

# The Workers' Advocate



WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

THEORETICAL ISSUE

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VOICE OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY OF THE USA

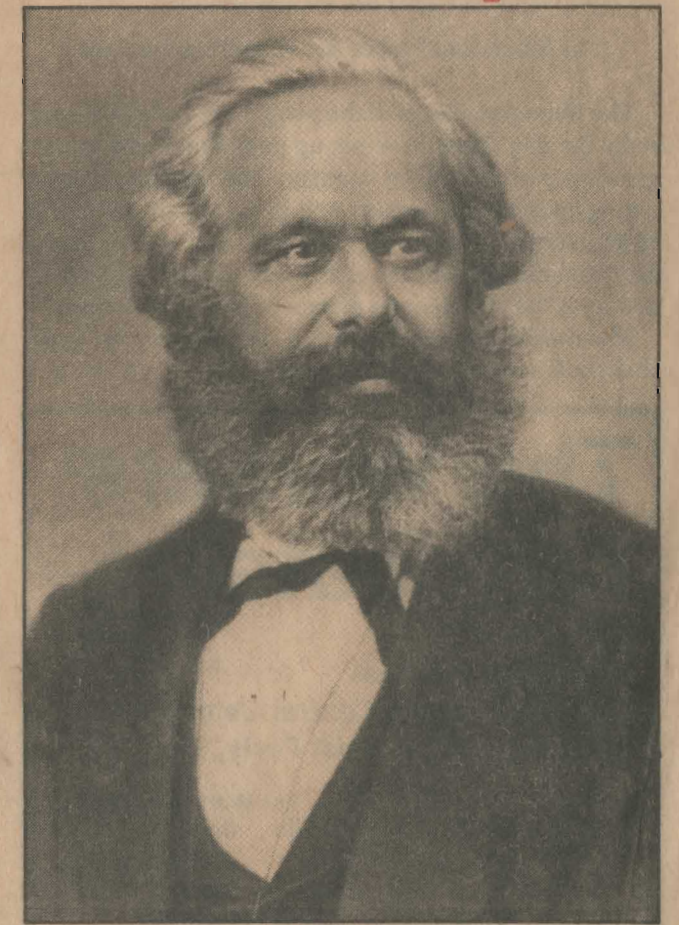
July 1, 1983

Volume 13, Number 5

On the life of the founder of communism

## Before all else, Marx was a revolutionary

*"For Marx was before all else a revolutionist. His real mission in life was to contribute, in one way or another, to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the modern proletariat, which he was the first to make conscious of its own position and its needs, conscious of the conditions of its emancipation. Fighting was his element. And he fought with a passion, a tenacity and a success such as few could rival." (from Engels' eulogy of Marx in his Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx)*



### IN THIS ISSUE

Support Salvadoran people .....	2
No to Reagan's war on Nicaragua .....	4
Democrats: Reagan's partners in aggression .....	6
Chicago elections and the liquidationist betrayal .....	8
France: "Supply-side socialism" .....	18
Iran: National Council of Resistance and the dangers of liberalism .....	22
Opportunists defend Khomeini's reaction .....	28
Reaganomics, the "Atari Democrats" and unemployment .....	41
Solidarity message of CPL-Dominican Republic .....	47
United front tactics: On the relationship of the party and the masses .....	49
On liquidationism in Trinidad and Tobago .....	70
CPC(M-L)'s factionalism and the 20th anniversary of the Internationalists .....	73

**KARL MARX**

**See Page 31**

# Support the Salvadoran people against U.S. imperialism!

Step by step Reagan is expanding U.S. military intervention in El Salvador. U.S. Air Force C-130's based in Panama are flying combat operations against the rebel forces, with the barrels of their 40mm cannons needing to be replaced almost daily due to heavy use. (*Chicago Tribune*, May 24, 1983)

On the ground a big "rural pacification" program has been launched. "Search and destroy" missions are being directed by U.S. Army lieutenant colonels who have now taken over effective control of the Salvadoran High Command.

The Pentagon is sinking deep into the quagmire of a Viet Nam-style war against the Salvadoran people.

## The Liberation Forces Are Marching Forward

The liberation forces of the people are getting stronger by the day. They have set up democratic power over growing portions of the country. The insurgents grow strong because the workers and peasants are determined to overthrow tyranny. They are fighting for liberation from the grips of the rich landlords and capitalists, and from the plunder and dictate of U.S. imperialism.

Meanwhile the death squad dictatorship is badly shaken. It stays in power at the grace of U.S. backing. It



The liberation forces in El Salvador are growing stronger every day. Here a guerrilla leader gives instructions to his comrades in the province of Usulután.

can only rule by means of terror against the workers and peasants and against any and all opponents.

## "Political Solution" — The Carrot and the Stick

Reagan hopes to rescue the regime through military intervention. In Congress both Republicans and Democrats alike share Reagan's hopes. But some Democratic chieftains are concerned that the big stick alone is not enough; a carrot is also needed to subjugate the people. The carrot is their so-called "political solution."

As Rep. Clarence Long (D.-Maryland) puts it: "What I have long favored is a carrot and stick approach. The carrot, of course, is a political solution; the stick is a military solution. Here I urge the military to develop a real stick and not a wet noodle, which I think it has had."

In a word, the Democrats' "political solution" is the one-two punch of imperialist aggression. First, build up the big stick of the regime (as if the military had drenched the country with the blood of 40,000 victims with a "wet noodle" and not a "real stick"!). Then, hold out the carrot of "political solution" to give the regime breathing space and to lull the vigilance of the people. With this carrot they want to rob the insurgents of the initiative, to isolate them and, if possible, to set them up for a massacre by disarming them in the face of the regime which, of course, holds the big stick provided by both Reagan and our Democratic "humanitarians."

The governments of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama are also trying to rescue the interests of their U.S. imperialist big brothers via such a "political solution." What's more, the Cuban and Soviet revisionists are backing up these reactionary and pro-U.S. imperialist governments in this and they are putting pressure on the liberation forces to accept these efforts.

These schemes deny the right of self-determination for the Salvadoran people. Self-determination can not be negotiated according to what's acceptable to Washington or any other reactionary power. It can only be determined by the workers and peasants of El Salvador themselves.

## U.S. Imperialism, Get Out of El Salvador!

The American workers and anti-imperialist activists cannot agree to the Democrats' "political solution," which preserves the tyranny and the positions of U.S. imperialism intact. Our responsibility to the people of

El Salvador is clear: Firm opposition to any and all intervention on the part of "our" government. No to the the sticks nor the carrots of the single imperialist policy of subjugation. The watchword of our struggle against intervention must be: **U.S. imperialism, get out of El Salvador, lock, stock, and barrel.**

Workers, youth, anti-imperialist activists!

The people of El Salvador and all of Central America are rising to break the chains of U.S. imperialist slavery. These are chains forged by the same U.S. government, by the same U.S. corporations and by the same system of exploitation which have brought the American working people unemployment, racism and Reaganite reaction. Let us smash these chains!

**Let us take to the streets in mass struggle against Reagan's war in El Salvador!**

**Let us extend our arm of solidarity to the workers and peasants of El Salvador who are fighting valiantly for their liberation!** □

## The Workers' Advocate



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## Déjà Vu Viet Nam

*You imperialists will never learn!  
Once again you throw down the gauntlet:  
"No Marxist states in Central America" —  
Reagan states.  
"No Marxist states in Central America" —  
the "Democratic" Senator Dodd declares  
(in echo).*

*It seems you have forgotten  
the bloody nose  
you got in Viet Nam.  
It seems you have forgotten  
the bloody nose  
we, the American masses,  
gave you at home.*

*But this is silly.  
Of course, you will never learn.  
You are imperialists.  
You will never stop drenching  
your hands in the blood  
of the small nations  
until those nations, fighting bravely,  
chop off your fingers abroad  
and we, fighting just as bravely,  
chop off your necks  
here at home.*

From a Reader

# No to Reagan's War Against Nicaragua!

The U.S. government is waging war on Nicaragua. This is not a war of words. It is naked aggression with guns and troops.

## Naked Aggression

Reagan has unleashed 7,000 CIA-armed and trained

counter-revolutionaries against Nicaragua. From camps in Honduras and Costa Rica the CIA is now directing their terror raids of murder, rape and destruction into Nicaragua. Most of these mercenaries are former members of the hated National Guard of the late dictator Anastasio Somoza. The undisguised aim of this CIA/Somocista invasion is to topple the Sandinista



The heroic people of Nicaragua stand determined against the CIA/Somocista invaders. Above, 150,000 rally in Managua on April 28, to oppose Reagan's aggression.

government, and to crush the people under a restored Somoza-style dictatorship.

All the tried and tested weapons in Washington's arsenal of destabilization are being brought to bear against Nicaragua: economic blockade, subversion, threats and blackmail.

U.S. warships and warplanes swarm the Nicaraguan coast and airspace. And 100 more U.S. military personnel are being dispatched to Honduras to beef up the U.S.-puppet army there as a striking force of provocation and aggression against Nicaragua.

## Imperialism Wants to Restore the U.S. Jackboot

Reagan's drive to strangle Nicaragua is a monstrous crime against a small and poor people. The Reaganites find the Sandinista government to be incompatible with their preference for death squads and fascist dictators. So they think nothing of trying to break the Sandinista regime, no matter how ruthless the means.

Behind the criminal CIA invasion stands a whole system of imperialism. Imperialist aggression defends the superprofits of the monopoly capitalists who hold power in this country.

When the Nicaraguan people rose up and overthrew the Somoza dictatorship a hard blow was struck to this imperialism. For four decades Somoza's tyranny had guarded the U.S. multinational companies which drew superprofits off the desperate poverty of the workers and peasants. Now Nicaragua is giving Reagan and the billionaires nightmares about falling dominoes as the will to live free of the U.S.-backed dictators is setting all of Central America ablaze with popular revolt.

To restore the U.S. jackboot in Nicaragua the imperialists will stop at nothing. When their superprofits and other "vital interests" are at stake, no crime is too bru-

tal or too extreme. Yesterday we saw this in Viet Nam; today we see it all over again in Central America.

## Hands Off Nicaragua!

The Nicaraguan revolution was a giant step forward for the people. Contrary to the ravings of Jeane Kirkpatrick and the Reaganites, the Sandinista government that came to power in this struggle is not a Marxist-Leninist one. This is unfortunate because the revolution would be that much stronger if it were. The new regime is weakly formed; and it is ideologically unclear, being influenced by bourgeois, social-democratic and revisionist (mainly Soviet and Cuban) trends. Nevertheless the gains won by the workers and peasants in the revolution are of enormous value for advancing their revolutionary cause.

The heroic people of Nicaragua are not about to give up the freedom won at so much cost without a fight. Each new atrocity of Reagan's "freedom fighters" against the people is multiplying their unbending hatred for U.S. imperialism. A firm resistance has been thrown up against the invaders. "No Pasaran!" is the watchword on the lips of the armed people — the CIA mercenaries "Shall Not Pass!"

Here in the U.S. let us also declare a firm NO! to the CIA invasion of Nicaragua. The American workers and progressive people must not let Reagan have his way. Our demand is that the Nicaraguan people must have the elementary right to self-determination. They must be allowed to determine their own fate, to live free of the bullying and dictate of the U.S. imperialist overlords.

**Solidarity with the Nicaraguan people against the CIA invaders!**

**U.S. imperialism, hands off Nicaragua!** □

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# Democratic Party: Reagan's accomplice in aggression

U.S. intervention in Central America is showing up the brutal, imperialistic nature of the Reagan government. It is branding Reagan as a man of the "death squads," as a criminal and warmaker.

But it is also branding his accomplices in crime — the hypocritical fakers of the Democratic Party.

The Democratic liberals in Washington wring their hands about the horrors and dangers of Reagan's policy. They bemoan the "no win situation" and fret about the political costs of escalation.

But do our Democratic Party heroes stand up to Reagan's growing intervention? No. Despite all their grandstanding they have rubber-stamped everything Reagan, the CIA and the Pentagon have asked for.

Do they demand that the people of Central America must have the right to settle their own affairs? No. They agree fully with the need for intervention albeit with a more "humane" face.

Do they express solidarity with the people of El Sal-

vador or Nicaragua or other victims of Reagan's war? No. Their sympathies lie with the fascist regimes and mercenaries and their fear is that they will not win out.

## The Democrats Want to Rescue the Reagan Policy

Liberal Senator Dodd, in delivering the April 27 policy statement of the Congressional Democrats, swore that they too "share goals" with Reagan. They too "oppose the establishment of Marxist states in Central America." They too are "fully prepared to defend our security and the security of the Americas, if necessary, by military means."

To help Reagan realize these "shared goals" the Democrats want to lull the people to sleep with sermons about "peace" and "human rights." At home they want to spread the myth that Congress will check the Reaganites, a false hope to keep the people from taking to the streets and to give Reagan a free hand.



Photo shows a section of the MLP contingent at a demonstration in Chicago on May 8, 1983.

In Central America they want to undermine the popular struggles with lies about the "peaceful" intentions of U.S. imperialism. Sowing illusions that Congress will deliver "human rights" and "peaceful solutions," they are striving to disarm the peoples' resistance in the face of the "death squads" and the CIA invaders that the U.S. government has armed to the teeth. The Democrats are striving to rescue the Reagan policy from fiasco.

## CIA Invaders and Congressional Hypocrisy

What have the Democrats done about the criminal CIA/Somocista invasion of Nicaragua? They have wagged a finger and there and tut-tutted about what a nasty business it is. Meanwhile they have given Reagan a green light.

In the Senate, the Democrats approved more funding for the CIA invasion with the stipulation that the Senate will review the matter again in October. After all, by that time CIA Director William Casey has (foolishly) assured them that the Sandinistas will already have been overthrown!

In the Democrat-controlled House they approved

\$80 million for the Honduran generals to pass on to the CIA/Somocista invaders. This was far more than what Reagan was asking in the first place for direct aid to the mercenaries. But by funneling the money indirectly through the U.S. puppets in Honduras the Democrats hope to keep U.S. imperialism's hands clean in this dirty invasion.

## Every Dollar for the Death Squads Has the Blessings of the Democrats in Congress

The Democrat-controlled House has also approved every one of the hundreds of millions of dollars for the death squad dictators in San Salvador. Oh yes, they have demanded that every six months Reagan must go through the farce of certifying that the butchers there are improving "human rights." Now they have Reagan dispatching Richard Stone, a very close friend of the Central American dictators, to talk to them about "political solutions." This is how the Democrats work to paint up U.S. military intervention in "human rights" and "peaceful" colors.

In short, the Democratic Party stands hip deep in the bloodbath that Reagan is executing in Central America.

We must not forget that it was the Democrats who, under Kennedy, were responsible for the invasion and fiasco at Cuba's Bay of Pigs. Under Johnson they were responsible for the invasion of the Dominican Republic. And it was the same Democrats who unleashed the genocidal war against Viet Nam.

The Democrats and Republicans are the twin parties of imperialist intervention and war.

## Build the Movement Against U.S. Intervention!

The supporters of the Democratic chieftains want to tie the fight against Reaganite intervention to the coattails of the Democratic "opposition." But to build and strengthen the movement the Democratic Party windbags must be branded as the Reaganite accomplices that they are.

We must not place any faith in the Democratic Party fakers. To build the movement we must work to organize and mobilize the workers, the young people and rank-and-file activists. As the multi-million strong movement against the war in Viet Nam showed, these are the real heroes of the struggle against U.S. aggression.

We must not tone down the struggle to what's acceptable to the "carrot and stick" policies of the imperialists. The struggle against intervention must squarely target imperialism and back up the liberation struggles of the peoples of Central America which are striking heavy blows at this cankerous enemy.

Let us build a powerful movement against U.S. imperialist intervention in Central America! □

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**More on the Chicago mayoral election:**

# The Fight Against Racism and the Betrayal of the Liquidators

Dressing Up Washington in Liberation Colors ..... 9

The Program of a Hero of the "Left"-Wing of the Democratic Party ..... 9

Pushing the Democratic Party to the Left ..... 12

Do Politics Count? ..... 13

A Call to Vote for Every Black Democratic Party Hack ..... 13

Build the Independent Movement of the Working Class ..... 16

**See also:**

On the Congressional Black Caucus: How the Tarnished Image of the Democrats Is Polished ..... 10

In the May 25 issue of *The Workers' Advocate* we carried an article on the struggle against the racist Reaganite storm that raged in the recent Chicago mayoral race.

That article denounced the campaign of the Republican candidate, Bernard Epton, who became the figurehead for a Reaganite program of racist terror and segregationism, of handouts to the monopolies and cutbacks for the working masses. It condemned the bosses of Chicago's Democratic party machine who have long been the bulwark of racism in the city, who supported Epton, and who are still trying to unleash a racist hysteria today. The article called for a stern fight against this Reaganite offensive.

*The Workers' Advocate* also emphasized that Harold Washington, who was backed by the national Democratic Party, does not stand for such fight. Washington rode into office on the crest of a wave of burning mass sentiment against Reaganism. But his first few months as mayor have already shown that his promises of reforms were never anything more than an attempt to sweeten the bitter pill of austerity cutbacks and other attacks on the workers and oppressed nationalities.

The May 25 article showed that a real fight against Reaganite reaction requires organizing the workers. The racist bosses must be condemned at every turn. Every opportunity must be taken to advance the mass struggles against police terror and the racist gangs, against the loathsome racial discrimination in jobs,

housing and education, against unemployment and the cutback offensive by the monopolies. Both the election campaign and its aftermath have to be used, as the MLP has done, to build up just such a struggle.

This requires the work, not of supporting the fraudulent promises of the likes of Harold Washington, but of encouraging a break with the honey-mouthed liars of the Democratic Party. We cannot allow the mass movements against Reaganite reaction to be subordinated to the liberal capitalists of the Democratic Party. Rather the black, Latino and white workers must be united in their own class movement, a movement independent of and in struggle against the capitalist class and its Republican and Democratic Parties.

In this article we wish to deal with the role of the revisionists and trotskyites who have been backing Washington to the hilt.

It should be pointed out that in Chicago there are many honest activists who, although extremely uneasy about the Washington campaign, felt compelled to support him against the racist hysteria that was being whipped up. Some also felt that support for Washington was the only way to stay close to the masses to educate them for future battles. The work of the MLP showed that such a stand is unnecessary. By putting in the foreground the fight against the racist Reaganite campaign, by emphasizing the fight on the concrete issues that are actually agitating the masses, the MLP was able to stay close to the masses. The MLP encouraged the anti-racist struggle while, at the same time, it was able to get the ear of the masses for the exposure of Washington and his Democratic Party. This work encouraged the latent distrust for Washington and has helped to guide the discontent with him, since he has taken office, in the direction of independent political action. The honest activists have been thinking this question over and learning from the experience of the Washington campaign.

But this cannot be said for the revisionist and trotskyite organizations. Their support for Washington was not an honest mistake, but part of a cold, calculated strategy of supporting reform-preaching liberals of the Democratic Party.

Everywhere today the working masses are itching for a fight against Reaganite reaction. On a national scale

the compromise of the Democrats with Reagan, their backing of one after another of his militarist, racist and anti-working class measures, is breeding a growing skepticism among the masses towards the Democratic Party. In order to polish up their tarnished image, the Democrats are maneuvering in Chicago and elsewhere.

But instead of exposing these maneuvers, instead of encouraging the workers' gravitation away from the Democratic party, the revisionists and trotskyites are latching on to "left"-sounding Democratic Party politicians.

In Chicago, together with the social-democrats, the majority of the revisionist and trotskyite groups became the foot soldiers for the Washington campaign. They not only failed to utter a peep of criticism of Washington themselves, but they denounced anyone who did. Even today they are dressing up Washington in liberation colors and are trying to portray his attacks on the masses as important steps towards reform. This is not a fight against Reaganite reaction. No! It is putting a lid on the mass movements by assisting the Democrats to repair their damaged image.

The pro-Soviet revisionists, the Maoists and trotskyites all claim to be Marxist-Leninists, the most farsighted and militant section of the working class. But they are renouncing the building of the revolutionary vanguard party of the workers and are turning their backs on organizing the workers as an independent class. Instead they are working to merge with social-democracy to form a "left" cheering squad for the capitalist liberals of the Democratic Party. This trend is called liquidationism and it came out in all of its hideous glory in the Chicago election campaign.

## Dressing Up Washington in Liberation Colors

With only minor exceptions, the revisionists and trotskyite groups leaped with both feet onto the Washington bandwagon.

The pro-Soviet groups such as the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) and the Communist Labor Party (CLP); the pro-Soviet trotskyites like the Workers World Party (WWP); the ultra-opportunist *Guardian* newspaper; the Maoists of the Communist Workers Party (CWP), the League of Revolutionary Struggle (M-L) (LRS(M-L)), the shattered remnants of the "Headquarters" and the Communist Party/ML (CPML); and so forth, all heaped up mountains of praise for Washington. They claimed that Washington is a champion of the anti-racist struggle and more. Why, his election campaign was supposed to be nothing short of a massive assault on the citadels of capital.

