leaflets, shop papers, pamphlets, petitions, etc. Organize a **network** of non-Party forces to participate in this. This may mean starting with one worker to sell one copy of C-D to one other worker.

(b) Launch an offensive struggle (such as 30 for 40) and/or react to the bosses’ attack, especially on **anti-racism**, out of which a PLP fraction or an industrial CAR chapter or **both** should be built. One does **not** contradict the other; rather they feed into each other. If a fraction can be organized first, one of its assignments should be to help build a CAR chapter, which can broaden out the base of workers to be reached by the Party’s line. If a CAR chapter is organized, win the most advanced workers in it into a fraction.



Defiant farmworkers in California, 1973

A fraction without a CAR chapter is narrowing down the base in which the Party should be operating and failing to carry out our responsibility to organize a mass, anti-racist, multi-racial organization. A CAR chapter without a PL fraction winds up as sheer opportunism, organizing against racism without recruiting to the Party, ending up eventually in revisionism, without a Party or CAR.

(c) Be active in the union and raise the Party line at local meetings, in union committees, at conventions, through resolutions, grievances, running for office, exposing the company and the union sellouts; turn every situation towards the Party's line, using them all to raise political issues which go beyond the shop (internationalism, ghetto rebellions, local fascism, war, etc.).

(d) Bring workers to Party and CAR activities off the job—forums, parties, marches, demonstrations, etc.

(e) See particular workers two, three or more times a week **away** from the job, sharing mutual problems, finding out what really is the obstacle preventing a worker from joining the Party or a fraction. Without this, we will never get a toe-hold in any sustained way in basic industry. Build a base in the working class!

(f) Tackle head on the question of chauvinist/sexist attitudes and actions towards women, both those who work in the plant and those who are the wives of workers in the plant. Fight for women, especially minority women, in leadership of class struggle. Expose the roots of the oppression of women in the fundamental contradictions of the capitalism system. Fight for unity of men and women workers against the common class enemy. Build a base with both husband and wife, not just with the one who works in the plant. It is out of the class contradictions of capitalism, especially at the point of production, that we can draw a clear class understanding of why and how the oppression of women in the working class is pushed and how socialist revolution can eradicate it and emancipate both women **and** men from this anti-working class, capitalist ideology.

(g) All this work should be done with the goal of recruiting workers, especially minority workers, to the Party and moving the **mass** of workers to the Left, so they will defend the Party, follow its leadership and fight the bosses **as a class** at crucial points in the class struggle.

(8) The Party leadership should evaluate who else can be sent into the concentration, considering their background, the current base of that member, the potential development of the member, his or her adaptability to the kind of work, etc. There should be no "blanket" policy; each individual Party member should be evaluated separately.

(9) To aid the concentration from the outside, either as a supplement to those inside or even if no one is inside yet, see 7(a) above. Then we should aggressively help follow up contacts and/or introduce them to Party members inside. We should use the whole Party in this outside concentration, and where possible set up a concentration club (depending on the size of the area-wide

Party) with the specific responsibility of organizing activities and the rest of the Party. Where a club of inside workers exists, there can also be "outside concentrators" in that club to help with particular tasks on a regular basis as a member of that club.

(10) The leadership of the Party in the city should be responsible for the main concentration; should insure that it fits into whatever the Party is organizing at the time, should help it contribute to important Party actions, whether against racist attacks in the city, or in building May Day, or whatever; should be helping the comrades in the concentration tie every grievance to capitalism, tie every reform struggle to revolution; should be guaranteeing that there is recruitment going on, especially of minority workers, etc. **The Party area leadership should be on top of the industrial concentration in that area.**

(11) Patience and persistence should be the watchwords. We have already been in some of these industries for a while and have made some modest progress, but not nearly enough, certainly very little around a Revolution-not-reform line. We will not turn around this situation in two weeks or two months. It will take time, but it must be pursued **NOW**; we can't let it mope along in slipshod fashion, especially now that we have a more revolutionary line. In some areas comrades have been selling C-D outside plants for years until they finally made a breakthrough. Our aim in developing this industrial concentration strategy is to speed up this process, especially as our estimate continues to prove true that workers are increasingly receptive to communist ideas. Our guideline should be: while we must stick with the concentration activities patiently and persistently, at the same time we don't have a moment to lose.

