

CLASS STRUGGLE

VS. ^{S.L.A.} TERRORISM

A COMMUNIST ANALYSIS

In recent months, a new so-called revolutionary group, the "Symbionese Liberation Army" has assassinated superintendent Marcus Foster and kidnapped Hearst's daughter. This group claims to be fighting for the destruction of capitalism, the self-determination of all oppressed peoples and the international proletarian revolution. We who write this leaflet are communists and have these goals. However, we want to totally divorce ourselves from the actions of the SLA and denounce them as counter-revolutionary.

Communists are guided by the science of Marxism-Leninism. It is a science that is based on the actual conditions in the world, and it explains our present society as primarily a class society in which all human relations are based on their class nature. As Karl Marx wrote in the Communist Manifesto, "Society as whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat."

In this leaflet we will apply the Marxist-Leninist analysis of class society to show why terrorism can't be discussed in an isolated or moralistic way but should be seen in its relation to the class struggle, to the needs of the proletarian revolution. It is not terror, but who uses it and how, that matters. We will show the terrorism of the SLA actually supports the bourgeoisie (capitalist ruling class) and point out the real steps that must be taken at this time if the proletariat (working class) and oppressed peoples of the U.S. are to be free.

The basic reality of the capitalist system is that while the proletariat by its labor creates all the wealth, it is the bourgeoisie that owns the means of production—the factories, oil fields, coal mines, railroads, etc. Since the bourgeoisie controls the means of production, its interests and ideas are the ones that dominate all of our society. Supposedly, we live under a democracy, but actually it is only for the bourgeoisie — a bourgeois democracy. There is freedom for the bourgeoisie and dictatorship for the rest of us — the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Only when the proletariat is in power will the needs of the people be met. This can only be accomplished by taking the ownership of the means of production away from the bourgeoisie and establishing in its place the dictatorship of the proletariat.

What will be the nature of the struggle against the bourgeoisie? We know it will be a violent one. We do not say this because we like violence, but because it is true. By applying Marxism-Leninism, by studying history and the society around us, we see that the bourgeoisie will always resort to violence, including terrorism, to preserve its rule. If we don't see this and prepare for armed struggle, then we are defeated from the beginning. Unlike the reformist so-called "Communist Party", we do not renounce armed struggle in favor of the "peaceful road to Socialism".

The ultimate form of violence that the bourgeoisie can use is fascism — the open terroristic rule of the bourgeoisie. The recent bloody coup in Chile and the mass murders in Nazi Germany are examples of such rule. Of course, even under bourgeois democracy the bourgeoisie will use violence and terrorism to smash the growing resistance of the proletariat and oppressed peoples. The bourgeoisie of the U.S. has long used such terrorism at home in massacring American Indians, lynching and burning Black people and shooting down workers during union struggles. More recently, there were the nationwide police murders of the Black Panther Party members.

What is the SLA doing to help the proletariat and oppressed people win their freedom? Well, according to the SLA, it has organized an army to fight a war against the capitalist class on behalf of the people. Yet it is a strange war fought by

a tiny group with no real program, isolated from the working class, against a few individuals and representatives of the bourgeoisie. The SLA is really saying that all you need is for a few people to terrorize a few members of the bourgeoisie. However, only an organized proletariat, led by a communist party based on Marxism-Leninism can defeat such a powerful enemy. The SLA will lead the proletariat and oppressed people only to defeat not victory.

At best, the SLA's terrorism will leave the bourgeoisie in power and get a few minor reforms. Actually its effects are a lot worse. The assassination and kidnapping can make it easier for the bourgeoisie to whip up public hysteria, with red-baiting and slander to repress and discredit real communist revolutionaries who have no connection with the SLA. Furthermore, the proletariat sees that these isolated acts of terror gain nothing except some free groceries. With the help of the press, the experience of the SLA is used to convince the proletariat that revolution is impossible. The SLA, which proclaims itself as revolutionary and yet leads the proletariat into this situation, is essentially a betrayer of the proletariat and the revolution, in other words, it is counter-revolutionary.

As communists, we know that in order for the proletariat and oppressed peoples to defeat the bourgeoisie they must have a clear theory to guide them and a strong organization to put its theory to use. They need the same things the Chinese people needed to successfully defeat their feudal landlords, their bourgeoisie, the Japanese and the U.S. bourgeoisie. The same things that every successful communist revolution has had; a Communist Party guided by Marxism-Leninism and which is the acknowledged leader of the proletariat, an army lead by the party, and an alliance with oppressed peoples and those non-proletarians who are sympathetic to the revolution.

What is the role of terror in a revolutionary struggle? During the course of the revolution the struggle might take many forms: peaceful, violent, open, secret, large military actions, or terrorism. Marxism-Leninism does not confine the movement to one particular form of struggle but it does demand that the question be decided on the basis of the concrete historical situation. For us, terrorism is not a strategy but a tactic, and a minor one at that. It would be used only by a communist party with the support of the proletariat in response to the terrorism of the bourgeoisie. We would not use it as the bourgeoisie does, to repress the struggles of the working class and oppressed peoples. Nor would we, as the SLA does make it our main strategy for revolution, which actually would hurt its development. It was used correctly by the European undergrounds during WWII when they killed Nazi officials to terrorize and disrupt the Nazi occupation forces. In China, actions like this were taken along with fines, ridicule and the seizing of property. The peasants picked out a few landlords for execution who were guilty of the most horrible crimes. Their executions helped to weaken the resistance of the remaining big landlords and prevent greater suffering for the peasants later on.

Of course, terrorism and armed struggle is not a practical question at this time. It is only an issue because the SLA has presented it as a revolutionary solution for right now. On the contrary, our present concrete historical situation is that the proletariat is divided and full of confusion about its revolutionary role and that there is no communist party ready to provide the leadership to educate the proletariat and lead it in a successful struggle. The class conscious members of the proletariat are not saying 'where is our free handout from the bourgeoisie', but rather they are saying 'where is our Communist Party?' And to these comrades, we would like to say: join us in the work of study, organizing, and propaganda which will bring about the building of our new revolutionary Communist Party.

WORKERS and OPPRESSED PEOPLE UNITE!

We encourage responses from readers and will be happy to furnish information on where to read more about the ideas presented here. Write to:

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