For example, the official pro-Soviet revisionists of the CPUSA stressed that "Washington himself repeatedly charged that racism was being used to divert the white Chicago electorate from the major issues con-

fronting them, and Washington's aggressive program in support of jobs, fundamental political reform, trade union rights and peace." (*Daily World*, April 14, 1983, emphasis added)

The Maoist CWP added their voice to hail what they called the "popular and progressive" program of Washington, and they emphasized that "His program can serve as a platform to wage struggle against the rule of the monopoly capitalist class." (*Workers' Viewpoint*, June 1-7, 1983)

The WWP also praised Washington's program of "reforms" and sought to stress the supposedly insurrectionary significance of the Washington election campaign. Sam Marcy, the head of the WWP, could not keep his enthusiasm in bounds. The "capitalist establishment," he asserted in a special editorial, "recognized that it was not an individual they would be opposing, but a giant mass movement which had developed into an uprising." (*Workers World*, April 15, 1983)

The CLP likewise went into raptures. "To characterize the Washington candidacy as a 'black' movement or crusade is to totally misrepresent reality," they asserted. "Washington...continues steadfast as a representative of the demands and interests of the lower strata of the workers." (*People's Tribune*, March 28, 1983, emphasis added) And in a special front page election appeal they declared, "Victory in this election is the first step along the road to the creation of an America and a world free from the threat of war, unemployment, poverty and exploitation.... Finish the job! Get out the vote for Harold Washington and Win!" (*People's Tribune*, April 11, 1983, emphasis added)

This is only a smattering of the lavish praise that the liquidators piled high for Washington. To call it excessive would be an understatement. It goes well beyond the extravagant praise by the social-democrats. Even the claims of Washington himself have not approached such exaggerated promises.

But since such a mystique has been built up, let us once again take a glance at Washington's actual program.

## The Program of a Hero of the "Left"-Wing of the Democratic Party

Both during the election campaign and since stepping into office, Washington has frequently declared himself to be an opponent of Reaganism, a reform politician, a champion of the oppressed nationalities and workers. But whenever he leaves the realm of vague generalities and empty platitudes to present concrete proposals, Washington's program heads off in the direction of Reaganomics.

Far from standing for a struggle "against the rule of the monopoly capitalist class," Washington declared that to deal with the economic crisis "You've got to create a climate for business to come in."

Far from taking a step toward ending "unemployment, poverty and exploitation," Washington campaigned for "an austerity city budget" cutting jobs, wages and services. Since coming to office he has already put into effect a freeze on city hiring and wages, he has laid off some 300 city workers and he is planning much greater layoffs. Nowhere is Washington even suggesting that the burden of taxation should be shifted onto the rich. Instead he is campaigning for the passage of Republican Governor Thompson's proposed increase of the state's regressive income tax, and he is talking of increasing various local taxes on the workers.

Far from standing militantly for "trade union rights," Washington's efforts have so far consisted in discussions with union bureaucrats about a special program that would allow the city to hire construction workers at wages below the going union pay scale.

And on "fundamental political reform" Washington has done little better. He has allowed the notorious racist police chief Brzeczek to resign, only to be replaced for the time being by Brzeczek's equally notorious sec-

ond in command, O'Grady. He is working toward a "compromise" with the bosses of Chicago's Democratic Party machine in their squabble over putting a few more black politicians in the top City Council offices. (See "Tokenism or the Mass Struggle," *The Workers' Advocate*, May 25, 1983) And instead of eliminating the patronage system, Washington has begun "reforming" the court ruling against patronage. Since taking office Washington has won an agreement that allows the mayor's office and the City Council to make 1,170 appointments on a patronage basis in addition to the some 500 patronage jobs previously allowed.

Such is Washington's program for Chicago: vague and general promises of reform combined with concrete and brutal attacks on the workers and the oppressed. This program existed in all of its essentials during the election campaign. It has leaped out with all of its ugly features since Washington became mayor.

But the liquidators refuse to look at it. Even today, after Washington has taken office, they are embellishing his program and are trying to cover up his attacks

on the masses.

For example, the WWP praises Washington's "plans to dismantle the patronage system, put some restraints on the city's notoriously brutal police force, create more city jobs for Blacks, Latinos and women, etc." They then cry that "the city's ruling class and its political frontmen are seeking to economically undermine Washington's administration, in much the same way that the U.S. government treats progressive governments in the oppressed countries. ... Clearly their aim is to discredit Harold Washington, force him to adopt the bankers' austerity program, and break up the powerful movement which elected him." (*Workers World*, May 13, 1983, emphasis added)

Imagine that. Washington is a wonderful reformer. It's just that the banks are "forcing him to adopt" an austerity budget that he ardently campaigned for during the elections and which he was so enthusiastic for that he used his inaugural address to present it in detail. Such is the fakery of the liquidators.

The CLP cries similar tears, but goes forward to paint

up Washington's backward steps as progress. They declare:

"Still the movement towards certain limited municipal reforms is proceeding, if haltingly. ... Most important, the administration successfully petitioned federal judge Nicholas Bua to exempt 1,200 city employee positions at the policy-making level from the famous Shakerman Decision barring political firings." (*People's Tribune*, July 4, 1983) If reopening up the patronage system is a "limited municipal reform," then the Daley machine, where Washington got his early training, must have represented revolution.

But more:

"Yet these limited and necessary reform measures fell short of alleviating the vast human suffering giving rise to a resurgent mass movement. The Washington campaign, and especially the program embodied in the 'Washington Papers,' represented an array of economic and social struggles, and now in the early days of the administration these struggles are breaking out anew on all fronts.

## On the Congressional Black Caucus:

### How the tarnished image of

Washington's actual program for Chicago is so clearly a Reaganite approach to the workers and the oppressed nationalities that it becomes somewhat difficult to understand how he has been passed off as a "progressive." But it must be remembered that the Democratic Party has become masters of the trick of painting up attacks on the masses as steps towards reforms.

One of the chief sources of Washington's "progressive" image comes from his association with the Congressional Black Caucus in general and his promotion of the CBC's 1984 "alternative" budget in particular.

The CBC is an organization of the black members of Congress. It includes in its ranks avowed social-democrats and other preachers of reform. With its statements against Reagan, its defense of the voting rights act, and so forth it has garnered the reputation of being the "representative" of the black people and of the oppressed generally. Since it was formed in 1969, the CBC has become a special agency of the Democratic Party to appeal to the black masses, to harness their outrage and channel it back into the safe harbor of Democratic Party liberalism.

The CBC's "alternative" to Reagan's 1984 budget proposal provides a typical example of the Democratic Party's sleight of hand, concealing the reac-

tionary substance behind an illusionary image of reform.

The CBC's "alternative" budget was proclaimed with much fanfare to be a major attack on Reaganism, a program of "peace" and of "full employment." It was largely this piece of legislation that a number of the revisionists and trotskyites pointed to in their praise of Washington's supposedly "progressive" platform. But a look at the actual provisions of this bill show that it is, at best, a return to Carterism.

The key features of the bill include the incorporation of the AFL-CIO's jobs bill with a provision to cut Reagan's military spending. In another article in this issue of *The Workers' Advocate* we analyze this jobs bill showing that it is largely composed of measures similar to those of the Carter administration and that if all of its measures were passed they would not even bring unemployment down to the level of the later years of Carter's presidency. (see "Reaganomics, the 'Atari Democrats,' and the Fight Against Unemployment," on page 41)

The military spending portion of the CBC's proposed budget has been especially promoted, but it is no better. It calls for cutting some \$65 billion from Reagan's proposed \$238.6 billion military budget. Thus the CBC demands nearly \$174 billion in 1984 alone to build up the imperialist armed forces and to

### the Democrats is polished

stockpile the weapons of mass destruction. This figure, taking inflation into account, comes close to Carter's 1981 military budget (\$157 billion) and is a good deal higher than Carter's 1980 military spending (\$130 billion). Both of these were record highs at that time. It was Carter who began the monstrous military buildup which Reagan is carrying forward today. The CBC's "peace" program supports this enormous buildup, but promises to keep it at the Carterite levels.

Thus it can be seen that the CBC's piddling "reforms" will hardly bring the mass of misery down to the level of the later years of the Carter presidency. But what is more, this "alternative" budget was never meant to be implemented. It was just window dressing for the Democratic Party, a hollow promise blown away by the slightest breeze.

Having gone to the trouble of drawing up this budget and having promoted it across the country, the CBC refused to even bring it before the Congress. They argued that to even put their bill before the House would disrupt the passage of the main Democratic Party budget proposal. The chairman of the CBC, Julian Dixon, put it this way, "We did not want to do anything which could jeopardize the adoption of a plan similar to our own in so many important respects." (*The National Leader*, April 7, 1983) Even though the CBC plan called for a cut in

military spending while the Democratic Party bill demanded at least a \$13 billion increase, Dixon praised the Democrats' bill, saying, "This still represents a major improvement...the Democratic plan would hold the growth to only 4 percent." (*Ibid.*)

Here you have the Democratic Party's magic act to a tee. Promise the workers a major battle against Reagan; promise them "full employment" and "peace." Then produce a bill which is at best a return to the program of the Carter administration and, in fact, to its later years, the most brutal and aggressive period when the militarization drive was going into high gear. And then scuttle even that bill in favor of the Democratic Party program which is as near to Reagan's as one can get without becoming a grade B actor in Hollywood.

This shows something of the character of the "best" of the Democratic Party "opposition" to Reaganism today. The CBC, and the revisionists and trotskyites who promote them, are simply trying to polish up the tarnished image of the Democratic Party. The sooner their overbloated reputation is broken, the sooner they are driven from the workers' and black people's movements, the sooner the fight against Reaganite reaction will come to a head. □

"Thousands of Chicago school teachers and parents packed the University of Illinois Pavillion on June 16 to demand a state income tax increase...." (*Ibid.*, emphasis added)

Amazing, is it not. Of course the working masses will sacrifice a great deal to keep the schools open. But the point of progressive politics on this question is to place the tax load onto the rich. Instead of this, Washington is running around demanding, in the name of keeping the schools open and solving the city's financial crisis, an increase of the taxes of the workers. That is, he is maintaining the old regressive tax system and boosting the burden on the working population. The School Board is overjoyed at Washington's program. It was the School Board that called the recent rally and it actually ordered its employees to attend. And then the CLP leaps into the air and shouts, "Glory, hallelujah! Washington is leading the masses in an array of economic and social struggles!"

The liquidators know no shame! They are describing attacks on the masses as "necessary reform measures" and are sidetracking the growing movement against Reaganite reaction into the oh so "tender" arms of the Democratic Party.

#### Pushing the Democratic Party to the Left

The liquidators not only romanticized Washington's political program, they also made amazing claims that he is an "independent" and that work for his election was building the independent movement of the workers.

For example the *Guardian* praised Washington as a "fierce independent." (April 6, 1983) The CPUSA alleged that "the independent movement that gave rise to Washington's victory was based on the black community and among rank-and-file trade unionists of all nationalities." (*Daily World*, April 14, 1983) Meanwhile the CLP described Washington's campaign as "the lower strata of the working class...striving for independent political action around its immediate demands" and pontificated that a Washington "victory will mean that the majority of the working class has made giant strides in the battle to break the political control of the privileged minority within its ranks." (*People's Tribune*, March 28, 1983)

All of these claims are of course quite ridiculous. Washington has always been a Democratic Party politician, from his earliest days as a loyalist of the Daley machine. His program is a typical program of the reform-promising wing of the Democratic Party. And he proudly ran as a Democratic Party candidate in the mayoral elections.

Although the local bosses of the Democratic Party jumped ship to back the vicious racist campaign of the Republican Epton, the national Democratic Party leaders rallied to Washington's support. Everyone from the

chief southern Democratic Party leaders to Kennedy and the whole range of Democratic contenders for president trooped into Chicago to campaign for Washington. And they made no bones as to why they were doing so. Washington, they believe, is needed to bring the black masses back to the Democratic Party to bolster their chances for victory in the 1984 presidential election.

One of the liquidator groups was more candid than the rest in describing the significance of the Washington campaign and why they backed him. The Maoist CWP explained, "But it was more than just the routine contention for black votes that brought the top Democratic Presidential contenders to Chicago. It reflected some of the changing character of the Democratic Party, a party with little room to move. With little to distinguish themselves from the Republicans and even less to offer concretely in concessions or reforms, the Democrats need the black vote in order to maintain their relevance as the people's alternative. They are forced to move to the left... This was one of the most important aspects of the campaign." (*Workers' Viewpoint*, June 1-June 7, 1983, emphasis added)

Here we find the actual and quite amazing logic of the liquidators. The CWP admits that the Washington campaign amounts to little more than putting a fresh coat of paint on the Reaganite policy of the Democratic Party in order to win over the black masses. But the CWP works for Washington anyway in the hopes that his victory will "force" the Democrats "to the left."

This is nothing other than a statement of the traditional strategy of the social-democrats, their typical justification for supporting Democratic Party politicians, their historical policy of keeping the workers subjected to the tutelage of the monopoly capitalist liberals of the Democratic Party.

In Chicago not only the official stalwarts of social-democracy, such as the Democratic Socialist Alliance and the *In These Times (ITT)* newspaper, but also the myriad of social-democratic "community leaders" and union bureaucrats trooped out on the campaign trail in support of Washington. Some of them also described Washington as an "independent." But most often their praise stressed that he is a liberal-reformer who, in the words of *ITT*, "established the beginnings of a new reform coalition that should shift the city — and possibly national politics — to the left." (*In These Times*, April 20-26, 1983)

And what is this wonderful "new reform coalition"? According to *ITT* it is "a coalition of blacks, Hispanics, white reformers, labor, certain business and financial interests and those white ethnics who decide to cooperate." (*Ibid.*, emphasis added) Thus what the social-democrats mean by shifting "politics to the left" is, in reality, binding the workers and the oppressed nationalities to "business and financial interests" and to some "white ethnics," that is, racist Daleyite machine

politicians. This stand on the part of social-democracy is hardly surprising, since they are always about the illusionary business of pushing the Democrats to the "left."

But what is more important is that the Chicago elections show that the revisionists and trofskyites are nuzzling ever more tightly with this social-democratic policy. And whether they make outrageous claims about how support for Washington means taking an independent stand or whether they speak more candidly, as did the CWP, their mission is the same: they are assisting to repair the damaged image of the Democratic Party and to murder the still incipient strivings of the working masses for an independent political movement.

#### Do Politics Count?

It has to be pointed out that while most of the liquidators literally gushed with praise for Washington, some also tried to develop more refined arguments to justify their support for him.

For example, the *Guardian* originally praised Washington for being, among other things, a "progressive, a fierce independent" who "has attempted to provide the movement for Black political power with a progressive ideology that transcends race." (*Guardian*, April 6, 1983) But after one of their readers denounced Washington's program and criticized the *Guardian's* extravagant praise for him, the *Guardian* attempted to backpeddle away to another specious argument.

"In Chicago," a *Guardian* editorial declares, "the political programs and party affiliations of the candidates have become secondary matters. What's really at stake is the racism which up until now has been entrenched in the city and reflected in the electoral arena — particularly within the Democratic Party machine. It is this racism which is being challenged head-on by Washington..." (*Guardian*, April 13, 1983, emphasis added)

Here we have the typical cultural nationalist trick that politics don't matter, only race. But the *Guardian* does not play it very well. Done up by them it is a blatantly fraudulent justification for backing the Washington program.

The criticism from the *Guardian* reader specifically charges that Washington's program is not progressive, is not fighting racism, and so forth. The *Guardian* replies that political programs and party affiliation are not important, are only "secondary matters." But they wait hardly a sentence to turn around and praise Washington for fighting racism "head-on." And they proceed to imply that Washington is a closet "progressive" who, although not so foolhardy as to take on the "genuine economic power in the city," nevertheless represents the "pressing needs, and growing demands, of an increasingly well-organized Black com-

munity." (*Ibid.*)

This is simply outrageous. In the first place, the politics of the man must be dealt with. Would the *Guardian* have us believe that there are not different political trends among the black people, that there is not the trend of the oppressed masses striving for liberation and the trend of the handful of black bourgeois who want to join the oppressors of the black people? Are we to believe that it is wrong to oppose, for example, Clarence Pendleton, Reagan's appointed chairman of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, just because he is black? Are we to believe that it is even possible to oppose Reagan while supporting those black politicians who are working, whether openly or not, for the very policies that Reagan represents?

Up until now every Marxist-Leninist, indeed every class conscious worker, believed that to organize the fight against racism we must tell the masses the truth. This requires exposing those black politicians who stand for open segregationism, like Pendleton. It also requires exposing those charlatans who stand for a more refined oppression of the black masses. And it requires that we support, in the interests of the entire working class, every real, and not imaginary, struggle against the racist onslaught of the monopoly capitalists.

In the second place, Washington does not stand for a real fight against racism. We have pointed out time and again, in *The Workers' Advocate* and local leaflets that Washington refused to utter a peep against the brutal police terror against the black masses in Chicago over the last few years. Instead he has actually repeatedly praised the police for having "grown into one of the best and finest police departments in the entire world." Washington, despite his phrasemongering, has not taken a serious step against the disgusting racial discrimination in jobs, housing and education. Nor has Washington done a thing to alleviate the mass impoverishment among black people.

At best, he has stood for tokenism, for putting a few more black politicians in the top positions of the city council. And even on this he has been more than willing to compromise.

Washington does not represent a fight against racism but an attempt to sidetrack that fight. This is his politics, which the *Guardian* and other liquidators would like to brush aside. But if we are serious about organizing the anti-racist struggle we must expose these corrupt politics to the masses and assist them to get free of its stifling effects.

#### A Call to Vote for Every Black Democratic Party Hack

The liquidators have taken the Washington election victory to be the signal to back every black Democratic Party hack around. A whole slew of half-baked liberal arguments are being dredged up to call for a blanket endorsement of the forked-tongued liberal, and every

the more conservative, black Democratic Party candidates in upcoming elections. The liquidators try to portray this as a most important fight against racism. But, as with the campaign for Washington, what this really means is to sabotage the mass anti-racist struggles and to deliver up the oppressed to be the election-fodder for the Democratic Party.

In the June 3 issue of *Workers World*, the WWP carried an article entitled "Black Electoral Victories Show Resurgence of Struggle." It is useful to take a look at this article because it draws together a number of the fashionable justifications that the liquidators are giving to support their call to back black Democratic Party hacks.

The WWP begins by praising not only the election victory of Washington, but also that of the more conservative Wilson Goode in Philadelphia and then proceeds to hop up and down with excitement over "one declared Black mayoral candidate in Boston, and prospective ones in Baltimore and New York City, in addition to discussions amongst some Black politicians and civil rights figures about a Black presidential candidacy in the upcoming Democratic Party primaries." The WWP wholeheartedly endorses all of these, both the "left"-sounding and the conservative, both the declared and the even as yet unnamed candidates. And the WWP demands, in no uncertain terms, that the black people and all workers must support without reservation each and every one of them.

This is quite clearly a call for the working class to desert its strivings for independent political action in favor of backing Democratic Party candidates who are known to be at best reform-pledging firefighters against the anti-racist struggles. Nevertheless the WWP is advocating just such a course and they offer up a number of hollow excuses to defend themselves.

In the first place, the WWP declares that conditions today have created a special situation where the black people's struggle is centered in the electoral arena and, apparently for this reason, the black people and all workers should support every black candidate who runs. Their June 3 article argues the case in this way: the Washington and Goode election victories "may only be dramatic first results of a general surge of organizing and activism in the Black community nation-wide. The compelling focus of this movement for the present is electoral goals." (emphasis added) Later in the article this point is drawn out. "It should really come as no surprise that electoral activity would provide the first avenue of expression for the new political stirrings. The electoral struggle is, after all, the most obvious and the least difficult, by comparison to an independent mass struggle."

The WWP poses the question in this fashion in order to obscure and downplay the important mass anti-racist struggles that are breaking out and in order to avoid the obvious issue of what political tendency

should be encouraged through work in the electoral arena.

The WWP tries to force into the background the courageous mass battles against police terror in Miami; the mass actions against the Klan and their police protectors in Washington, D.C., Boston and elsewhere; the growing turmoil against the enormous unemployment and mass impoverishment of the black people; and so forth. The protests, the demonstrations, the mass battles represent the strivings of the just-awakening masses for independent action against the capitalists' racist offensive. Obviously work in the electoral arena should be used to support this trend, to encourage the mass struggles, to strengthen the independent strivings and assist the masses to come to revolutionary conclusions.

The monopoly capitalists, their politicians, newspapers and TV networks admit that they are sitting on a powder keg of the black people's outrage. They are crying about the coming "long hot summers" and are fervently debating how to "cool out" the situation. Among other things, they are turning to "safe" and "respectable" black politicians in the hopes of harnessing the mass anger by putting a pleasant face on the brutal racist oppression. Surely work in the electoral arena must be used to expose this political trend and to help free the masses from any illusions in the silver-tongued liars of the Democratic Party.