These 11 points and sub-points are only for "openers." By no means do they exhaust the "how to" of industrial concentration. More should and will be added by the experience of all Party members.

The intensification of industrial concentration at this time may very well occur in a new period of emerging class struggle. When we first pointed to the contradiction between imperialists as the main contradiction in the world affecting all other events, the primary aspect between the U.S. and the USSR was **collusion**; conflict was secondary. We said the latter was growing. Now **conflict** has become the **primary** aspect, although collusion exists alongside it. Confrontation is sharpening in Africa and the Middle-East, if not directly, then through vassal states. There are rapid daily changes, making for an explosive situation. This has a distinct effect on how the U.S. ruling class operates domestically.

The Carter Administration's main aim is to push "national unity" leading to fascism. It is the most solidly Rockefeller-dominated Administration of all recent ones and much smoother than Ford's. This is reflected in, for example, its immigration policy: allow "aliens" in, due to their great potential for exploitation, therefore, harassment but no mass removal. Or in using

Andrew Young as "trouble-shooter" to create a better image, at home and abroad, especially in Africa, and capture minorities ideologically.

The Administration's attempt to prepare people to accept "national unity" for fascism is reflected also in a policy of "tightening the belt." They admit they can hardly turn the economy around ("acceptable" unemployment now is 7%; it used to be 4%). Each new recession starts at a worse level than the last one. Carter economists admit that the falling rate of profit can't be reversed; therefore, "capitalism is doomed."

Compared to the 1960's rebellions, anti-war movement, emerging rank-and-file strike wave, the last five years has been a "lull." We may now be entering a new period. Carter is promising a lot but the attacks on the working class intensify. This is similar to more intensive attacks during previous Democratic administrations (JFK-LBJ) which spilled over into Nixon-Ford. Workers have more illusions in Democrats, permitting the latter to attack workers harder under a "reform" guise. Therefore, there should be more mass struggle and resistance to these attacks in the coming period.

The Party has emerged from this "lull" period with a better, more advanced line, a slow rate of growth numerically, and several hundred more committed cadre nationally. In this new period, it is possible to have a larger Party based in the working class, especially among minority workers. The potential for recruiting them is growing. It has taken a certain period of time to absorb the lessons of these attacks, but many may now be ready to ACT.

The working class, in many respects, is watching the Party, some consistently absorbing our line. Therefore, **increasing the regular readers of C-D, through winning thousands of present regular readers to sell to others**, should become the main way we heighten this ideological struggle with an expanding base. This will impel us to win hundreds and thousands of workers to defend the Party's line, to be won to revolutionary politics, to be prepared to ACT in the intensifying class struggle, act in a revolutionary, not reform, direction. Leadership must focus on this aspect, as outlined in the proposals.

There may be new trade union rank-and-file rebellion to side-step the T.U. misleaders. This will make workers more open to our line. We should run in union elections **as a step closer to revolution**, not to "win" numerically, although there's nothing wrong with that happening, either.

Our goal in the coming period should also be to develop several hundred more committed cadre, especially workers. What the Party and working class do can help determine whether we have fascism with complete control or fascism with shaky control over the working class. A small party can lead a revolution (i.e., USSR, China). We should be campaigning in the Party to galvanize this kind of thrust. We should use the Oct. 1st demonstrations to **push political ideas into the shop, compelling political struggle**.



Strike! G.M. workers walk out at Detroit, 1946.

MAIN PROPOSAL:

Given agreement on the necessity of industrial concentration and the selection of concentrations in each area according to the guidelines laid down, the **main barometer** to gauge the carrying out of this concentration—the winning of the working class and its allies to the revolutionary line of the Party and to join the Party—is through a qualitative and quantitative increase in the sale of C-D and through the ideological struggle of the Party membership with its base to achieve this. This would lead to the building of fractions, CAR chapters, heightened on-the-job struggle linked to revolution, and to hundreds of workers and others joining the Party.

The main way this can be accomplished is by **winning regular readers** of C-D to themselves take 2 to 10 papers to sell to co-workers and friends, thereby winning the base of the Party to fight for the Party's line.

This means that in the next three months 2,000 people who now read the paper regularly **must be asked and struggled with** to sell the paper.

It also means that by the end of the year we should have substantially accomplished this task and should have doubled to tripled the sale of the paper nationally.

In order to do this, the following should be guaranteed by the leadership of the Party—the NSC (National Steering Committee), the NC (National Committee) members and the area leaders.

(1) the increase of C-D sales by every member, especially at the concentration points, inside and outside these concentrations;

(2) the establishment of networks of C-D sellers from among the regular readers inside and outside the concentration points;

(3) regular reports of the week-by-week progress of this campaign provided by each club to the area leadership and to the NSC, on forms to be provided by the NSC;

(4) bi-monthly reports by the NSC to the membership on the progress of the campaign on: readers asked and won to sell, sales by members and regular readers, persons won to fractions, study groups, CAR chapters, and recruits to the Party—especially industrial workers and minority workers.

(5) The task of every club leader (and therefore area leader) is the most careful and specific check-up of the progress of this campaign, which will necessitate intensification of the ideological struggle against the right-wing trend and the winning of the mass of Party members to the Left, "talking AND doing."

II. Additional proposals:

(A) That one result of this campaign be the bringing of thousands of the new C-D sellers, readers, fraction and CAR members, especially from the industrial concentration areas, to a march and encampment for Revolution and Jobs in Washington, D.C. (from the East and Mid-West), in Los Angeles, and Seattle (from the Far West region), on Oct. 1st and days surrounding it.

(B) That shop/fraction papers be issued **REGULARLY** (semi-monthly to monthly) at every concentration point, supervised by area leaders, with copies sent to the NSC who will work out a method for their review.

(C) That out of this campaign around the paper, the demonstrations, the work on shop papers, etc., the workers at the industrial concentration points be won into fractions which, if necessary, should be led directly by NC members and area leaders.

(C) That Party members participate in union elections in every city, especially in the industrial concentrations, as open communists, primarily to use the union as a forum for revolutionary politics.

(E) That week-end schools of shop workers be held this summer in the Far West, Mid-West and East/South to discuss one point: how to practice the revolution-not-reform line in the shops and unions.

(F) That a pamphlet be issued in the near future from the national party center on the role of industrial workers in the fight for revolution.

Comrades, the fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat must be centered in the basic industries among the industrial workers. Bringing down the giant monopolies who control these industries in the U.S. and around the world could possibly be the decisive step to bringing revolution to the whole world. Little though we may realize it, these are the stakes in carrying out a revolutionary industrial concentration strategy in "the belly of the monster."