This is the only correct way to pose work in elections. But the WWP and other liquidators avoid it like the plague. They speak only of a "focus on electoral goals" in general. They create endless, and phony, debates over why it is essential to "participate in electoral struggles" against the specter of "ultra-leftists" who are opposed to participating in elections. From the heights of such abstract arguments the liquidators try to obscure the fact that they are demanding support for precisely those black politicians who are trying to throw cold water on the flames of the mass anti-racist struggles.

Our Party has always held to the Leninist view of active participation in the electoral field. Although it is a subordinate form of struggle, it is of much importance for educating the broadest sections of the masses and assisting them to organize as an independent, revolutionary force. Whether or not Marxist-Leninists actually run or support candidates depends on the particular circumstances. But in any event the electoral campaigns must be used to tell the masses the truth. This is precisely what our Party did in the mayoral contest in Chicago. But the liquidators turn their backs on such a struggle. For them the call to "participate in electoral struggles" has become simply another justification for supporting Democratic Party liberals.

The WWP moves from their empty platitudes about focusing on electoral goals to another scurrilous argument. They claim that support for the "respectable"

black Democratic Party hacks means to stand for "self-determination" for the black people.

The June 3 article declares:

"The particular expression of self-determination involved in this new Black political struggle is simple and uncomplicated — the right of Black people to have one of their own for mayor, or even President. If we must, for the sake of clarity, punctuate the inherent contradiction here to the extreme, this means the right of Black people to be oppressed by Black officials within the framework of the bourgeois democratic state machinery."

Obviously the WWP is quite ignorant of the Marxist-Leninist conception of the right of self-determination, the right of oppressed nations existing in a definite territory to secede from the oppressor state. They are not discussing the question of how this principle applies to the black people. For the WWP, "self-determination" is just a fraudulent banner put up to try to portray voting for "Black officials" who "oppress" black people as something akin to, say, the Puerto Rican people liberating the island of Puerto Rico from the clutches of U.S. imperialism. Any such comparison is not only ridiculous, but quite treacherous.

Certainly we must fight for full equal rights for the oppressed black people in every sphere. We must oppose any abridgement of black people's right to vote just as we oppose racial discrimination in jobs, education or housing. It is also of importance to condemn racist attacks on black people running for office. But on no account can the fight against racism be used as a justification for backing black, or any other, candidates who stand in support of the oppression of black people. This is just what the WWP is doing.

Nevertheless, we must thank the WWP for their "clarity" on this question. Before one might have thought that perhaps the WWP was arguing that support should be given to those black candidates who actually stand for the struggle against racism, who actually represent, even if in a confused manner, the mass movement of the black people against the Reaganite onslaught.

But now the WWP has cleared up any possible confusion. They are explicitly demanding support for "black officials" who "oppress" black people. Such is their appeal to the masses. Our job, according to the WWP, is not to fight racism no matter where it comes from. We are not to criticize those politicians who act as a brake on the anti-racist struggle. We should not expose those politicians who stand for the capitalist oppression of the black people. Oh no! We should back them to the hilt. And what is more, we should claim to the black masses that support for their oppressors is somehow a fight against that oppression. It comes as little wonder that the WWP is concerned about the "inherent contradiction" in their position.

But let us proceed because the WWP has yet one

more justification for their endorsement of the black Democratic Party politicians. The WWP goes on and on about the need for black people to get their own "experience" in elections in order to avoid the main point of how the Marxist-Leninists should act in order to assist the masses to learn from their experience.

The June 3 article asserts:

"Of course, larger sections of the working class have taken this basic bourgeois democratic right for granted for a couple of centuries and are realizing in larger numbers each day that voting holds no solution to joblessness or any other by-product of capitalist oppression. The collective experience of phony bourgeois democracy is the cement that is paving the road to the class struggle.

"In addition to twice as much unemployment, hunger, and inequality in relation to every aspect and necessity of life, Black people have also been denied the experience of bourgeois democracy."

Earlier, the head of the WWP, Sam Marcy, stressed this same point in justifying his support for Washington.

"It is vitally necessary for the Black people to go through this experience as the best means for educating both Black and white," Marcy declared. "Experience is the test. Whoever wishes to deny that to the Black people, and monopolize it for whites only, is consciously or unconsciously aiding and abetting racism." (*Workers World*, April 8, 1983)

Now if the WWP were here arguing about the importance of defending the black people's right to vote, if they were simply stating the obvious fact that black people's participation in elections is useful for them to come to a revolutionary conclusion about this decadent capitalist political system, then we could hardly quibble with them. But the WWP is not arguing this. Rather, they are suggesting that on the general grounds of the need for "experience" the Marxist-Leninists must support black liberals of the Democratic Party. And on this their argument will simply not hold water.

The issue here is not "getting experience" in general, but what use is made of such experience. It is the task of the Marxist-Leninists, the most advanced section of the working class, to teach the broadest sections of the masses and to organize the class struggle. To do this successfully, the Marxist-Leninists must use the everyday living political experience of the masses to teach them the truth. We must train the masses through their own political mistakes and use their experience to dispel illusions and guide the masses to revolutionary conclusions. In the case of the Chicago elections this required not only condemning the vicious Reaganite racist campaign but also sharply criticizing Washington's program and exposing that he stands as a brake on the anti-racist struggle.

But you will not find any such criticism of Washington in the literature of the WWP or the other liquidators.



tors. Nor does the WWP call for such criticism of the black Democratic Party politicians they are supporting in their June 3 article. Nor does the WWP expose the crimes of the sundry black mayors who have given the masses a good deal of experience in oppression and exploitation already. Indeed the WWP's love affair with Detroit's head of government oppression, Coleman Young, is quite notorious.

In general the WWP and the other liquidators are whitewashing the policies of the political hacks of the Democratic Party and promoting them as the heroes of the struggle against racism.

With such a practice as this it is pure hypocrisy for the WWP or any of the other liquidators to talk of giving the masses "experience as the best means of educating both Black and white." It is nothing more nor less than a cover-up for their ardent support of reform-promising liberals of the Democratic Party.

Without saying so directly, the WWP and other liquidators are trying to imply that they are following the well-known teachings of Comrade Lenin in his famous book *"Left-Wing" Communism, An Infantile Disorder*. But they are turning his teachings on their head.

It is impossible in this article to take the time to show how Lenin's every point refutes the tactics of the liquidators. But one issue should be pointed out. Nowhere does Lenin argue that giving the masses their own experience means that the communists should give up their ruthless criticism and exposure of the treacherous petty-bourgeois politicians. On the contrary, Lenin repeatedly called for an even more thoroughgoing and comprehensible exposure of them in order to prepare the masses for revolutionary struggle.

This point is driven home with all the more force if we look at the particular circumstances in which Lenin advised the British communists to make an election agreement with the British Labor Party. Lenin described the Labor Party as *"the old, trade unionist, opportunist and social-chauvinist Labor Party, which consists mostly of trade unions"* and which was led by the Hendersons and Snowdens who were *"petty-bourgeois and treacherous by nature."*

Nevertheless, Lenin pointed out that at that moment they represented a breach in the traditional two-party system of the British capitalists. The Liberals, who were much like our present-day Democratic Party, had for decades hoodwinked the workers into supporting them. But at that time they began to call for uniting with the Conservatives in a common capitalist front against the Labor Party.

For this and other reasons, Lenin suggested that the British communists should propose an election agreement with the Labor Party against the two-party front of the capitalists. But as part of any such agreement Lenin insisted that the communists must *"retain complete liberty of agitation, propaganda and political activity"* and *"secure complete liberty to expose the Hen-*

*dersons and the Snowdens."* Lenin went to great lengths to stress that the point of giving the Laborites a certain amount of electoral support at the moment was to *"not only help the Labor Party to establish its government more quickly, but also (to) help the masses to understand more quickly the communist propaganda that we shall carry on against the Hendersons without any curtailment or omission."* (All above quotes are from *"Left-Wing" Communism, An Infantile Disorder*, Ch. IX, "Left-Wing" Communism in Great Britain) Lenin advised that the communists should, right during the election campaign, agitate among the broad masses that the communists are calling for a vote for Labor precisely to *"hasten the political death of the Hendersons and the Snowdens"* and to expose their bankruptcy all the faster.

Clearly the tactics of our modern day liquidators bear no resemblance to those of Lenin. Among other things, they are not exploiting a breach in the two-party system. Rather the liquidators are trying to prop it up by backing its stalwarts from the Democratic Party. But neglecting this fact, the liquidators are not even exposing the Democratic Party hacks. Instead they are dressing them up in liberation colors.

The liquidators are not Marxist-Leninists but renegades from Marxism-Leninism. No matter their multifarious high-sounding arguments, they are selling out the interests of the working class and the oppressed generally in favor of a disgusting love fest with the Democratic Party.

#### Build the Independent Movement of the Working Class

The experience of the Washington campaign in Chicago, and the disgusting role of the revisionists and trotskies in it, teaches many invaluable lessons to the working class.

Most importantly it shows that the working masses of all nationalities cannot put their faith in the heroes of the "left" wing of the Democratic Party. Washington has hardly stepped into office but already he has unleashed a whole barrage of attacks on the working class. To advance the struggle against racism and the general capitalist offensive headed by the Reagan government requires breaking with the liberal liars of the Democratic Party. The workers must organize on their own. They must build up an independent political movement of the working class in resolute struggle against the bipartisan capitalist program of racism, hunger and imperialist aggression.

The fact that discontent is growing among many of the workers who only yesterday voted for Washington is an encouraging sign. It shows that there is a fertile field open for Marxist-Leninist work.

More than this, a section of activists from the revolutionary movement are becoming disgusted with the liq-

uidators' love fest with the Democratic Party politicians. The voices of protest are growing and even the liquidator press can't conceal this. We have already mentioned that the *Guardian* came under fire from their own readers for their support of Washington. More recently the CLP has begun to complain out loud in their paper that some of their members are criticizing the CLP leaders and their slogan for backing Washington as "tailist" and "liquidationist." (See *Rally Comrades!*, June, 1983) These and other examples reflect both the shifting mood among the masses and the importance of the current struggle of revolutionary Marxism-Leninism against revisionist liquidationism.

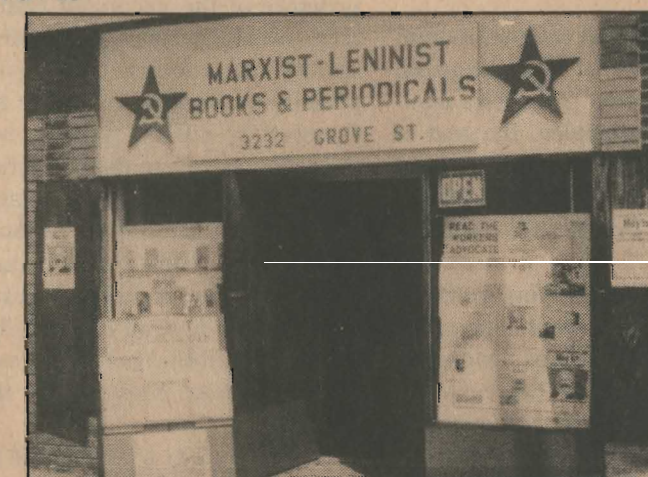
The liquidators' support for Harold Washington is an

important manifestation of their descent down the inclined plane of merger with social-democracy to become the "left" cheerleaders for the Democratic Party liberals. This whole trend is an attempt to divert the workers from building up their own fighting organizations and especially to oppose building the vanguard party of the working class.

The open fight against liquidationism is an essential struggle for the building of the true Marxist-Leninist vanguard, and it is playing a crucial role in the work to build the independent political movement of the working class. We call on all revolutionary activists to join with our Party to carry this struggle through to victory.

□

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## Mitterrand's "supply-side socialism"

# Behind the turmoil in France

The Bluster of International Social-Democracy . . . . .	18
The Reality: Social-Democracy in France Launches Reaganite Offensive Against the Working People . . . . .	18
French "Socialists" Adopt "Supply-Side" Economics . . . . .	19
Mitterrand's Unrestrained Militarism . . . . .	20
Social-Democracy and Revisionism Work to Keep the Lid on the Workers' Struggle . . . . .	20

### The Bluster of International Social-Democracy

This past April in Albufeira, Portugal the social-democratic Socialist International held its 16th congress. There the SI unanimously adopted the "Albufeira manifesto," a 29-page statement of principles, the text of which had been drafted by none other than Michael Harrington, a personality of the left wing of the Democratic Party and the leader of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA).

This manifesto points to the crisis gripping both the capitalist West and the state monopoly capitalism of the Soviet bloc and other revisionist countries, countries which it falsely labels as "communist." The essential theme of the manifesto is that the workers and oppressed of the world should look to social-democracy and not to the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist road of the class struggle, socialism and communism as the way out of this capitalist and revisionist crisis.

"Democratic socialism" is advertised by the manifesto as "a third force — an alternative to capitalism and one-party state communism." It proclaims that "the socialist [that is social-democratic — ed.] ideology is the only one that can bring hope to the peoples of the Third World as well as to those of the industrialized nations." (See *In These Times*, May 5-10, 1983) The key to this "alternative," the manifesto explains, is so-called "economic democracy" defined as "the indispensable means of exercising the economic and social power of the people."

### The Reality: Social-Democracy in France Launches Reaganite Offensive Against the Working People

But today's example of the French "socialist" government of President Francois Mitterrand shows just what kind of alternative social-democracy has to offer.

Since the time of the First World War, international social-democracy has repeatedly proven itself as an agency of capitalist exploitation, political reaction and imperialist plunder and war. Today the world can see that social-democracy in power in France is nothing but Reaganism thinly draped in talk of "socialism."

On April 1, only days before the SI congress in Portugal, the "socialist" Mitterrand government imposed yet another round of harsh austerity measures on the workers and masses of France. This has provoked a spring of protests by graduate students, shopkeepers, police, farmers, transport workers and others. The pressure of the economic crisis and government austerity measures have pushed diverse sections of French society into motion, bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and proletarian, fighting for their diverse interests and influenced by diverse political trends, from the right to the reformist left to the revolutionary left.

Mitterrand's austerity measures and the ensuing social crisis has pricked the balloon of "hope" in "French socialism." When the SP was voted into office two years ago, the social-democrats the world over were jubilant. But now all euphoria has been swept aside by reality and all that is left is a savage austerity program to make the workers pay for the capitalists' economic crisis.

First there was a five-month wage freeze followed by wage controls that limit 1983 pay increases to 8%. The government's price guidelines were set to allow prices to rise faster than wages, "in order to curb consumer purchasing power and increase profitability," as the "socialist" Finance Minister Jacques Delors aptly put it. In most sectors the indexing of wages to the cost of living was broken, thus reversing a measure for which the French working class has fought gigantic battles. Big cuts were made in unemployment benefits and other social service programs, while a series of new taxes were imposed on the workers.

But the greedy French billionaires were not satisfied. So the always obedient "socialists" decreed yet another round of measures to skin the proverbial ox twice over. The declared aim of these new measures is to cut the purchasing power of the masses as a means of improving France's balance of trade. The idea is that if the workers are poor enough this will keep them from purchasing imports. That's "economic democracy" for you!

Mitterrand has ordered a mandatory loan to the gov-

ernment equivalent to a 10% annual tax increase. This will apply to all who paid over \$675 in income tax last year, affecting some seven million households which includes a large section of the workers. The promise is that this is only a loan which will be paid back with interest in three years. But even if this promise is kept, it means that for the next three years the working people will suffer an even more unbearable burden of taxation.

In the name of shoring up the French franc a limit of \$275 a year has been set on the amount of currency that can be taken out of France. This not only affects millions of workers who vacation outside the country, it also hits millions of immigrant workers especially hard. Consumer credit is also being sharply curtailed.

The government has also mandated a string of other taxes including: a 1% surcharge on all taxes to pay for the deficits in the social security funds; a special gasoline tax; a 25% tax hike on tobacco; and a \$1.37 a bottle tax on liquor. Moreover state-owned industries and utilities jacked up their rates, including an 8% hike in charges for electricity, gas and passenger train service. And further cutbacks have been decreed in spending for social services.

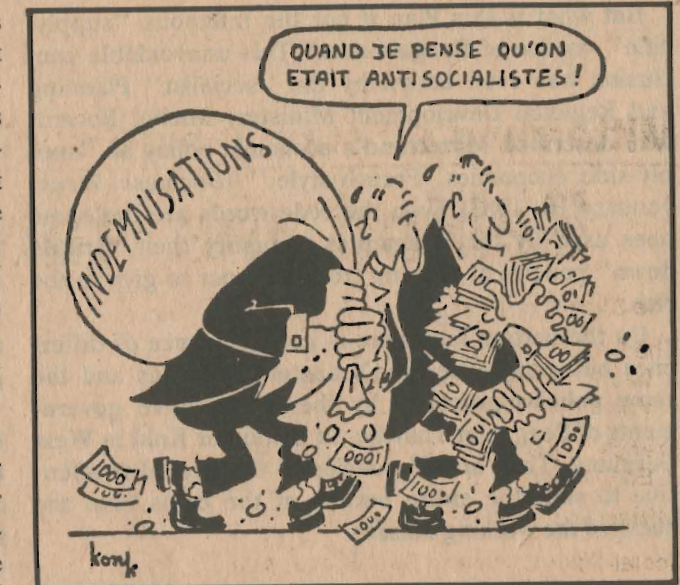
Here it should be recalled that Mitterrand came into office promising more jobs by increasing the purchasing power of the masses. But instead the social-democrats have presided over a post-World War II record 9% unemployment and have adopted one draconic measure after the next to further impoverish the workers.

### French "Socialists" Adopt "Supply-Side" Economics

"Sure the French worker is making sacrifices and paying a heavy cost," it may be argued, "but it is all for the good of 'economic democracy' and 'socialism.'" But all facts refute such arguments. The austerity measures are only bolstering the profits of French monopoly capital. Just like Reaganomics, Mitterrand's wage cuts, tax hikes and cutbacks are geared to provide a windfall for the filthy rich bourgeoisie.

Since coming to office, in the name of helping industry climb out of the slump, Mitterrand has pumped billions of dollars into the capitalists' coffers through nationalizations, bailouts and tax write-offs.\* On the heels of the last round of austerity for the masses, the government also announced a new round of tax breaks for industry. Among other measures, enterprises set up in 1983 will receive a total exemption from taxes for three

\* These nationalization schemes were designed with the explicit aim of funneling large sums of investment capital into key high-tech industries. To accomplish this a number of banks were nationalized to put capital at the disposal of the newly nationalized electronic, aerospace and chemical firms. These schemes have meant forking over tens of billions to the capitalists, first in compensation and then in underwriting their profits on investments in the state-owned enterprises.



This cartoon, which appeared in the prominent French bourgeois newspaper, *Le Monde*, depicts the attitude of appreciation among French millionaires for the handouts from the Mitterrand government. It shows two capitalists hauling away government compensations, with one chuckling to the other "When I thought we were anti-socialists!"

years. This is an improvement on Mitterrand's previous handout of a five-year, 50% abatement on taxable profits.

Squeezing the workers while showering the capitalists with billions is part of the long-term program of French "socialism." The 9th Five-Year Plan (1984-88) for the economy, prepared by the Mitterrand government for presentation to Parliament spells this out. It states:

"The urgent necessity to increase investment efforts implies a relative moderating of public spending and of household consumption. . . . In due time the success of this action will allow, in the course of the 9th Plan, a return of growth, the condition for the development of employment and for the renewed increase in consumption." (*Le Monde*, April 21-27, 1983)

In other words, the first priority ("the urgent necessity") is to fatten the capitalists' bankrolls ("increase investment efforts") by squeezing the workers with wage cuts, tax hikes and cutbacks ("moderating public spending and household consumption"). Then, on some far off day in the future ("in due time"), this will bring jobs and prosperity ("growth").

Far from bringing "socialism," Mitterrand's nationalizations pale compared to the sweeping nationalizations carried out under the arch-conservative Charles de Gaulle. In content they are no more "socialist" than the state-owned corporations in Thatcher's Britain.

Mitterrand has called a halt to any further nationalizations, but other handouts and bailouts for the big capitalists continue.

But what is this Plan if not the infamous "supply-side" voodoo of Reaganomics? This unavoidable conclusion was even drawn by the "socialist" Planning and Regional Development Minister, Michel Rocard, who described Mitterrand's economic policy as "supply-side economics, French-style." (*Business Week*, January 10, 1983) Even the code words are the same ones used by the Reaganites to justify their "trickle down" policies of robbing from the poor to give to the rich.

On the bottom line there is not one ounce of difference between Mitterrand's austerity policies and the same policies practiced by the conservative governments of Reagan or Thatcher in Britain or Kohl in West Germany. They are all policies of the capitalist offensive to shift the entire burden of the crisis onto the backs of the working masses.

#### Mitterrand's Unrestrained Militarism

The discussion of Mitterrand's austerity would not be complete without mention of his drive for the unrestrained militarization of the country. Here too the "socialist" Mitterrand is striving to keep apace with Reagan in soaking the working people to finance the arms merchants and the preparations for imperialist war.

In proportion to its gross national product France already has the largest military budget in Western Europe. Even so Mitterrand's military budget for 1983 was up 10% over 1982, with the lion's share going into nuclear weapons — new nuclear missiles, nuclear submarines, tactical nuclear weapons, Mirage bombers to carry nuclear payloads, and development and testing of the neutron bomb.

The new budget adopted on May 20 by the National Assembly will pour \$113 billion into the war buildup over the next five years, with the largest single item being nuclear weaponry. It also includes funding for setting up a 47,000 man "rapid reaction force" for "mobile intervention" where called upon to defend the interests of French imperialism in Europe, the Mideast, Africa or the Pacific. This force is the creation of "socialist" Defense Minister Charles Hernu, who was also behind the Protocol Accord signed last September between the Defense and Education Ministries. Hernu boasts that this accord is designed to create a "symbiosis" between the schools and the armed forces, paving the way for stepped up military recruiting on the campuses, more militarist propaganda in the class rooms, etc.

Along with beefing up French imperialism's war machine, Mitterrand has also worked hard to strengthen France's participation in the U.S. imperialist-led NATO war bloc. As well, among all heads of state on the continent, Mitterrand is the most fervent champion of Reagan's "Euromissiles" that have aroused the wrath of the whole working population of Europe.

#### Social-Democracy and Revisionism Work to Keep the Lid on the Workers' Struggle

A broad discontent is brewing among the workers and oppressed against the Mitterrand regime. The working people's trust in the SP and its junior partner in government, the revisionist "Communist" Party, is being shaken. A smoldering rage is burning among the rank-and-file masses of the SP and the CP as they watch their government ministers saddle them with anti-worker measures that even the previous right-wing government would not have dared to attempt.

This growing discontent is deepening the infighting between the SP and CP chieftains, with each pointing the finger at the other for the economic and political crisis. So far the SP has not made the final step to rupture the coalition, afraid that without the CP in the government it will be that much harder to keep the workers in line. Meanwhile George Marchais and the other CP leaders walk a tightrope. On the one side, they fear that if they fail to criticize Mitterrand, and if they come out too adamantly against the growing revolt among the workers, then they face the real danger of undermining their base of support. And on the other side, as the lackeys of the bourgeoisie that they are, they fear that if they go too far then they will lose their government posts, which they cherish above all.

Despite their quarrels the SP and the CP chieftains are working jointly to stamp out the fires of resistance. They are preaching to the workers that, no matter how painful it may be, they must stick behind Mitterrand because, after all, this is the government of the "left," allegedly the "workers' government." To do otherwise, they plead, will only bring the "return of the right" to power.

The two largest trade union centers in the country — the CGT (General Confederation of Labor) led by the revisionist CP and the CFDT (French Democratic Labor Confederation) led by the SP — have been central pillars of support for the Mitterrand government. But beneath these pillars millions of workers are growing restless. Christian Pierret, a leading SP Deputy in the National Assembly, made a valuable confession when he expressed his concern "about the impatience that is developing in certain segments of the working class. In Paris, union leaders continue to support the government, but in many factories in the provinces there is a slow burn developing among the workers." Feeling the heat the union bureaucrats are squirming to prevent the outbreak of "irresponsible actions" and to channel the workers' deepening anger into safe channels harmless to the SP-CP government.

At the May Day rally in Paris the CFDT chieftains ignored the austerity measures altogether and instead issued hollow appeals for solidarity with the oppressed peoples and Polish trade unionists, by which they don't mean the Polish workers but the Reagan-loving leaders

of Solidarity. For their part, the CGT bureaucrats declared that they had come to demonstrate against austerity but not against the government. As if the government had nothing to do with it!

On June 17, the Paris Metro was shut down by a 24-hour strike. The subway workers were protesting a job-eliminating job reclassification plan. This strike was directed against Transportation Minister Charles Fiterman and the head of the Paris Transportation Authority Claude Quinn, two CP officials given these posts to keep in check the militant transport workers. The strike itself was called by a subway workers' union unaffiliated to either of the two big union centrals. But the leaders of the CGT union in the subways condemned the strike as "excessive" and called for a more limited job action that kept up 15% of the Metro's service. Such is the scabbery that the CP revisionist union chiefs are resorting to in defense of the social-democratic government.

In the face of all the treachery of the reformist leaders, the Metro strike was but the latest skirmish in the mounting resistance to Mitterrand's austerity. In January, auto workers' strikes against wage controls swept the Paris region. (See *The Workers' Advocate*, March 10, 1983) In late April Mitterrand, on a tour of northern France, was repeatedly confronted by angry workers demanding jobs.

At the May Day demonstrations the workers' bitterness also came through. In Toulouse workers of the CGT carried banners asking "Can one fight austerity without fighting the government?" and denouncing "socialist" Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy for following in the footsteps of the right-wing government of Giscard d'Estaing. Along the route of the march in Paris banners were raised declaring "Make the rich pay; the workers must take this [task] on themselves!" and

"The [SP/CP government] ministers serve the bourgeoisie!"

\* \* \*

The Mitterrand experience is rich in lessons for the French workers and the workers everywhere. It is giving the lie to the Michael Harringtons of this world who advertise their "democratic socialism" as a "third force" alternative between capitalism and revolutionary Marxism-Leninism. "French socialism" and "economic democracy" are being revealed as nothing but a fig leaf for Reaganism, for the naked capitalist offensive of impoverishment, reaction and nuclear war-mongering.

In France the "national solidarity" which Mitterrand is trying to enforce is bound to be smashed to smithereens by the class struggle. The sooner the French working class frees itself from the grips of the social-democratic and revisionist chieftains the more powerful this class struggle will be, and the more favorable its outcome.

The struggle against the capitalist offensive demands that the workers must take their own class stand independent of the bourgeoisie and its political representatives, whether they are rightists or reformists. The workers must hurl themselves into the fight against the exploiters and, in the course of the struggle, build up their own independent class organizations, in the first place their genuine Marxist-Leninist party, the Workers' Communist Party of France.

On this road the French working class will again confirm the international experience of the workers and oppressed: Only the path illuminated by revolutionary Marxism-Leninism, the path of the class struggle, revolution and proletarian socialism can bring hope of an alternative to this capitalist hell. □

## On the National Council of Resistance of Iran

# The Dangers of Adaptation to the Liberals

Who Is the National Council of Resistance? .....	22
On the Meeting Between the NCR Leadership and the Iraqi Regime .....	24
The Roots of the Weaknesses of the NCR Leadership .....	25

Today Iran continues to be the arena of a fierce life and death struggle between the Iranian people and the medieval hangman regime of Khomeini and the Islamic Republican Party. The government's repression has taken the lives of thousands of valiant fighters, but the Khomeini regime remains scared stiff of the forces of the popular resistance.

There are different political forces involved in this struggle. Recently certain developments have taken place in the resistance movement which have created concern among its friends and sympathizers. These have to do with the policies of the Paris-based leadership of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCR), a coalition which is one of the major opposition forces to the Iranian government. On January 9, Massoud Rajavi, General Secretary of the NCR, held a meeting in Paris with Tareq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq. They issued a joint communique which talked of a common political understanding between the two sides. While much of the discussion apparently focused on the Iran-Iraq war, this meeting appears to have signified an attempt to achieve a general political rapprochement between the NCR and the Iraqi government.

This is a shameful act on the part of the NCR leadership. After all, the Iraqi government is a confirmed enemy of the Iranian people. It supported the Shah and, since his overthrow, it has harbored and supported forces that seek a restoration of the Shah's fascist monarchy. It is a regime of hangmen, with increasingly close connections with Western imperialism. Rapprochement with such a regime can only cause massive confusion in the ranks of the Iranian people who are fighting Khomeini's tyranny. Already, the apologists for Khomeini, both in Iran and abroad, are using this event to try to discredit the Iranian popular resistance as mere tools of imperialism and reaction.

Our Party is a consistent champion of the revolutionary struggles of the Iranian people. We supported the Iranian people in their powerful revolution which

brought down the Shah's U.S.-backed regime in February '79. In the period since, we have defended the Iranian revolution against the schemes of U.S. imperialism and supported the efforts by the toilers to carry forward the revolution. Today, the situation in Iran calls for firmly standing by the struggle of the masses against Khomeini's brutal regime.

Thus our Party has supported the courageous fighters of the popular resistance to the Iranian government, including the struggle waged by militants who have been fighting under the banner of the National Council of Resistance. This stand of ours remains. However, we do not approve of the attempts of the NCR leadership to effect a rapprochement with the reactionary Iraqi regime. We believe it is important to speak out on this issue in order to defend the Iranian resistance. While the recent action of the NCR leadership cannot take away from the justness of the cause of the popular resistance, nevertheless it is an important sign of the political weaknesses of the NCR leadership, weaknesses which the Iranian revolutionaries have to overcome in order to advance the movement against Khomeini's regime.

We will now proceed to examine the NCR, the meaning of its recent action, and the weaknesses which have given rise to it.

### Who Is the National Council of Resistance?

The NCR is a coalition of various political forces which have come together in the period since the events of June 1981.

At that time a major turn took place in the post-revolutionary situation in Iran. The revolution of February '79 successfully overthrew the Shah, but the workers and peasants were not strong enough to seize power. Instead a government of exploiters came to power, headed by Khomeini. In the period up to June 1981, the basic feature of this government was that it sought to stop the revolution halfway. It tried to balance between the revolution, on the one hand and imperialism and royalist reaction, on the other. Because the masses were aroused, the government could not strike out with massive force against the revolutionaries.

Another feature of this government was that it was made up of two major factions, the liberals and the

clerical reactionaries. In June 1981, the clerical reactionary faction, organized in the Islamic Republican Party and headed up by Khomeini, felt strong enough to consolidate their hold over the Iranian political scene. They carried out a coup d'etat within the government by ousting the liberals and simultaneously launched a massive campaign of terror against all revolutionary and progressive forces.

In the wake of the coup, different forces adjusted

their tactics and new alignments took shape. One new grouping that emerged was the NCR, a coalition which includes liberals and groups from the Iranian left. At the core of this coalition is the alliance between the liberals around Bani-Sadr, ex-President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the People's Mojahedeen Organization of Iran.

The Mojahedeen has historically represented a revolutionary democratic current in Iran based among a



June 20, 1981 demonstration of half a million condemns the Khomeini/IRP regime in the midst of Khomeini's reactionary coup. The Khomeini regime's shock troops of clerical reaction viciously attacked this demonstration and launched a full-scale terror campaign against the Iranian revolutionaries.

section of the urban poor, urban petty bourgeoisie and the workers. It was formed in the 1960's to fight against the Shah's regime under the banner of anti-imperialism and democracy. It based its ideology on Islam, but it was influenced by secular national-revolutionary movements of the time, such as the Palestinian guerrillas and the Vietnamese liberation movement.

After the '79 revolution, the Mojahedeen became a large mass organization, bringing into its ranks large numbers of activists who wanted to carry the revolution beyond what the halfway government was willing to do. The activity of the Mojahedeen came into increasing conflict with the government and it became the target of growing repression. In June '81, it became one of the principal targets of the bloody terror unleashed by the mullahs.

The liberal faction of Bani-Sadr, on the other hand, represents the interests of sections of the Iranian bourgeoisie. It was a prominent participant in the halfway government of 1979-81. The liberals had certain differences with the clerical reactionary faction — they wanted a liberal bourgeois regime patterned after Western capitalist institutions, while the mullahs worked to set up a medieval and obscurantist regime. However, since both the liberals and the mullahs represented the interests of exploiters, both factions cooperated in measures aimed at clamping down on the revolutionary strivings of the Iranian masses. Thus, Bani-Sadr helped to supervise the savage war of suppression against the oppressed Kurdish nationality; he took part in the so-called Islamic "cultural revolution" to wipe out the left from the universities; he helped sabotage the agrarian reform, etc. While the liberals helped the mullahs do the dirty work against the masses, the mullahs built up their own strength. When the mullahs began to target the liberals too for suppression, Bani-Sadr balked and began to publicly complain against various reactionary moves of the Islamic Republican Party. This led to his ouster in June 1981.

It was in the period leading up to the June '81 coup that the alliance between Bani-Sadr and the Mojahedeen began to take shape. As Bani-Sadr lost ground within the government, he sought support from the Mojahedeen. Finally, after Bani-Sadr's ouster and his flight from Iran alongside Massoud Rajavi, a top leader of the Mojahedeen, the NCR was formally launched. Since that time, a number of other organizations have joined the coalition, but it still represents only a part of the anti-Khomeini resistance forces.

Our Party, while supporting the popular resistance to Khomeini, has chosen not to single out the NCR for endorsement. In our press, we have supported various struggles organized by the militants of the NCR. However, we have been worried by a number of features of the program and policies of the NCR. The recent attempt at rapprochement with the Iraqi regime

has further added to our reservations about the NCR leadership. Let us first examine this event and then go on to discuss some of our more general concerns.

#### On the Meeting Between the NCR Leadership and the Iraqi Regime

In early January, Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister, Tareq Aziz, visited France to meet with top officials of French imperialism, with which Iraq enjoys very close relations. While on this visit, he held a four-hour meeting with Massoud Rajavi of the NCR. At the end of this meeting, a joint communique was issued. A great deal of this statement dealt with the Iran-Iraq war and spoke of the common interests of both sides in putting an end to it. As well, it spoke of developing the general relations between the NCR and the Iraqi government. It stated that the relations of the two sides were based "on the political understanding of the two parties on the legitimate ideals of their people." Tareq Aziz also invited Rajavi to visit Iraq and establish full-scale fraternal relations. Rajavi replied that "no obstacle of principle" existed which stood in the way of such a visit and the question would be closely studied.

It is pretty clear that this signifies an attempt at a general political rapprochement with the Iraqi regime. It would be one thing for the NCR to proclaim to the Iranian masses that if it comes to power it will work to swiftly bring an end to the Iran-Iraq war. But to make agreements with Iraqi officials and speak of common political understanding, fraternal relations, etc. — this is something quite different. It is the language of an alliance.

Such a rapprochement can only harm the interests of the Iraqi and Iranian peoples. After all, what is the Iraqi government of Saddam Hussein? It is a well-known enemy of the Iranian people. It supported the Shah and harbors the royalists who dream of a restoration of the fascist monarchy. In August 1980, at a time when imperialism was throwing up a fierce pressure against the Iranian revolution, Saddam Hussein joined in this imperialist campaign by launching a massive invasion of Iran.

It is true that the character of the Iran-Iraq war has changed since then. When the Iraqi invasion was launched, the main feature of the Iranian war effort was just resistance to the Iraqi efforts to strangle the revolution. But in the meantime, the mullahs pulled off their coup and themselves took the lead of the counter-revolution. This was the main event in transforming the war into a reactionary war on both sides. Today, the Khomeini government is pursuing a frankly expansionist war against Iraq. It has recaptured most of its territory but seeks to press into Iraq for its own expansionist motives. It wants the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and his replacement by a puppet "Islamic Republic" and it also wants to extract massive war tribute, which can

only come out of the backs of the Iraqi toilers.

However, the change in the character of Iran's war does not mean that the Iraqi side has become progressive and that the toiling masses of the region should come to its aid. No. The workers and peasants have no interest in either of the sides in this war.

The popular resistance to Khomeini's rule must maintain its independence from Iraqi reaction. The efforts of the NCR to strike an alliance with the Iraqi regime can only cause confusion about the nature of the resistance and its basic objectives. An attempt at an alliance with Iraq tends to efface the distinction between the popular resistance to Khomeini and the royalist, pro-imperialist opposition to Khomeini, which is well known to enjoy the support of the Iraqi regime. It hardly needs mentioning that this distinction is of the utmost importance to maintain.

#### The Roots of the Weaknesses of the NCR Leadership

The recent action of the NCR leadership did not fall from the sky. For some time our Party has been concerned about the increasingly rightward orientation advocated by the NCR leadership in Paris. At the bottom of the problem, we believe, is the fact that the revolutionary democratic forces within the NCR, in particular the Mojahedeen representatives in the NCR leadership have been adapting more and more to the interests of the Bani-Sadr liberals.

When the June '81 coup took place, our Party did not rule out the possibility of the Iranian left making use of the contradictions between Bani-Sadr and the mullahs. However, we believed that, irrespective of whether or not the toiling masses entered into a temporary alliance with the liberals, the toilers must maintain their vigilance and preserve their independence. But once the policies of the NCR began to crystallize, it became more and more clear that the representatives of the Mojahedeen in the NCR leadership, Rajavi and co., were not sufficiently safeguarding the interests of the masses from the liberals. Their policy was marked by a serious vacillation away from a revolutionary-democratic stand towards a liberal stand.

The fundamental distinction between a revolutionary-democratic position and a liberal one in the fight against the Khomeini regime is whether one stands for a continuation of the revolution, a new mass uprising and the establishment of a government of the toilers, or whether one seeks the establishment of a refurbished version of the old halfway government, albeit a somewhat more liberal version of it.

One of the ways this distinction shows up is on the question of who you rely on in the fight against Khomeini. Revolutionary democracy stands for basing this fight on the mobilization of the workers and peasants, while liberalism takes a halfhearted attitude towards the mobilization of the masses and seeks to rely on

some section of the exploiters or parts of the Khomeini state apparatus to come out and topple the regime. Right from his first days in Paris, Bani-Sadr has made no secret of the fact that he was looking for some sort of military coup to oust Khomeini.

We believe that there are numerous signs that the NCR leadership follows a policy which blurs this distinction in favor of tending towards a liberal position. This was indicated, for example, in the very detailed program of the NCR issued in October 1981, the "Platform of the Provisional Government of the Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran." It can happen that a political force is carrying out a revolutionary-democratic policy despite unclarity in its program. But we believe that in the case of the NCR, its program accurately reflects the actual weaknesses of its policy.

This program has numerous defects. It is especially the defects from the standpoint of democracy which we are primarily concerned about here. The program also contains schemes which it purports to have something to do with socialism, ending exploitation, etc. In reality, this is really "socialist" window-dressing to prettify a halfhearted democratic program. This being the case — and further, it being the case that no coalition with the liberals can bring about socialist transformation — we leave aside our criticisms of those features of the program. Instead we concentrate on looking at this program from the angle of how well it serves the immediate democratic goals of the anti-Khomeini struggle.

It is a positive feature of the platform that it openly speaks of overthrowing the Khomeini regime. But this is not sufficient. A revolutionary-democratic program should spell out the goals of the movement in such a way that it orients its basic appeal to the mobilization of the toiling masses, the only real force which can sweep away the medieval regime of Khomeini. But instead, the platform tailors its promises in such a way that it is more directed to satisfying the liberals than the toilers.

The platform pledged to make Iran independent from imperialism and spoke of terminating all subservient imperialist relationships. Well and good. But this is not enough. The experience in Iran teaches that forces such as Bani-Sadr, not to speak of the mullahs, can swear to general statements about independence from imperialism. To distinguish between a serious platform against imperialism and the phrases of the bourgeois nationalists requires spelling out concrete measures that will break the back of imperialist exploitation. But on such measures, such as the expropriation of foreign capital, the platform of the NCR is silent.

The platform also spoke of guaranteeing democratic liberties, such as freedom of the press, speech, parties, etc. But even here the liberalism peeks through. There is no reference to the right of workers to organize

trade unions and even the recognition of the right to strike and peaceful demonstrations is halfhearted — it is conditioned on prior authorization by the authorities. This shows the fear of the liberals in extending full democratic rights to the workers; they know that the workers would utilize such rights to get organized against the bourgeoisie. Furthermore, one of the essential conditions for the toiling masses to exercise their democratic rights fully is that they be armed. The platform of the NCR does not speak of arming the masses or organizing a popular militia. Instead it simply calls for a "popular re-organization" of the current Iranian army. This essentially signifies a pledge to keep the current armed forces with simply some minor reforms.

The platform speaks of overthrowing Khomeini's Islamic Republic but it does not speak of doing away with the Islamic Republic altogether and guaranteeing the separation of mosque and state. Instead the platform seeks to continue an Islamic Republic, although it attaches a Democratic appellation to it. Here is a concrete example of where the Islamic ideology of the Mojahedeen shows up as a hindrance to its functioning as a thoroughly democratic force. The Islamic Republic slogan is something which unites the Mojahedeen with the Bani-Sadr liberals, but separates it off from the secular left.

In Iran, the Mojahedeen has stood for the goal of an Islamic Republic. But besides the Mojahedeen, it is the Bani-Sadr liberals, i.e. those who have been connected in one way or another with the Khomeini regime, who are among the main forces who still want to preserve an Islamic Republic. A great deal of the left in Iran, on the other hand, has historically stood for a secular democratic republic, not a theocratic one. And in addition, there are large sections of the ordinary masses who have learned from their own experience with the current Islamic Republic the importance of the basic democratic demand of the separation of mosque and state.

Unfortunately, when it came down to the question of who to unite with, the Mojahedeen leadership stuck to its Islamic Republic demand, a move in favor of the liberals and away from the secular left and the secular-minded masses.