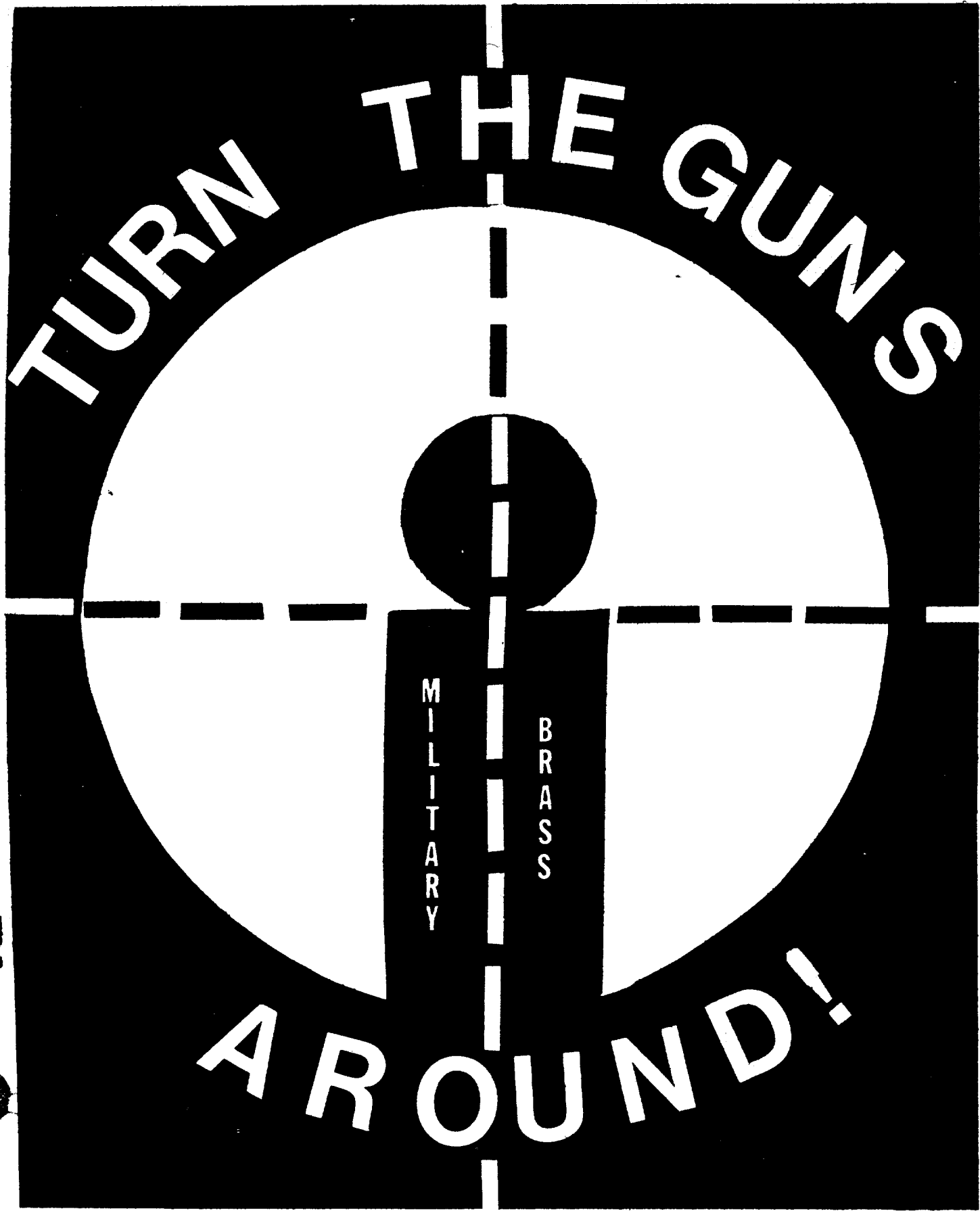
the lost word

"If, after the inauguration, you find a Cy Vance as secretary of state and Zbigniew Brzezinski as head of national security, then I would say we failed. And I'd quit. But that's not going to happen. You're going to see new faces, new ideas. The government is going to be run by people you have never heard of." -- HAMILTON JORDAN in November 1976 'Playboy'

...

the last word

Even in their 'finest hour,' the McCarthy era, liberals merely quibbled over whether or not a particular object of persecution really *was* a Communist; only the inquisition's means, never its ends, were in doubt (leading Bertrand Russell to remark that when the U.S. Government decides to sterilize subversives, liberals will campaign for a right of appeal).



DEFEAT U.S. IMPERIALISM!

March in Pittsburgh July 23

pp. 2, 10

CHALLENGE

The Revolutionary Communist Newspaper

PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

July 21, 1977—Volume 14, Number 8

10c

Wisconsin, Detroit: Strike-Breaking, Union-busting

FLATTEN FASCISM IN FACTORIES, UNIONS

With Communist Ideas and Action pp. 2, 3, 5



London, July 11—11,000 workers from all over England fought 4000 cops in a show of solidarity with 173 film-processing workers who are on strike for union recognition. Seventy people were arrested.

The British bosses are trying to bust the unions as the fascist threat intensifies. The same situation exists in the U.S. Workers must unite to smash fascism through socialist revolution.

L.A. Cops Sue PLP

On June 18, the Los Angeles Police Dept. attacked a demonstration and march through the L.A. garment center, organized by the Committee Against Racism (CAR) in which members of PLP participated. The marchers defended themselves from this unprovoked attack. Naturally the cops arrested 29 anti-racists, including eight on felonies. Many of those arrested are undocumented workers and now are facing the threat of deportation and double the amount of bail.

As a result of this fascist attack, ten cops are suing PLP, its leaders and others for \$2 million. They claim "injury to their bodies and shock to their nervous system."

All these attacks are part of the bosses plan to destroy our party. They are fearful that PL and CAR will lead the garment workers, and all L.A. workers, out of the racist superexploitation and into rebellion. The cops' attack is part of the growing fascist trend in the U.S., promoted by a weakening bourgeoisie that cannot extricate itself from a world-wide decline. But the workers will not be defeated! Socialism will crush the bosses once and for all! PLP, CAR, and the working class will not be intimidated by these attacks!

We are asking for help from our readers and friends to step up our fight against racism and for socialism, and to oppose in all fronts the bosses' attacks. We must rely on workers, and their allies, to fight the bosses. Send all contributions to PLP, GPO Box 808, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.