A serious shortcoming of the NCR platform is that it does not guarantee the right to self-determination to the oppressed nationalities. Instead it limits itself to support for equality of the nationalities and internal autonomy within Iran. But not giving the nationalities the freedom to decide for themselves, whether they want secession or some form of autonomy, means not being fully consistent about granting the nationalities their democratic rights. The '79 revolution against the Shah showed the strength of the oppressed nationalities as a force of revolution. As well, the continuing war in Kurdistan has made the issue of self-determina-

tion a burning issue.

The demand for self-determination is all the more important considering that the coalition is headed by Bani-Sadr, a man who not so long ago personally supervised the war against the Kurdish people. Under such circumstances, the weakness of the NCR platform on self-determination can only prevent the full mobilization of the oppressed nationalities on its side.

On a series of questions regarding the vital interests of the toiling masses, the NCR platform chooses to be vague. For the peasants, there is a general promise of land to the tiller, but without spelling out that the property of the landlords will be confiscated. The workers are only promised that "attempts" will be made to improve their living conditions and basic needs. But there have been many empty promises from the post-Shah governments. Hence it is a serious defect that the program does not include any clear-cut call for specific measures to improve the living conditions of the workers and not even a mention of working conditions.

These weaknesses of the platform raise questions about how serious the NCR is about fully mobilizing the toilers. On the significance of such demands for the democratic revolution in Russia, Lenin wrote:

*"Why is the struggle for the eight-hour working day a natural condition for the attainment of freedom in Russia? Because experience has shown that freedom cannot be achieved without a selfless struggle on the part of the proletariat, and such a struggle is inseparably bound up with the struggle to improve the workers' conditions. The eight-hour day is an example of such improvements and is the banner of struggle for them."*

*"Why is the struggle for the confiscation of all landed estates a natural condition for the attainment of freedom in Russia? Because, without radical measures to help the millions of peasants who have been reduced by the Purishkevishes, Romanovs and Markovs [the landed nobility —ed.] to unheard of ruin, suffering, and death from starvation, all talk of democracy and of 'people's freedom' is absurd and utterly hypocritical. And unless the landed estates are confiscated for the benefit of the peasants, there can be no question of any serious measures to help the muzhik [peasant —ed.], there can be no question of any serious determination to put an end to muzhik Russia, i.e. to feudal Russia, and to build up a Russia of free tillers of the soil, a democratic bourgeois Russia." (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 17, p. 336)*

Our concerns about the orientation of the NCR, as shown by the defects in their program, have also been confirmed by a number of practical policies of the NCR leadership. In particular, we have observed a serious weakness in the stand towards the anti-imperialist

struggle. Mr. Bani-Sadr has for example made repeated statements about how an Iran freed from Khomeini's rule will have close economic ties with European monopoly capital. To our knowledge, the NCR leadership has not condemned such statements. As well, there are many examples of the NCR's efforts to establish close ties with the social-democratic parties in Europe, parties which are big defenders of the interests of European imperialism in particular and imperialism generally.

Even more significantly, there has been a general toning down of opposition to imperialism in the statements and agitation of the NCR. In mid-1982, supporters of the NCR in the U.S. were instructed to remove slogans against imperialism from their practical work. This even extended to asking other political forces, such as our Party, to not raise anti-imperialist banners and slogans in activities organized by the NCR supporters. For some time, the appeals of the NCR have been mainly restricted to questions of Khomeini's violations of democratic rights. And this is done in a liberal spirit, not a revolutionary-democratic one.

Revolutionary democracy not only calls for standing up consistently for democracy but also wages the struggle for democracy in close connection with the fight against imperialism. It stands for defending the cause of the '79 revolution against imperialism and the monarchy. To do otherwise is to fall into liberalism. It is to efface the distinction between the popular resistance to Khomeini and the pro-imperialist royalist

opposition. It is to hand over the banner of anti-imperialism into the hands of the mullahs, who have craftily used this banner to deceive the anti-imperialist Iranian masses.

Only a revolutionary-democratic position can stand up to the rigors of the struggle against Khomeini. The liberals promote the illusions of a quick victory. The last two years have seen statement after statement from Bani-Sadr promising victory against Khomeini to be just a few short months ahead. And as the Khomeini regime holds on, excuses are made by the NCR leadership to go even further in a liberal direction. All this promotion of illusions only works to sap the strength of the masses who fight under the banner of the NCR.

It is this growing motion towards liberal positions, which, in our view, has paved the way to the recent contacts between the NCR leadership and the reactionary Iraqi government. This event however has served to bring to sharp relief the seriousness of the mistake of falling into a position of adaptation to the liberals.

We conclude this article with the hope that the revolutionary democrats in the National Council of Resistance will shake off the mistaken policies being pursued by the NCR leadership. We hope that the dangerous course pursued by the NCR leadership will serve as an impetus to all Iranian revolutionaries, whether inside or outside the NCR, to stand up against liberalism and uphold a revolutionary democratic stand in the fight against Khomeini-ite reaction. □

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## Opportunism in the service of the medieval reaction of Khomeini

Today, among the followers of Soviet revisionism, Maoism and Trotskyism, it has become the fashion to flaunt renegade stands on every vital question of revolutionary principle. They are nothing but liquidators, who have abandoned (liquidated) any belief that the working class can build up its own revolutionary movement, independent of the tutelage of the capitalists. Instead they have taken to fawning on the bourgeois and even extreme reactionary forces.

One example of this class collaborationist stand shows up with respect to the oppressed peoples of the dependent countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The liquidators oppose the organization of the independent class struggle of the toilers. They do not believe in the Marxist-Leninist teaching that the proletariat should strive to achieve its hegemony in the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles. They denigrate socialism. Instead, the liquidators urge the workers and peasants to trail behind bourgeois and reactionary forces.

Quite often, the liquidators come forward to advocate lining up behind the most bloodstained reactionary regimes. We saw a vivid example of this last year, when almost every opportunist trend — pro-Soviet revisionist, Maoist or trotskyite — came out supporting the fascist generals of Argentina in the Falklands war. The opportunists did not defend the revolutionary struggle of the Argentine workers from the reactionary nationalism of the Argentine fascists. Instead, they asked the workers to take the side of the Argentine fascists in this reactionary war between two groups of capitalist oppressors, the Argentine bourgeoisie and the British imperialists. (For more on this, see the article, "Opportunists sacrifice the Argentine workers to the generals," in the July 20, 1982 issue of *The Workers' Advocate*.)

Such shameless betrayal of the interests of the proletariat is also revealed with respect to the situation in Iran today. Generally the liquidators advocate tying the struggle of the Iranian toilers to the coattails of one or another faction of the exploiters. One section advocates tailing behind the Bani-Sadr liberals. Another section, however, stands out with an even more extreme renegade position. This section boosts the hangman regime of Khomeini and the Islamic Republican Party (IRP). It is in this section we deal with in this article.

This position is taken, for example, by the pro-Soviet revisionists of the Communist Party of the USA. In line

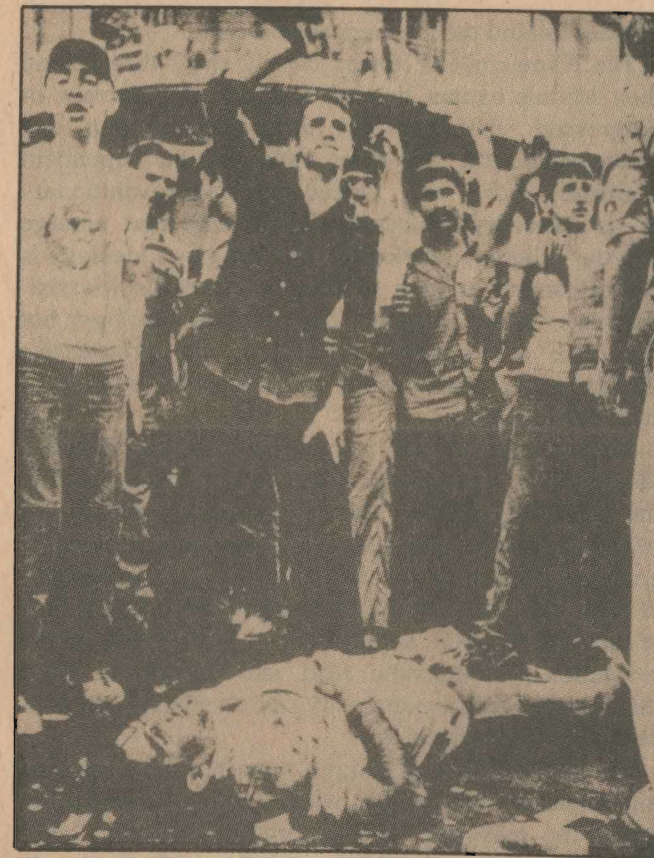
with its mentor, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and its fraternal pro-Moscow revisionist buddies worldwide, the CPUSA endorsed the June 1981 coup d'etat of the IRP and applauded the terror against the left as a necessary struggle against ultra-leftism. Meanwhile, their fraternal party in Iran, the thoroughly corrupt Tudeh Party, helped to hunt down progressive people and hand them over to the torturers and executioners. Recently, however, the mullahs, having used the services of the Tudeh Party, decided that they no longer needed them. They threw them into jail and officially dissolved this Party. This has somewhat dampened the enthusiasm of the CPUSA for the Iranian government, but they continue to support it.

The trotskyite Socialist Workers Party, however, is unrestrained in its enthusiasm for the Khomeini regime. The SWP will sometimes mildly complain that the Iranian government puts its fraternal trotskyites in jail, but this does not deter them one bit in working as a virtual public relations voicebox for Khomeini and the IRP.

The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) and the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) have also thrown their support behind the hangman regime in Iran. The RCPB(ML) complained about a year and a half ago that it would be nice if Khomeini would please stop massacring the people. (*Workers' Weekly*, October 31, 1981) Recently, both these Parties have stepped up their laudatory articles praising the Iranian government. Thus on May 27, *People's Canada Daily News* carried an article entitled "Iran opposes both imperialist superpowers" which heavily praised the Iranian government officials. Meanwhile on May 21, *Workers' Weekly* carried a similar article which denounced all resistance to Khomeini's regime as imperialist plots "to fan up differences and incite internecine strife with the aim of fomenting civil war so as to weaken Iran." Behind the stand of these Parties on Iran lies the fact that they are gripped by Maoist and liquidationist deviations. We have extensively written about these problems in the pages of *The Workers' Advocate*.

### Whitewashing Medievalism Under the Guise of "Anti-Imperialism"

The basic rationale offered by the supporters of the Khomeini regime, if and when they bother to offer any,



The Khomeini/IRP government is a regime of hangmen of the Iranian revolution. Photo shows Iranian masses denouncing the murder of a protester by Khomeini's reactionary "revolutionary guards" during the June 1981 mass protests against the Khomeini/IRP government.

is that this regime is allegedly the embodiment of the '79 Iranian revolution and the real champion of the struggle against imperialism today. This is a monstrous fraud. It is simply painting dark reaction in anti-imperialist colors.

In the adjoining article, we have discussed in detail the nature and evolution of the Iranian government. The real anti-imperialist force in Iran has always been the revolutionary movement of the toilers. Right from the start, the Khomeini government on the other hand sought to put a brake on this movement. In the first period after the 1979 revolution, it balanced between the revolution and the forces of imperialism and royalist reaction. But since the June 1981 coup d'etat, this government has become the embodiment of counter-revolution. The real anti-imperialist force in Iran today is represented by the forces of the popular resistance.

The apologists for the Khomeini government do not believe in taking a serious look at its policies. They resort to sophistry instead.

Take the SWP, for instance. They try to sell the Iranian government as "anti-imperialist" on the basis that it takes "good stands" on international questions. This is a joke. There are many reactionary regimes in the

dependent countries which spout off hot air against the big powers, but Marxist-Leninists and revolutionaries do not get mesmerized by speeches at the UN or words on press releases. Even a brief look at the words and deeds of the Iranian government on a few of these alleged good stands is sufficient to show up the sophistry of the SWP.

In its April 1, 1983 edition, the SWP's paper *The Militant* ran off a big list of the "good stands" taken by the Khomeini regime. The SWP tells us, for example, that "Iran backs the struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination." *The Militant* covers up, on the other hand, that the Khomeini government has repeatedly made arms deals with Zionist Israel to supply its war effort in the Persian Gulf. As well, the SWP does not mention the Khomeini regime's support for groups such as Amal in Lebanon. The Palestinian and Lebanese progressive forces know through close experience of the disruptive role this group has played in the struggle in Lebanon.

The SWP also brags that the Iranian government "backs the struggle of the Muslim people of southern Philippines against the Marcos dictatorship." This is supposed to be proof that Iran is a champion of oppressed nationalities. But are we to forget the old saying that charity begins at home? Are we to forget about the Khomeini regime's brutal subjugation of the nationalities in Iran, especially its bloody war against the valiant people of Kurdistan?

We cannot help but remind the SWP that even Saudi Arabia claims to support the Palestinian struggle and the Moro people's fight in the Philippines. And they even give millions to the PLO and the Moro organization. Are we to believe, therefore, that the Saudi monarchy is really a great paragon of anti-imperialism? What complete garbage!

Clearly all this talk of the "anti-imperialism" of the Khomeini regime is an empty fraud. It is meant to justify abandoning the progressive movement of the toilers in favor of embellishing medievalism and dark reaction. This stand has nothing in common with Marxism-Leninism. Long ago the teachings of Marxism-Leninism underscored the importance of fighting such phenomena as the Khomeini-IRP forces. In developing the tactics of the Communist International with regard to the national liberation movements of the colonial countries, Lenin wrote in 1920:

"With regard to the more backward states and nations, in which feudal or patriarchal and patriarchal-peasant relations predominate, it is particularly important to bear in mind:

"...the need for a struggle against the clergy and other influential reactionary and medieval elements in backward countries;

"...the need to combat Pan-Islamism and similar trends, which strive to combine the liberation movement against European and American

imperialism with an attempt to strengthen the positions of the khans, landowners, mullahs, etc...." (Lenin, "Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and Colonial Questions," *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 149)

It hardly needs any great insight to see the medieval nature of the Khomeini-IRP regime. This is a regime that rules completely arbitrarily, that imprisons, kills and tortures at will. Its methods of torture place it in the same league as the worst despots of history. It is a regime that gives no rights to the workers and shoots down strikers. This is a regime of complete obscurantism, of extreme chauvinism against the national, religious, and other minorities, and of extreme subjugation of women.

As well, in the present-day world, the Khomeini regime is one of the biggest advocates of the reactionary ideology of Pan-Islamism. With its "Offices for the Export of the Islamic Revolution," it supports Khomeini-ite groupings throughout the countries with large Muslim populations. These elements play an extremely disruptive role against the revolutionary movements of different countries and help to bolster the forces of medievalism and backwardness generally.

Some people say that when we raise the need to fight against the mullahs and Pan-Islamism, this must mean that our opposition to the Khomeini regime is based on some sort of sectarian prejudice against the followers of the Islamic religion. This is nonsense. Marxism-Leninism has long recognized that political forces that appear under religious banners have to be differentiated according to the social and political content

that lies behind the ideological banners.

The Khomeini-IRP forces clearly show that behind their Islamic banner lies not a shred of democracy or progressive character but unbridled reaction and medievalism. On the other hand, in the dependent countries there are indeed national-revolutionary or revolutionary-democratic movements that emerge bearing religious ideologies. The religious ideology is a shortcoming in such movements, and the Marxist-Leninists do not support the religious ideology; but they take a supportive attitude to the progressive character that exists despite the ideological banners of such movements.

An example of such a movement is the People's Mojahedeen Organization of Iran, which is discussed in the adjoining article. This organization, despite its Islamic ideology, expresses a democratic movement among a section of the toilers and petty bourgeoisie of Iran. The Marxist-Leninists take a friendly attitude to such a movement, support the steps they take on the revolutionary-democratic road and explain to them the harmful consequences of any vacillation towards liberalism and reformism.

In sum, therefore, it is quite clear that the apologists for Khomeini are simply whitewashing medievalism under the guise of "anti-imperialism." Their "anti-imperialism" has nothing in common with the teachings of Marxism-Leninism on advancing the worldwide struggle against imperialism. We, however, choose to stand with the revolutionary lessons taught by Marxism-Leninism and the Communist International. □

## On the life of the founder of communism

# Before all else, Marx was a revolutionary

The Origin of Scientific Socialism .....	32
Communism in the Democratic Revolutions of 1848-49 .....	33
Marxist Political Economy — Powerful Weapon of the Proletariat .....	35
Marx and the International Working Men's Association .....	36
Marx Fights Against Liquidationism .....	38
Marxism Lights the Way for Our Struggle Today .....	39

(Below we publish the full text from one of the speeches delivered by a representative of the MLP at the May Day celebration held in New York City on April 30. It has been edited for publication.)

Comrades and friends,

One hundred years ago on March 14, 1883, Karl Marx, the founder of scientific communism, died in his sleep just short of his 65th birthday. Three days later Marx was buried in Highgate cemetery in London at a private ceremony attended by a few faithful friends, including the best representatives of the class conscious workers of France and Germany. His lifelong friend and collaborator, Frederick Engels, delivered his famous "Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx."

In his farewell remarks, Engels said:

"...Marx was the best hated and most calumniated man of his time. Governments, both absolutist and republican, deported him from their territories. Bourgeois, whether conservative or ultra-democratic, vied with one another in heaping slanders upon him. All this he brushed aside as though it were cobwebs.... And he died beloved, revered and mourned by millions of revolutionary fellow workers -- from the mines of Siberia to California, in all parts of Europe and America...."

Today, 106 years later, Marx remains among the 'best hated' and most beloved of men ever to have lived — hated by the bloated bourgeois, by the warmongering generals and by the pompous philistines,

beloved by the workers and downtrodden masses struggling for emancipation.

Over the years, the hatred of the bourgeoisie for Marx and his teachings has not diminished one iota. In the name of "fighting Marxism," the bourgeoisie and reactionary tyrants of the world have continued to slander, deport, imprison and slaughter thousands and millions of workers and insurgents over the years. Today, Reagan's criminal aggression in Central America is being waged under just such a banner of "fighting Marxism-Leninism."

But Marx and his teachings are subject to a different kind of fate as well. In the schools and universities, in the press, TV and film, an attempt is made to kill Marx with kindness, to emasculate his teachings of anything revolutionary, to detach Marx from the working class and revolutionary movements of his time, and instead to present Marx as something of a mere liberal or harmless eccentric.

Sometimes he is simply described as a quaint old man who spent his entire life in semi-permanent hibernation in the British Museum poring over musty volumes.

More often, Marx is depicted as a kind of schizophrenic — the "early Marx" and the "late Marx." The "early Marx" is shown as a youthful iconoclast, a utopian dreamer and philosopher seeking the true method of individual liberation from the alienation of industrial society. The "late Marx," however, is described as a disillusioned and hardened fanatic, a hair-splitting polemicist and heartless dictator towards his fellow socialists. This image was spread widely in the 1960's to divert the activists who were turning towards revolutionary politics from taking up the all-sided tasks dictated by Marxism.

This image has not been abandoned to this day. In a centenary article mistitled "Standing up for Marx," Michael Harrington of the Democratic Socialists of America presents a disgustingly liberal picture of a Marx who was, on the one hand, a "Himalaya of the human spirit" but, on the other hand, was "a fallible man who made some astounding mistakes." These mistakes include the "miserable phrase 'dictatorship of the proletariat'" which only happens to be a corner-



stone of Marxism. Harrington then proceeds to rave against the very "notion of a Marxist Party" and blurts out that the "conception of Marxism as an integral and total whole is obsolete and reactionary." In their hatred for Marxism, as in everything else, Harrington and his "Democratic Socialists" prove themselves to be the type of "socialist" who loves the neo-liberal (that is, neo-Reaganite) businessmen of the Democratic Party.

Comrades and friends, these ravings and slanders against Marx and Marxism are part and parcel of the whole bourgeois campaign to keep the working class and militant activists at arms length from Marx's revolutionary teachings. Marx was neither a schizophrenic nor a kindly liberal. He was a communist fighter on the theoretical, political, economic and organizational fronts for the working class and against the bourgeoisie. This is readily shown with even a cursory examination of his political history.

But first let us say that the tremendous extent and range of Marx's activities and his views, and of the profound changes that Marxism wrought in the revolutionary movement, cannot be done justice in a short speech. Before Marx, socialism was a collection of sentimental phrases or the brilliant premonition of a better future. After Marx, socialism was a science. Before Marx, socialism appealed to the higher feelings of the upper classes. After Marx, there could be no real socialism but scientific socialism, communism, which was based on the class struggle of the working class. And the briefest examination of his life suffices to show that Marx was all his life a revolutionary, who united practical activity with the theoretical side of the movement. It is our hope that this speech will encourage further study of the life and work of Marx.

#### The Origin of Scientific Socialism

Born in 1818, Karl Marx was a product of the revolutionary ferment of his day. By the latter 1830's, the European revolutions of 1848-1849 were already looming on the horizon. Lenin, in his article "The Marx-Engels Correspondence," described the "social life in the German provinces in 1844" as follows:

"There was a general urge for political life, a general seething indignation in opposition to the government; the clergy fulminated against the youth for their atheism; children in bourgeois families quarrelled with their parents for their aristocratic treatment of servants or workers."

When he was a youth, Marx went to the university, studying law, history and philosophy. He immediately took part in the radical philosophical circles of his day; at this time, the philosophical disputes served as a sort of ideological preparation for the revolutionary days that were to come. Marx at first belonged to the group of Young (or Left) Hegelians, which drew atheistic and revolutionary conclusions from Hegelian dialectics.

Then he enthusiastically welcomed the materialist philosophy of Feuerbach. And subsequently he made a deep study of French socialism and revolutionary traditions.

Because of his philosophic and political views, an academic career was closed to Marx by the Prussian authorities. In any case, his attention went in other directions: the direction of revolutionary politics.

In 1842, Marx became a writer and editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung*, a daily newspaper in Cologne, a city in the Prussian Rhineland. The paper enlisted the cooperation of the Young Hegelians, and by October Marx had become chief editor. Under Marx, the *Rheinische Zeitung* spoke out sharply in a revolutionary-democratic spirit and quickly came into conflict with the Prussian censors. Since not even double or triple censorship of the paper succeeded in quieting Marx, the newspaper was eventually suppressed. Shortly thereafter, in 1843, Marx left Germany for Paris.

As an exile, Marx moved freely in the French socialist circles which included other German exiles. It was in Paris that Marx first met Engels, who visited Paris for a few days in September 1844, and thus began a life-long friendship and collaboration. It was also in Paris that Marx initiated his study of political economy and began his socialist writings. However, in 1845 Marx was banished from Paris as a dangerous revolutionary on the insistent demand of the Prussian government, which had been the target of several of his trenchant articles.

From 1845-48 Marx lived in Brussels in Belgium. Engels also came to Brussels, in the spring of 1845, and worked jointly with Marx. In recounting the history of these years, Engels says that, by spring 1845 when he rejoined Marx,

"...Marx had already fully developed his materialist theory of history in its main features...and we now applied ourselves to the detailed elaboration of the newly-won mode of outlook in the most varied directions." ("On the History of the Communist League," *Selected Works of Marx and Engels*, Vol. III, p. 178)

Engels continues:

"Now, we were by no means of the opinion that the new scientific results should be confined in large tomes exclusively to the 'learned' world. Quite the contrary. We were both of us already deeply involved in the political movement, and possessed a certain following in the educated world, especially of Western Germany, and abundant contact with the organized proletariat. It was our duty to provide a scientific foundation for our view, but it was equally important for us to win over the European and in the first place the German proletariat to our conviction. As soon as we had become clear in our own minds, we set about

the task." (*Ibid.*, p. 179)

With this in mind, Marx and Engels founded a German workers' society in Brussels in order to spread the new theory of revolutionary, proletarian socialism or scientific communism among the workers. And from Brussels, Marx and Engels remained in close touch with the radical movements and the revolutionary organizations of workers in England, France and Germany. Finally, in 1847 Marx and Engels joined an already existing proletarian society, soon to be called the Communist League, which had agreed to transform itself from a conspiratorial group of markedly unclear views, previously called the League of the Just, to a clandestine political and propaganda organization adhering to communism. The Second League Congress, of November-December 1847, commissioned Marx and Engels to write its program.

Thus, at the beginning of 1848, appeared the famous *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, which lives today as a foremost document of the international proletariat. It represents a cogent summary of the Marxist theory of historical materialism; it succinctly outlines the role of the class struggle as the motive force in history and the world-historic role of the revolutionary proletariat in destroying capitalism and building the new socialist society. It sets forth the fundamental Marxist ideas on the tactics of the class struggle. It provides the basic program for communists everywhere.

The views elaborated in the *Communist Manifesto* were a radical rupture with the pre-existing utopian and petty-bourgeois socialist views. Before Marx and Engels, the working class had been regarded only as a suffering mass, worthy of pity. Before Marx and Engels, socialists appealed to the rich and powerful to give up their evil habits and help the workers out of the goodness of their hearts. Marx and Engels combated these ideas and taught the working class to stand up in its own right. They put socialism on the scientific basis of the class struggle of the workers and all the oppressed against the rich and powerful.

With the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*, one can say that the fundamentals of scientific socialism had been worked out. The revolutions of 1848-49 were to immediately put the new theory to a severe test, from which it would emerge triumphant.

#### Communism in the Democratic Revolutions of 1848-49

Events moved rapidly in the revolutionary years of 1848-49. In February 1848, the bourgeois monarchy in France was overthrown by revolution and the republic was proclaimed. Popular movements also broke out throughout Europe, including Belgium. The Belgian government established a real state of siege in Brussels and, in particular, began to hunt down all foreign political refugees. Marx was arrested and deported back to France. But this was just where Marx had intended

going, in order to carry out the mandate of the Communist League to organize a new Central Committee in Paris.

In Paris Marx again threw himself into the work of the Communist League. He was the leading figure in the German workers club that was formed by the League. He worked to consolidate the ranks of the German emigre workers around the correct tactics to be adopted by the proletariat in the democratic revolution that broke out in Germany with the uprisings in Berlin and Vienna in March 1848. Marx and Engels opposed the then-fashionable playing with "revolutionary legions" of foreign workers; legions that were encouraged for ulterior motives by the French provisional government, which then betrayed these legions to their respective reactionary governments. Instead they advised the German workers to return home singly and then plunge into the movement. Three hundred to four hundred workers, including the great majority of the members of the Communist League, returned in this fashion to Germany to participate in the revolutionary struggle. Engels points out that "the League had been an excellent school for revolutionary activity." (*Ibid.*, p. 185) This was proven when its members stood everywhere at the head of the extreme wing of the democratic movement in Germany.

Marx, too, returned to Germany. He went to Cologne and became editor of the daily newspaper the *Neue* (new) *Rheinische Zeitung*, which was the revolutionary organ of the proletarian wing of the democratic movement.

Marx and the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* had to deal with the particular circumstances facing the German revolution. Germany had not yet been formed into a modern bourgeois state and was not even unified. It was a loose confederation of sovereign states, comprised of the two big rival absolutist states, the Prussian kingdom and the Austrian empire, and some three dozen or so small states and tiny statelets. (Germany eventually unified under Prussian hegemony, while the ethnic German part of the Austrian, or Austro-Hungarian, empire became the separate national state of Austria.)

Furthermore, the German bourgeoisie acted in a timid and halfhearted way in the struggle against absolute monarchy, feudal rights and the bureaucracy. With an eye towards the revolutionary workers of France, the German bourgeoisie was terrified of what the German proletariat might become if it won its rights; the German bourgeoisie therefore saw its salvation in a cowardly compromise with the monarchy and nobility. On the other hand, the German workers were then largely unorganized and, in the main, had not come out with their own demands and program in the revolution.

These factors determined the tactics of the proletariat advanced by Marx in the 1848 revolution. The

workers began at the start as the extreme or "left-pushing" section of the democratic movement. They had to fight for the utter destruction of the monarchy, feudalism and reaction, and, in Engels' words, they "had above all to win those rights which were indispensable to their independent organization as a class party: freedom of the press, association and assembly" which the bourgeoisie did not want to see put into effect so far as the workers were concerned. ("Marx and the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (1848-1849)," *Selected Works of Marx and Engels*, Vol. III, p. 166) They had to learn to put forward, at every opportunity, their own demands alongside those of bourgeois democracy; and they had to maintain a distrustful attitude towards the liberal bourgeois and the petty-bourgeois democrats. They had to continue to push the revolution beyond the bounds that the bourgeois democrats had set for it. Thus the proletariat would organize itself and come forward as an independent party in the course of the democratic revolution and would strive to continue the revolution and develop it into a proletarian revolution.

These tactics had been set forward in the *Communist Manifesto* which had pointed to the participation of the communists in the democratic revolution and added that:

"But they never cease, for a single instant, to instill into the working class the clearest possible recognition of the hostile antagonism between the bourgeoisie and proletariat, in order that the German workers may straightaway use, as so many weapons against the bourgeoisie, the social and political conditions that the bourgeoisie must necessarily introduce along with its supremacy, and in order that, after the fall of the reactionary classes in Germany, the fight against the bourgeoisie itself may immediately begin." (Ch. IV)

These were the tactics advanced by Marx through the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in 1848-1849. Through its incisive political and economic analyses, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* became the most important and famous newspaper in the German democratic revolution.

The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* persistently called for a single, indivisible and democratic German republic which would clear the battlefield of all obstacles for the decisive battles between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. It treated with the utmost scorn all the compromising measures of the bourgeoisie which threatened to stop the democratic revolution short of this goal and which, in fact, handed back to the reactionary monarchies the fruits of the victorious popular insurrections of March 1848. Thus the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* exposed the contemptible parliamentary cretinism of the liberal bourgeois and the petty-bourgeois democratic phrasemongers who turned the so-called National Assemblies into powerless talk shops while the reactionary governments recovered from the popular insurrections and grew in power and arrogance.

In foreign policy, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* came out on behalf of every revolutionary people. It championed the freedom of the oppressed nations, such as the Hungarians and Poles oppressed by the German governments. It hailed without hesitation the heroic insurrection of the Parisian proletariat of June 1848 against the provocations of the French provisional government. And it stood for a war of revolutionary Europe against tsarist Russia, then the bulwark of European reaction. Tsarist troops suppressed the insurgent Hungarians in favor of the absolutist Hapsburg monarchy of Austria and stood poised to intervene elsewhere as well.

The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* was so adamant in defense of the proletariat and so merciless in exposing the compromising liberals that half its stockholders deserted it after the very first issue, and the rest deserted within a month after it defended the June insurrection of the Parisian workers. Its readership, however, zoomed. It had an electrifying effect on the proletarian masses.

The reactionary government made repeated attempts to shut down the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* and to prosecute Marx for treason. Finally, in May 1849, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* was suppressed. At this time, it had a circulation of 6,000, compared to no more than 9,000 for the main paper of the treacherous liberal bourgeoisie in Cologne, the *Kölnische Zeitung*. The last number appeared on May 19; it was printed in red and declared that its "last word everywhere and always will be: **emancipation of the working class!**"

At the same time, the government banished Marx from Prussia. Marx first went with Engels to Baden and the Palatinate, where they saw that the petty-bourgeois democrats had made no serious preparations for the impending insurrection on behalf of the German National Assembly against the reactionary governments. They were arrested in their travels by reactionary troops in Hesse. After being released, Marx made his way to France, where revolutionary events were expected, while Engels returned to the Palatinate to fight in the insurrectionary army. After the disastrous demonstration of June 13, 1849 by the petty-bourgeois democrats in Paris, the French bourgeoisie celebrated its victory with increased reaction and Marx was banished from France. He then made his way to London, where he lived the rest of his life.

After the suppression of the insurrection in Germany, the Central Committee of the Communist League was reorganized in London. Marx and Engels wrote the *Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League* in March 1850. At this time, they still hoped for a new revolutionary upsurge in Germany. The *Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League* gives a succinct summary of the tactics of the proletariat in the democratic revolution, stresses the need for the independent organization of

the proletariat, and puts forward the plan of continuing the revolution until it goes over to a proletarian revolution. On the basis of this document, the League was reorganized inside Germany as well, where it was the only revolutionary organization that still had any significance.

But it soon became apparent that the revolutionary situation in Germany had, for the time being, passed. A split occurred in the Central Committee of the Communist League where the minority opposed the sober assessments of Marx and Engels and instead concocted fantastic revolutionary schemes. This split brought disorganization into the League. This split, the decline in the revolutionary ferment, and finally, a huge frame-up trial in Cologne, where a new leadership of the League was to have been formed, resulted in the dissolution of the League. Marx played a major role in exposing the police forgeries used to set up the infamous Cologne Communist Trial of 1852, but seven revolutionary leaders were convicted even though the prosecution itself was forced to withdraw its forged evidence.

The end of the revolutionary wave of 1848-1849 signalled a fairly long decline in the revolutionary movement in Europe. It closed an important period of Marx's life and work — a period in which he vigorously participated in the German democratic revolution, hammered out the tactics for the independent policy of the proletariat in a democratic revolution, and exposed the stand of the liberal bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois democrats, who brought the revolution to grief.

Marx continued his active work in the political movement. He was one of the founders of the Fugitives Aid Committee, which helped assist the political exiles who were flooding London. He kept close contacts with the clearest elements of the British Chartists. He wrote ardent attacks on British colonial atrocities in Ireland, India, China and Persia. But he took no part in the illusory schemes and the setting up of governments-in-exile by the petty-bourgeois democrats and held himself aloof from the circles of political exiles which were all involved in these intrigues. For this stand, he was subject to the most vile and monstrous attacks.

#### Marxist Political Economy — Powerful Weapon of the Proletariat

During the next years, Marx carried out an enormous amount of research and theoretical work. His famous work, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, was finished in 1852. This book brilliantly elaborated historical materialism, explaining the complex twists and turns of French politics in terms of the class struggle. But he mainly concentrated on an extensive study of political economy and he carried out painstaking research using the rich materials in the British Museum. He and Engels had already set forth the basic stands of the communist theory, but it remained to carry out a



Karl Marx and Frederick Engels with Marx's daughters, Jenny, Laura and Eleanor in 1865. Marx's daughters were all active in the international working class movement.

more detailed analysis of the capitalist economic system, to penetrate its mysteries and discover its internal laws of development, to show how it arises and how it declines and passes away. This Marx carried out with his important economic writings and especially with their culmination, *Capital*, the first volume of which did not appear until 1867.

During these years, as in all his years of exile, he lived in grinding poverty. But he refused to save himself by abandoning his revolutionary work for a career. Instead, he was forced to survive by writing articles for the *New York Tribune* and other newspapers, which — what with cheating, pay-cutting and alteration of articles by the bourgeois editors — was a heartless task, and he also received selfless support from his collaborator Engels.

But Marx was not wrong about the value of his economic research. He revolutionized the discussion of economic questions and provided the socialist proletariat with a powerful weapon.

With his economic writings, Marx explained the causes for the miseries facing the workers, including the recurring crises, unemployment, poverty and ruin. He showed that these evils were not an accident, but the inevitable result of the capitalist system of private ownership of the factories, mines and mills that had been built up by the working masses in their millions. With his theory of surplus value, Marx uncovered the secret of capitalist exploitation. In so doing, he not only provided theoretical justification of the economic struggle of the workers, but punctured the petty-bourgeois theories of harmony between exploiter and exploited.

The economic theories of Marx stand not only as a blistering condemnation of the capitalist exploiter, but they also stand as evidence of the inevitability of the

rise of socialism. Marx showed how capitalism, through its own development, gave rise to the forces that would overthrow it. These theories provide a powerful assistance to the revolutionary working class movement.

Thus it was no idle pastime which Marx pursued with his theoretical study. Marx took up the issues facing the proletarian struggle. His meticulous work and careful research is a standing rebuke to those who think that serious questions can be decided with a simple wave of the hands, who believe that it suffices to place any shoddy trash before the working masses, and who write whatever fashionable nonsense comes into their heads one day and the opposite the next. At the same time, Marx also taught that the most important thing was not just to understand the world but to change it. He taught the working class leaders to apply his revolutionary theory to the practical tasks of uniting the working masses, building revolutionary organization and advancing the mass struggle stepwise up to the socialist revolution.

#### Marx and the International Working Men's Association

Meanwhile, the revival of the democratic and working class movements at the end of the 1850's and in the 1860's recalled Marx to practical, organizational activity. Thus, in September 1864, the International Working Men's Association was founded in London. This was the famous First International, and Marx was its

heart and soul. He was responsible for the success of its organizational plans, and he wrote innumerable documents for the General Council of the International, including the "Inaugural Address of 1864," the key resolutions dealing with the role and relationship of economic and political struggle, and the famous addresses on the civil war in France and the Paris Commune.

In his writings for the First International Marx clarified many issues of general tactics for the proletarian struggle. He stressed that the economic emancipation of the working class was the goal of the working class struggle, but that this emancipation cannot take place without the conquest of political power. Under Marx's leadership, the First International adopted numerous resolutions which stressed the importance of political action by the working class, the need for the working class to constitute itself into a political party separate from and opposed to all the parties of the exploiting classes, and the importance of the economic struggles and organizations of the workers both as means of resistance to the capitalists and as levers to further the political struggle and organization of the workers. These teachings have served to guide the actions of class conscious workers and their Marxist-Leninist parties to this very day.

The First International existed as a major force from 1864-1872 (and was formally dissolved in 1876). Marx guided the International through this entire period in which it transformed the working class movement



Delegates to the First Congress of the International Working Men's Association in Geneva, September 1866. Marx was the heart and soul of the First International.

throughout Europe and America.

Firstly, the International gave a tremendous spur to the international solidarity of the working class movement of different countries. In the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, Marx and Engels closed with the call "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" This became the watchword of the First International as well. Many concrete manifestations of this unity took place, including support for Polish freedom from tsarist Russia, international assistance in strikes, support for the Civil War against slavery in the U.S., and support for the heroic Paris Communards in 1871.

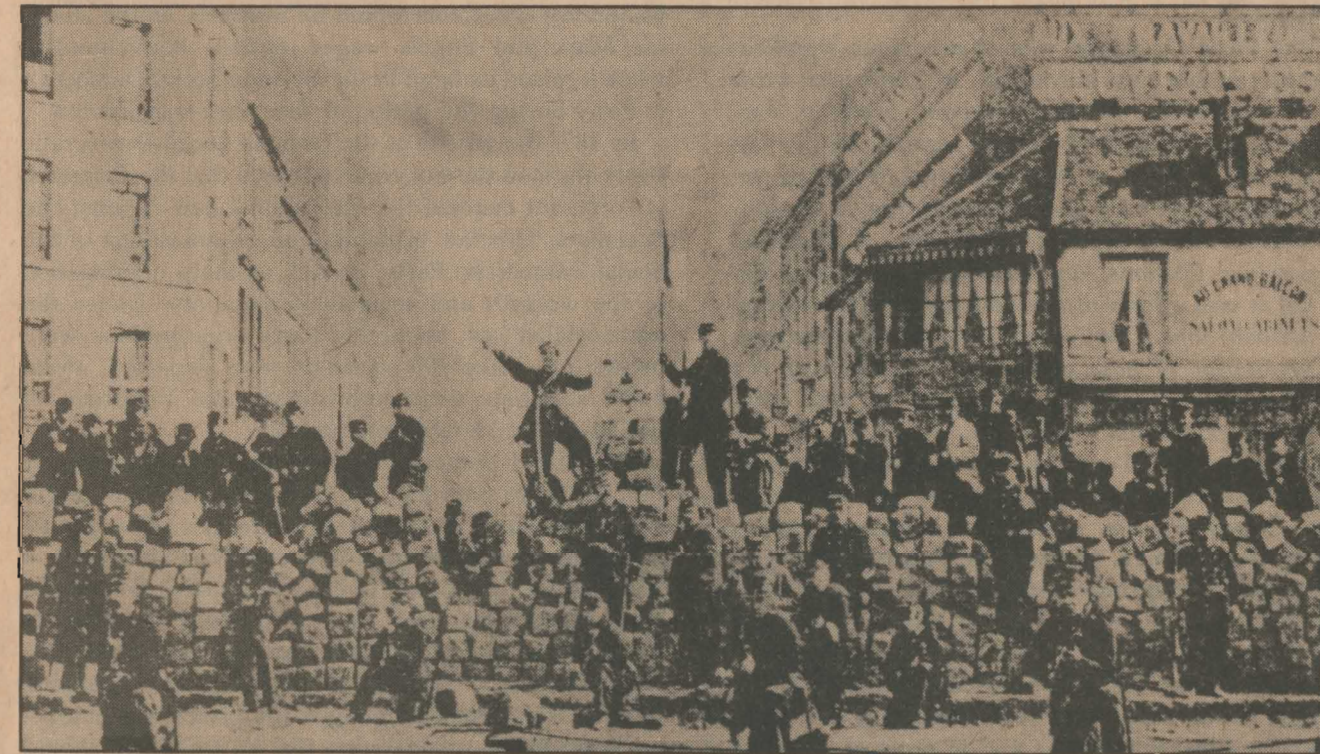
Secondly, under Marx's guidance, the International became an important vehicle for the spread of scientific socialism throughout the working class movements of the world. This, however, was not because adherence to Marxism was a prerequisite to joining the International. On the contrary, the First International was by no means a homogeneous organization with regard to theoretical views. In the International scientific socialists militated side-by-side with petty-bourgeois socialists of the Proudhon variety, right-leaning Lassallean socialists (in so far as they maintained any connection with the International), anarchist followers of Bakunin, and British trade unionists. Marxism was one trend among many.

Nevertheless, despite the different trends, Marx was able to unite the fighting proletariat of Europe and

America into one great army through the program and rules of the International. At this time, the rise of the working class struggle itself was coming into contradiction with the various obsolete forms of utopian and petty-bourgeois socialism that were still predominant in the working class movement. In this situation, Marx believed the association of the workers on the basis of carrying forward the actual struggle would serve to educate the international movement and render it susceptible to scientific views. However, this did not mean that Marx thought that all this would happen spontaneously, and he fought vigorously against the erroneous trends inside and outside the International.

Events proved Marx correct. The First International was a major blow at the various obsolete socialist sects, and it fostered rapid progress in the working class movement. In this period, Marxist communism spread rapidly in the world movement.

The most glorious deed of the proletarian party during the time of the International was the Paris Commune. In March 1871, in reply to the attempt of the bourgeoisie to strip the workers of the weapons they had acquired in the course of the Franco-Prussian war, the heroic proletariat of Paris rose up once again in revolution and this time successfully established its own political power, the Paris Commune. The Parisian workers smashed the existing bourgeois state machine — the bourgeois standing army and the bureaucracy —



The Paris Commune was the first occasion in history when the proletariat seized power and established the proletarian dictatorship. It lasted from March 18, 1871 to May 28, 1871. Of this Marx wrote: "Working men's Paris, with its Commune, will be forever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society. Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class. Its exterminators history has already nailed to that eternal pillory from which all the prayers of their priest will not avail to redeem them." Picture: Workers and rebel soldiers on the barricades at Montmartre defending the Commune.

and established the first ever dictatorship of the proletariat. With political power in their hands, the Commune took numerous measures of a proletarian character. However, the Commune was too magnanimous towards its enemies, and, for fear of being called the first to start the civil war, it allowed the defeated reaction to regroup at Versailles. Thus the Commune did not succeed in extending the revolution to the whole of France, and the bourgeoisie was able to consolidate its forces and march on Paris. After a ferocious struggle, and with the aid of the reactionary German government, the French bourgeoisie succeeded in destroying the Commune. It celebrated its victory with one of the most ferocious bloodbaths in French history. Whole working class districts of Paris were depopulated.

The First International played a major role in the Commune. Members of the International were prominent in its leadership.

Marx himself rose to the defense of the commune. He did his best to see to its victory while it existed, and after its defeat he stood up for its against the hysterical vilification of the bourgeoisie. The only correction Marx and Engels saw fit to make to the *Communist Manifesto* was on the basis of the experience of the Paris Commune in the smashing of the bourgeois state machine. (See their preface to the German edition of 1872 of the *Manifesto*.) Marx regarded the experience of the Commune as of profound importance and studied it attentively.

The Paris Commune was of enormous significance for the working class movement. As Lenin later wrote:

*"The sacrifices of the Commune, heavy as they were, are made up for by its significance for the general struggle of the proletariat: it stirred the socialist movement throughout Europe, it demonstrated the strength of civil war, it dispelled patriotic illusions, and destroyed the naive belief in any efforts of the bourgeoisie for common national aims. The Commune taught the European proletariat to pose concretely the tasks of the socialist revolution."* ("Lessons of the Commune," *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 477)

And Lenin pointed out that the experience of the Commune showed that the *"Bourgeoisie will stop at nothing. Today liberals, radicals, republicans, tomorrow betrayal, shootings."* Hence, the Commune showed the need for: *"Independent organization of the proletariat — class struggle — civil war."* ("Plan of a Lecture on the Commune," *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 208)

In short, the Commune posed concretely the very issues which Marx had been explaining for over 20 years. In this sense, it was a vivid proof of the truth of Marxism. This was not because the Commune was led by Marxists; on the contrary, the leaders of the Commune were divided between two socialist sects. The majority followed the eminent conspiratorial revolutionary Auguste Blanqui, while the minority was under

the influence of the theories of the petty-bourgeois socialist Proudhon. Nevertheless, the experience of the Commune both enriched and confirmed the Marxist teachings.

The fall of the Paris Commune, the subsequent persecution of the International throughout Europe, and the intensified splitting activities of the Bakuninists led to the removal of the General Council of the First International from London to New York in 1872, which essentially marked its end as a major force. Its official dissolution took place in 1876. Nevertheless, the International Working Men's Association had already accomplished its historic role in laying the groundwork for the creation of mass socialist workers' parties in a number of different countries. After the dissolution of the International, the last decade of Marx's life was dedicated to continuing his theoretical work and to assisting the development of proletarian parties in various countries.

### Marx Fights Against Liquidationism

The German Social-Democratic Party, for example, became in the later 1870's the largest of the European workers' parties. Right from the start, Marx and Engels waged a struggle to help rid it of various opportunist tendencies. Of particular interest at the present time, when liquidationism is so fashionable among our contemporary revisionist would-be Marxists, is the struggle Marx and Engels waged against liquidationism when it raised its head in the German Social-Democratic Party during the period of the "anti-socialist law."

By 1878 the growth of the German Social-Democratic Party alarmed the exploiters so much that the Bismarck government enacted the Exceptional Law Against the Socialists. This law prohibited all organizations of the Social-Democratic Party, as well as mass organization of the workers and socialist newspapers. Under the anti-socialist law, about 350 Party organizations were broken up, some 900 socialists were deported, about 1,500 socialists were imprisoned, and hundreds of periodicals and books were banned.

The Social-Democratic Party did not immediately find the right path for overcoming this difficult situation. It vacillated both towards anarchism and especially towards the right opportunism of Karl Hochberg, a Party leader. In the face of the anti-socialist law, Hochberg wanted the Party to beg pardon, abandon its revolutionary policy, appease reaction, and content itself with minor reforms to patch up the capitalist system. He wanted to liquidate the proletarian character of the Party, emphasizing that its main task should be to recruit bourgeois "with a true love of humanity." He wanted to end the class struggle against the bourgeoisie so that the enlightened elements of the "upper strata" would not be frightened by the "Red Bogey" of communism. In short, he sounded just like our

present revisionist worshippers of the liquidationist policy of working inside the Democratic Party.

Marx and Engels could not sit idly by and watch this development. They knew that Hochberg's policies would castrate the Party and put an end to its "proletarian energy." Hochberg's path was the path of renegacy, a path that would lead the workers' party into a swamp that would suck out its class independence and turn it into a plaything in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

Marx and Engels therefore rushed into the fight against the opportunists. In their famous "Circular Letter" of 1879 to the leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party, they analyzed the opportunist direction that the Party was taking, clarified the issues of principle at stake and called on the Party leaders to eliminate the opportunist errors in a decisive way. They stressed that:

*"As for ourselves, in view of our whole past there is only one path open to us. For almost forty years we have stressed the class struggle as the immediate driving force of history, and in particular the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as the great lever of the modern social revolution; it is therefore impossible for us to cooperate with people who wish to expunge this class struggle from the movement. When the International was formed we expressly formulated the battle cry: the emancipation of the working class must be achieved by the working class itself. We cannot, therefore, cooperate with people who say that the workers are too uneducated to emancipate themselves and must first be freed from above by philanthropic bourgeois and petty bourgeois. If the new Party organ adopts a line corresponding to the views of these gentlemen, and is bourgeois and not proletarian, then nothing remains for us, much though we should regret it, but publicly to declare our opposition to it and to dissolve the solidarity with which we have hitherto represented the German Party abroad. But it is to be hoped that things will not come to that."*

The "Circular Letter" galvanized the sounder Marxist elements of the Party to action. The Party overcame the liquidationist deviation. It defied the anti-socialist law, carried out effective legal and illegal work in the face of this law, and mocked this law by the steady growth in its strength and influence.

Comrades and friends, there were many who didn't understand why Marx and Engels waged such a fierce fight against opportunism, anarchism, sectarianism, and so forth. But the absolute necessity for a stern fight against opportunism would be verified by later events. After the deaths of Marx and Engels, opportunism would again raise its head in the German Social-Democratic Party. By the time of the First World War,

the opportunists succeeded in taking over the Party and setting it on the social-chauvinist course. The class conscious workers loyal to the class struggle carried through a struggle leading to the formation of a genuine communist party, while the name "social-democrat" became a term of disgrace. This would once again underline the need to carry out a stern fight against opportunism, just as Marx and Engels did. This Marxist lesson had, indeed, already been taken to heart and further enriched by Lenin and the Bolsheviks, who fought opportunism in the Second International, rose up against social-chauvinism during World War I, and spearheaded the formation of the Communist (Third) International.

Comrades and friends, his strenuous work in the First International, his still more strenuous theoretical work, and the long years of grinding poverty in which he lived, completely undermined Marx's health and prevented him from finishing *Capital*. In December 1881, his wife died after a painful illness. Finally, on March 14, 1883, Marx passed away in his armchair. This brought to a close the life and work of this great leader and inspirer of the working class, the founder of scientific communism and the organizer of the First International.

Comrades and friends, even this cursory examination of the life and work of Marx refutes the bourgeois and opportunist slanders about the schizophrenic "early" and "late" Marx. It shows that all his life Marx was an outstanding theorist of the working class movement whose teachings on historical materialism, on political economy, on the program and tactics of the class struggle, etc., represent an integral whole that cannot be severed by the impotent pecking by the bourgeois and opportunist magpies. It shows that Marx was an outstanding practical worker, too, who was a thoroughgoing revolutionary from the days of preparation for the German democratic revolution to his tireless assistance to the advanced workers of Europe and America in his final years. As an agitator and propagandist, as an organizer and tactician, as a proletarian internationalist and as a relentless fighter against opportunism, Marx was the model communist leader of the working class. Today, when we commemorate the Marx centenary, we are honoring just these qualities of Marx.

### Marxism Lights the Way for Our Struggle Today

Moreover, when we commemorate the Marx centenary we are not just reminiscing about a man and his work from 100 years ago. The teachings of Marx remain a powerful weapon for the revolutionary education and organization of the working class.

This May Day finds the working masses in the U.S. suffering the scourges of unemployment, wage cuts, and the Reaganite austerity measures. Racism and segregationism are being intensified by the rich and

their state apparatus. Orgies of militarization and aggression are the hallmarks of the bipartisan policy in Washington. Marxism teaches that economic crisis, racism and aggressive wars are the fellow travelers of the capitalist system and that only the socialist revolution can put an end to these evils.

At the same time, a ferment is gripping the working and oppressed masses who are opposing the capitalist offensive, the warmongering imperialism and the racism of the rich. Marxism teaches us the need to defend the immediate interests of the workers, to strengthen the strikes and protests, and to bring class consciousness and organization into the movements of the toiling masses. Marxism teaches that only in this way can a mighty movement of the class develop, a movement through which all the necessary conditions are prepared for the decisive battle to overthrow capitalism.

Marx also taught the importance of fighting the opportunists who have betrayed the interests of the working class. Today the social-democrats, trotskyites, and the Soviet, Chinese and Yugoslav revisionists are just such betrayers of the workers. At one time socialism was being built in the Soviet Union under Lenin and Stalin and in other countries in Europe and Asia. Today, only Albania is building a new socialist society without exploitation. This provides us with a grave lesson on the importance of adhering to Marxism-Leninism and fighting revisionism as part of organizing the workers' struggle.

In particular, we must oppose the liquidators — those modern-day Hochbergs whom Marx and Engels denounced with such a passion in their "Circular Letter." The mask of Marxism must be ripped from all

those who denounce the building of a vanguard workers' party, or who denounce strikes against concessions as "ultra-left" or condemn protests against militarization and nuclear weapons as "useless" or reactionary, or who seek to keep the mass movement tied to the leading strings of the bourgeois neo-liberals.

These people are not Marxists; they are not even revolutionaries. They are shameless liquidators hankering after unity with the Democratic Party politicians, trade union bureaucrats and other soldout bourgeois and petty-bourgeois dregs. The liquidators are nothing but scoundrels tugging at the coattails of the working masses, fearful of their enthusiasm to build the independent movement of the working class. Liquidationism must be exposed for what it is, and its influence must be driven out of the mass movements. This will be a fitting tribute to the memory of Karl Marx and the only way to demonstrate adherence to his scientific socialism.

Comrades and friends, on this May Day the Marxist-Leninist Party calls on all militant workers and activists to commemorate the Marx centenary by studying the life and work of Karl Marx and the classic writings of Marxism-Leninism. This year, let us rededicate our lives to the struggle against exploitation and tyranny just as Marx did! This year, let us continue to spread the truth of Marxism among all the workers and oppressed!

*Glory to the memory of Karl Marx!  
Organize the class struggle against the exploiters and oppressors!  
Down with the revisionist enemies of Marxism-Leninism and socialism!  
Back to the classics of Marxism-Leninism!* □

## Reaganomics, the 'Atari Democrats,' and the Fight Against Unemployment

The Atari Democrats and the Unemployed .....	43
The AFL-CIO "Jobs" Program .....	44
Advance the Mass Struggle Against Unemployment .....	45

*(Below we publish the full text from one of the speeches delivered by a representative of the MLP at the May Day celebration held in Buffalo, New York on April 30. It has been edited for publication.)*

Comrades and friends,

The disaster of unemployment is stalking the country. Fifteen million are plagued with joblessness, millions more work only part time, and the threat of layoffs continues to tick like a time bomb over those still lucky enough to find work. As insurance runs out and the utilities are cut off, as homes are lost and starvation looms like a dark shadow, the anger of the hard-pressed workers is growing.

But for Ronald Reagan, that arrogant mouthpiece of the billionaires, the misery of the unemployed is not an indictment of this rotten and crumbling capitalist system. Oh no, he considers unemployment to be a symptom of the wanton laziness of the unwashed workers. Indeed, Reagan believes that the miseries of the unemployed must be increased because only then will the workers come to understand the wonders of capitalism, get to work, and pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. It is this "humanitarian" concern for the workers that has led Reagan to slash to the bone even those minimal social benefit programs, like unemployment insurance, food stamps, welfare, and so forth. Certainly the unemployed should get relief, Reagan reasons, but only if they pay for it. Medical insurance: why yes, the workers just have to buy it. Job training: why yes, just steal millions from the unemployment funds to pay the monopolies to instruct a few of the jobless. Jobs for the youth: by all means, just reduce the minimum wage. Such are Reagan's solutions for unemployment: rob the unemployed of any relief, crush them into the ground, and when they cry out, just rob them again in the name of providing them assistance.

But then Reagan really doesn't like to talk about unemployment anyway. He prefers to drink champagne and gossip about how well the stock market is doing. After all, Reagan preaches, recovery is underway. Why, if the forces of the "free market" are just let loose, if the recovery is just allowed to "take hold," if America will just "stay the course," Reagan assures us that unemployment will simply vanish on its own. ...

Recently, the capitalist news media has become ecstatic about these Reaganite predictions. There is article after article reporting on the Wall Street stock market boom. The banks are praised repeatedly for their overflowing vaults.

Hosannas are sung to GM's \$635 million first quarter profits, its greatest in four years. Why even poor old Chrysler, who only yesterday was on the brink of collapse, has posted a record quarterly profit of some \$172 million. And with all these profits, the newspapers croon, can jobs be far behind?

Reaganomics, it is claimed, is on the verge of being vindicated. The first phase is in place — the monopolies are raking in enormous profits. We have but to wait for the second phase when jobs and prosperity are supposed to "trickle down" to the rank-and-file workers.

But comrades, lest we become dizzy-headed from such euphoric estimates, perhaps we should take a step back and look at one or two facts which are peeking out from around the rose-colored spectacle painted by the apologists of capitalism.

In the first place, this so-called recovery resembles, more than anything else, a hot air balloon lifted skyward on the voluminous fabrications from the mouths of the Reagan administration. Even such notorious capitalist economists as those from *Business Week* have been forced to admit that the recovery is "sub par." In fact this "recovery" is far behind the level of the last two recoveries at the end of 1975 and at the beginning of 1980, which themselves were termed "sluggish" and which lasted only the shortest time. It is true that the Gross National Product, after plummeting 8.2% last year, has now begun to rise. But what upturn in production there is has been chiefly concentrated in the housing and military industries. In the economy as a whole only 69.5% of production capacity was being used as of March; that is, capacity utilization remained below the level of the bottom of past recessions. In short, what we are witnessing is a slight, slow and unstable upturn in certain sectors of production which is just as likely to give way to another crash as to give rise to anything else. It must be remembered that even during the Great Depression of the 1930's there were slight upward blips of the chart in the midst of intolerable suffering and starvation for the masses.

But, let us leave aside for a moment our scepticism towards Reagan's promises of recovery. Let's take Reagan's word for it that recovery is underway. Then what does this recovery mean for the masses of workers? According to the figures of the Congressional Budget Office, if Reagan gets everything he wants, if the recovery works out like he expects, if indeed the devastating depression disappears like a forgotten nightmare, then in 1988 there will still be 7.5% unemployment. That is, even by the Reagan government's outrageously optimistic figures, five years from now there will still be nine million workers walking the streets without jobs.

Comrades, such is the nature of this rotten capitalist system in which we live. Since World War II there have been eight major recessions and with each recovery a larger

and larger number of workers have been thrown into the ranks of the army of unemployed. Reagan would have us believe that if the forces of the "free market" are just allowed to operate, if the monopoly billionaires are only allowed to advance their unquenchable drive for maximum profits, then jobs will be created for the workers. But the truth is just the opposite. The ever growing army of the unemployed is a basic condition for capitalist profit taking.

Karl Marx, that great thinker and leader of the international working class, exposed this law of capitalism over a century ago. Marx showed in scientific detail how the growth of the mass of unemployed, what he called the "industrial reserve army," is a "condition of the existence of the capitalist mode of production" and how this ever expanding industrial reserve army is the essential lever in the hands of the capitalists for squeezing profits out of the workers.

Marx pointed out:

*"In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed — a class of laborers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital. These laborers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market." (Manifesto of the Communist Party, Sec. I, p. 39)*

Marx showed that, since the worker only works when the capitalist creates profits for the capitalists, in times like these when there is a hitch in production, when a crisis of overproduction spreads like a plague, the capitalists try to preserve their profits by throwing the workers into the streets

like so many worn-out socks.

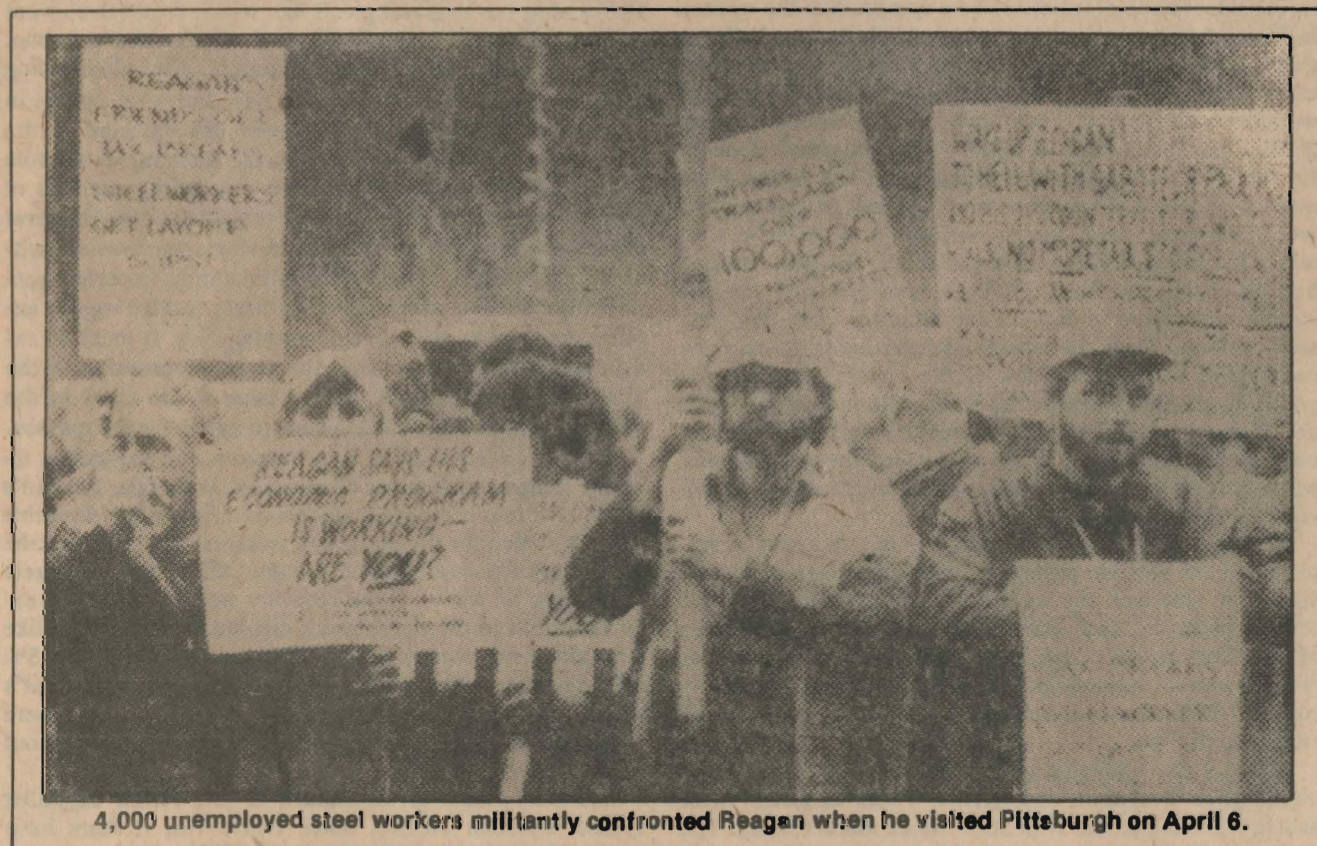
But this is only one part of a vicious cycle. The growth of unemployment, the creation of a whole army of jobless, is used by the capitalist to further increase the exploitation of those still employed which becomes, in turn, the source of still more layoffs, for the further growth of the industrial reserve army.

Speaking of how the existence of an army of unemployed is used to force down wages, Marx pointed out:

*"Taking them as a whole, the general movements of wages are exclusively regulated by the expansion and contraction of the industrial reserve army, and these again correspond to the periodic changes of the industrial cycle." (Capital, Vol. 1, Ch. XXV, Sec. 3)*

The army of the unemployed becomes a weapon in the hands of the capitalists by which they threaten those still working: "give up concessions or lose your jobs." In 1981, when the giant Ford monopoly demanded that the workers in its Sheffield, Alabama plant cut their wages in half, this seemed like the exceptional demand of an especially arrogant and brutal capitalist. But today, when unemployment has reached record levels, cutting the workers' pay in half has become the program of all the monopolies in basic industry.

But the capitalists don't stop with merely cutting wages. They also use the threat of unemployment to force through speedup, job combinations, overwork and automation. And this increased exploitation of those still employed paves the way for the capitalists to trim their work forces even further and to drag in even more profits at the expense of the growing millions of unemployed. Marx explained this law of capitalism over a century ago and today it is still in operation with devastating force. Concessions are being wrung from the hides of the workers. And what are they used for?



4,000 unemployed steel workers militantly confronted Reagan when he visited Pittsburgh on April 6.

To pay for "reindustrialization," for automating the plants and speeding up those still employed. But this "reindustrialization" in turn is eliminating even more jobs and relegating ever greater numbers to the ranks of the permanent army of unemployed.

Ronald Reagan's "free market" theories, his "supply side" promises that corporate profits will somehow "trickle down" to the jobless and poor, are nothing but a cynical lie to conceal this savage offensive of the capitalists against the workers. Indeed Reagan's "free market" theories are a cynical lie twice over. For, despite the talk of letting the forces of the capitalist market "freely" operate, the Reagan government is intervening in the economy left and right to provide the monopolies with vast sums of money from tax giveaways and other means to help them to reindustrialize; to put huge sums into military spending; and to force enormous cuts in social welfare spending and huge concessions in the work places. Reagan wants the working class to finance the job-eliminating schemes of the capitalists.

Reaganomics is the justification for this plunder; it is the outrageous lie that the workers can somehow improve their own lot by helping out the capitalists. Marx exposed this lie long ago. The capitalists live and grow fat off the exploitation of the workers. The workers can only hope to live a decent life through waging the class struggle against the capitalists.

#### The Atari Democrats and the Unemployed

Reaganomics is a cynical capitalist lie. But the Democratic Party's "opposition" to Reaganomics, and their supposedly "new" theories for solving unemployment, are nothing more than the same capitalist hoax sweetened up with honeyed phrases of sympathy for the distressed.

It will be remembered that ever since Reagan was put in office, the Democrats have been whining about what they consider to be the awesome, magnetic, almost god-like power of Reaganomics. The old liberalism has lost its magic, they say. Instead they need something "new," something like Reaganomics-with-sugar-on-it. And for several years now they have been on a holy quest for such a "new" theory.

Well, word has it that the Democrats may have found their Holy Grail. This month a new book called *The Next American Frontier* is being published. It contains the rambling "insights" of Robert Reich, a Harvard professor of economics, who has become the guru of the disciples of high technology known as the "Atari Democrats." Indeed, most of the chief Democratic Party candidates for president are turning to Reich for their theories. Not only Hart and Glenn, but even that old-Humphreyite liberal, Mondale, has begun to embrace various aspects of Reich's "theory," and these presidential hopefuls have been making pilgrimages to Reich's office seeking "inspired" guidance for their electoral campaigns.

Despite all of the fanfare, Reich has done little more than to coin a new slogan. Against the callous calls of Reaganomics for ever greater "capital investment," Reich has raised the watchword of "human capital investment." Thus the Goliath of Reaganomics is felled with a single stone.

It must be pointed out that the propagandists for Reich's theories emphasize that his slogan is not simply the answer to Reagan's "supply-side economics," but is also the alternative to the old liberal Democratic slogan of "full employment." Not that the liberal Democrats actually did provide

"full employment." Far from it. But they did pretend to be concerned for the plight of the unemployed. Now Reich drops this and embraces his own form of "trickle-down" theory. It is enough to point out that Reich does not even consider the question of providing any immediate relief for the unemployed. Indeed he takes the Reagan "recovery" as a given and goes on to discuss the long-term "structural" problems of the American economy. It is with such high-minded academic disdain for the miseries of 15 million jobless that Reich elaborates his "new" concepts which are supposed to put America back to work.

In the March and April issues of *Atlantic Monthly* Reich explains the basic concepts to be found in his new book. Chief among his ideas is that the American monopolies must step up their competition against the foreign capitalist monopolies and to do so they must desert "mass standardized production" as in steel, auto, chemicals, textiles, and so forth and turn to the "more profitable" fields of "high technology" and "specialty products." Of course Reich is forced to admit that the capitalists cannot really do without basic industry, and so for these he demands intensive automation and a shift to the "highest-valued and most competitive segments of these industries" which Reich promises "are likely to expand as their world markets develop, absorbing more labor and generating new wealth."

In the final analysis, Reich is simply glorifying the brutal policies that the American capitalists are already following and dressing them up as the cure for unemployment. For Reich the monopolies are not savagely oppressing the workers in auto, steel, textiles and the other industries. Oh no, they are just "structurally" changing the economy. For Reich the threat of a "shift" out of "mass standardized production" is not the standard blackmail of the monopolies to force concessions out of their workers. Oh no, this is the road "generating new wealth" and with it new jobs. Reich's theory turns out to be nothing more than an expression of a basic law of capitalism, long ago explained by Marx, that for the capitalists to exist they must constantly revolutionize the technical means of production. But Reich glosses up the necessary investments of the capitalists as something special, as "high tech," as if this constant process of capitalism has ever led to anything other than the greater exploitation and suffering for the workers.

In fact, Reich admits that he is merely restating what the monopolies are already doing. "Many of these changes are already occurring in American industry," Reich emphasizes. "The problem is that they are not occurring quickly enough."

In short, Reich favors the policies of Reaganomics, but he wants them carried out more fully, in a much bigger hurry. The reindustrialization program of the capitalist class remains the same, whether it was Carter's or now Reagan's. But now it is to be dressed up as "high tech." In adopting Reich's theories, the only progress made by the Democrats is in further discovering rationales for the impoverishment of the workers.

Far from solving unemployment, Reich's theories aim at using the industrial reserve army of the unemployed as a battering ram to drive down the wages and working conditions of those who are employed and as a ready-made pool of labor, a mass of human material, to move into the new and more profitable endeavors of the capitalists. Reich explains: "the economic future of countries lies in technically advanced, skill-intensive industries...the transition requires a basic restructuring of business, labor and gov-

ernment. A reorganization of this magnitude is bound to be resisted, because it threatens vested economic interests and challenges established values.... Because America's blue-collar workers often lack the skills and training necessary for flexible-system production, they have clung to job classifications, work rules and cost-of-living increases that brought them some security under standardized production."

Thus, Reich suggests that the issue is to abolish cost-of-living increases and open up the plants to speedup, job combinations, and so forth. But he complains that the workers are resisting this.

But Reich has found an answer to this problem: "human capital investment." What this boils down to is a promise that if the workers give up their "vested interests" they will receive job training that will supposedly open up new job opportunities.

In one of his few concrete proposals, Reich makes clear how this is to work. Instead of creating jobs or carrying out government-run jobs training programs, Reich suggests that the unemployed workers be given "vouchers" that they could cash in at companies for on-the-job training. The companies that accepted the voucher would have their training costs paid by the government for up to three years. As can be seen, this would not create new jobs, nor is it intended to. Rather, at best, it would spread the competition for jobs around to a slightly wider section of workers. Instead of giving relief to the workers, relief would be given to the capitalists who could get the government to pay the workers' wages under the pretext of job training. This proposal has been so pleasing to the capitalists that Reagan himself has already written it up and put it before Congress as a part of his "jobs" program.

Along with such job training, Reich stresses that the government must provide "long-term capital" through subsidized loans, targeted tax breaks and so forth combined with temporary tariffs and import quotas to help the modernized American industries get on their feet. With such sympathetic treatment of the monopolies, it is really hard to see why Reich's ideas are considered to be any different from Reaganomics.

Reich does complain that the current across-the-board tax giveaways to the capitalists often lead to profit-taking through corporate mergers and money manipulation instead of reindustrialization. Thus Reich proposes that the tax breaks be "targeted" to only those corporations that are willing to restructure. Such "targeting" is nothing more than the old refrain of the Carterites and bureaucrats of the AFL-CIO.

Along with this, Reich also complains that the monopolies and the government have to be brought together with the union bureaucrats for a new partnership against "foreign" competition. This too is but a restatement of the Carterite and union chieftains' appeals for tripartite reindustrialization boards.

Such "differences" with Reagan are but quibbles within an overall Reaganite program of subsidies for the capitalists, takeaways for the workers, and an empty promise that some day, when the "markets expand" etc., jobs and prosperity will trickle down to the workers. Reich's theories are nothing more nor less than a call for stepping up the government intervention to speed up achieving the aims of Reagan. The Democrats' new slogans of "high tech" and "human capital investment" are just the sugarcoating for the distasteful pill of Reaganomics.

#### The AFL-CIO "Jobs" Program

Comrades, this review of the policies of Reagan and the Democratic Party on unemployment would not be complete if I did not dwell for a few minutes on the jobs program of the heads of the AFL-CIO. These bureaucrats are the front men for the Democratic Party among the workers. At least since the mid-1930's it has been the union bureaucrats who have provided the Democratic Party with its image of being the "party of labor." Today, while the mainstream of the Democratic Party, its presidential candidates, and legislative leaders, are madly scrambling after Reagan, trying to beat him at his own game, the union bureaucrats, while also tottering along in Reagan's wake, are continuing to preach the old Rooseveltian liberalism and trying to convince the workers that the Democratic Party is the party of relief for the unemployed.

The slogan of the AFL-CIO chieftains, and indeed of the social-democrats and revisionists who form the left wing of the Democratic Party and pander to these union hacks, remains phrasemongering about "full employment." For decades these characters have claimed that American capitalism is only a step away from providing jobs for all, if only the workers elect Democratic Party politicians. Today, in the midst of the worst depression since the 1930's they are once again preaching this same old tired song.

In this regard, the new AFL-CIO "jobs" program, drafted late this February, is most interesting. Much of it has been endorsed by the Congressional Black Caucus and it has received the praise of a whole slew of social-democrats and revisionists. Under the title of the "Economic Program for Jobs and Fairness," the AFL-CIO bureaucrats promise immediate relief for the unemployed and comprehensive long-term jobs legislation. But what this program promises and what it provides are vastly different.

Let us first examine the package of immediate relief for the unemployed. The AFL-CIO hacks' program calls for the spending of \$22.5 billion in 1983 and \$46 billion in 1984 for a series of measures which they claim will create 1.8 million jobs and provide a "stimulus that would put us on the road to full employment." Now the first thing that strikes the eye is that to say that reducing the level of unemployment to some 13 million jobless is getting on the "road to full employment" is absolutely ridiculous.

But this is all the more ridiculous when you realize that this is the bureaucrats' maximum program. There are around 15 million unemployed, millions more are being impoverished in part-time and minimum wage jobs, while every program of social welfare benefits is being cut to the bone. Meanwhile the union bureaucrats, the supposed leaders of the workers, are humbly requesting that the government cough up a few billion dollars of the workers' tax money to provide a minimum of relief. This is outrageous.

Furthermore, this program of CETA-type jobs, youth Job Corps training, etc., is at best just a return to Carterism. Let the mass of misery be only as high as it was in the last year of the Carter presidency, before the depression worked its way deeper for a few more years — this is how the union hacks think.

Beyond this, the details of the AFL-CIO chieftains' plans are really not so important anyway, since they have no intention of fighting for them. They will certainly never, never raise the workers in mass struggle for their minimal crumbs. Why in fact, the largest part of their program has

not even been put into legislative form. It remains to a large extent a legislative program in the air, an empty promise that relief will come some day if only the workers vote Democrat.

But let us take a look at other aspects of this program to see what the bureaucrats are actually interested in. The flag-waving patriots of the AFL-CIO executive board, in their jobs program, could not resist giving a pitch to raise military spending. They speak of moderating Reagan, of asking for only a 5-7% military spending increase each year. For the unemployed they make an empty promise for \$68 billion over two years, but for U.S. imperialist war preparations they demand at least \$224 billion for 1984 alone.

Further on they describe their serious economic program. The program reads as follows: "For long-term revitalization, the government must pursue a reindustrialization program that involves business and labor. A national industrial policy supported by a new Reconstruction Finance Corporation should be set up to rebuild the nation's industrial base with loans, grants, guarantees, and targeted tax policies to strengthen investment in basic industries and new, high-growth industries."

In short, the union bureaucrats advance a program of a minimum of relief for a fraction of the unemployed with one hand and then demand wide-ranging subsidies to the monopolies for job-eliminating reindustrialization programs on the other. Of course this is not so surprising from the bureaucrats if we simply glance over their practice for the last few years.

The AFL-CIO hacks have stood at the head of the concessions drive against the workers — demanding billions of dollars from the auto workers, the steel workers, the rubber workers and the workers in every other industry all in the name of saving the capitalist industries and providing them capital to reindustrialize. They have not only headed up cuts in wages and benefits, but they have presided over extensive productivity drives, to increase the exploitation of those employed while driving ever growing numbers off the job.

More than this. In a number of places the bureaucrats have not only actively collaborated with the capitalists to eliminate jobs, they have also worked to cut unemployment benefits for those they have driven into the streets. For example, in Illinois last year the AFL-CIO bureaucrats met with Republican and Democratic officials and worked out a program to cut the first week of unemployment benefits for laid-off workers and to eliminate all benefits to any worker who has been fired. This year the same bureaucrats just finished working out a deal with the Illinois legislators to cut the amount of benefits that everyone on unemployment receives.

What is more, should the workers start to rise in struggle against unemployment and concessions, the union hacks have been Johnny-on-the-spot to divert the movement into chauvinist anti-import campaigns, into demands that the government assist the capitalists' reindustrialization programs, into election campaigns for the Democratic Party.

In the final analysis, the union bureaucrats' program is not so different from that of the Atari Democrats or for that matter Reagan. Massive concessions from the workers; massive military spending; and huge sums for job-eliminating reindustrialization programs. But the bureaucrats are trying to conceal this capitalist offensive against the workers and channel the boiling anger of the masses into a

voters' drive for the Democrats by talk and empty promises of a little jobs-bill relief today and "full employment" just around the corner.

#### Advance the Mass Struggle Against Unemployment

It should be stressed, before closing, that this denunciation of the union bureaucrats' jobs program does not mean that every jobs bill should be opposed or that we are against jobs bills in general. In fact, we are in favor of even the tiniest bit of relief for the poor that any of the present bills might give them.

But we know that the present jobs bills are really not relief, but a war on the unemployed. Any serious relief for the unemployed will have to come out of the profits of the capitalists, and the Democrats and their union buddies are not about to touch such profits. Jobs bills that are based on making the workers pay the price; jobs bills based on finding new ways to preserve the profits of the capitalists; jobs bills that are nothing more than finding better ways to exploit the workers; these can never be more than a hoax and a swindle, empty promises to sabotage the workers' struggles and keep them enslaved and devastated by the capitalist exploiters.

We believe that the unemployed must be provided with jobs or a livelihood. We know that the slightest step to such concessions cannot be wrung from the capitalists without the serious mass struggle of the workers.

As long as capitalism exists, the struggle against unemployment will be with us. This was shown by Karl Marx who so brilliantly exposed the evils of the capitalist system, who so systematically proved that unemployment is a basic condition of capitalist profit-taking, a condition that can only be alleviated through the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. Marx also repeatedly emphasized that the workers must fight the day-to-day guerrilla actions against the capitalists, must resist tooth and nail against every encroachment by the moneybags, or they will be crushed into one wretched mass, incapable of launching any greater struggle.

Today such guerrilla actions are beginning to break out. Everywhere the workers are getting angry and starting to raise demands for medical benefits, against utility shut-offs, for relief from the miseries of unemployment. There are demonstrations against plant closings and ferment



Hundreds of GE workers in Schenectady, N.Y. seal off the plant gates during a strike against the company's job-eliminating productivity measures, June 2.

against in-plant productivity measures. In a few places actions have begun against the foreclosure of mortgages and against evictions. And larger demonstrations have erupted against Reagan, such as the march of 10,000 against Reagan in San Francisco, and the 3,000-strong protest in Boston, and the 4,000 angry workers who denounced Reagan in Pittsburgh.

We must go into these actions and encourage the struggle of the workers. We must work not only to raise the workers against this or that capitalist monopoly, this or that employer, but to unite the employed and unemployed, to organize the workers as a class, to combine the different rivulets of struggle into one mighty wave of class struggle.

The extreme impoverishment and devastation that is stalking the working masses today is creating a deep ferment. The masses are shaking off the initial shock at the economic crisis. Slowly, step by step, they are beginning to go into action. The fight against unemployment is an important struggle. It is agitating very wide strata, raising in them thoughts of organization and moving them toward mass action.

But more than this, today's devastating unemployment cannot help but raise among the working masses serious doubts about the capitalist system, a serious look for



**Demonstration this past winter against the closing of Bethlehem Steel in Lackawanna, N.Y.**

another way. We must go among the masses and encourage their struggle, expose the Democrats and union bureaucrats, and show them that the fight against unemployment today is a powerful vehicle to prepare the socialist revolution which will put an end to the scourge of unemployment once and for all. □

## Comrades of the CPL of the Dominican Republic greet the May Day rally in New York

*(Below we publish excerpts from the solidarity message delivered to the May Day rally in New York City by the Information Office in the U.S. of the Communist Party of Labor of the Dominican Republic.)*

To the MLP, USA

Dear comrades,

For the men and women of the Communist Party of Labor in New York it is an enormous happiness and joy to participate together with you and with the comrades of the Caribbean Progressive Study Group, tonight, in the commemoration of the centenary of the death of Karl Marx and in the celebration of May 1st, International Working Class Day, two dates of profound significance in the lives of the Marxist-Leninists and revolutionaries the world over.

The Information Office of CPL in New York fraternally salutes tonight's meeting and brings to the MLP, to the New York Branch and to all its militant membership, warm greetings of struggle and solidarity, wishing them total success in the realization of the tasks set to carry forward the all-out struggle against the Reagan administration and the organization of the class struggle against capitalism.

This year, all the Marxist-Leninist parties and the revolutionaries the world over associate the celebration of May 1st with the commemoration of the centenary of the death of Karl Marx, great creative genius of the doctrine of scientific socialism, the doctrine of the definite emancipation of the proletariat and all the oppressed.

Even though on March 14, 1883 Marx ceased to be physically at the head of the international proletariat in its incessant struggle for the destruction of the capitalist system and its defenders, the theory created by him has remained a shining light, unshaken by the passage of time, serving as an unerring guide in the struggle of the oppressed against all types of oppression.

Karl Marx has entered and remains in the history of the human race a giant of revolutionary thought and action. Marx dedicated his whole life to the cause of the proletariat, to the struggle destined to overthrow the system of capitalist exploitation and to bring about a new classless system, the communist society.

The bourgeoisie and the revisionists, all the enemies of communism strive to present Marxism as obsolete,

old-fashioned and out of place in the present historical conditions.

The revisionists of all hues, Soviet, Titoite, Eurocommunist, Chinese, etc., under the facade of a creative development of Marxism, deny the laws, the general principles and the proletarian class spirit of the Marxist-Leninist science. They talk about models and of specific forms of socialism, such as "developed socialism," "self-management," "democratic and human," etc., with the purpose of opposing the true scientific socialism of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

But faced with the insults and betrayals of the revisionists and opportunists of all hues, the genuine Marxist-Leninists have come forward to fight them in all fields to preserve its integrity and purity and to keep it as an always sharp weapon in the hands of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Among them have been and will always be the communists of the CPL.

We sincerely congratulate the comrades of the MLP for the warm homage which tonight they pay to the great teacher, Karl Marx, showing once again their unbreakable admiration of his work and person, and their unchanging devotion to the cause of communism, to which Marx dedicated his life.

[The message then described the situation facing the revolutionary movement around the world this May Day. It then continued:]

In the Dominican Republic the class confrontations between the exploited and the exploiters, between the oppressed and the oppressors, are well defined as a result of the sharpening of the profound crisis and of the resistance of the toilers to the politics of oppression and exploitation of U.S. imperialism and the bourgeoisie.

The political line of the CPL is in accord with the need to accumulate forces in a moment in which the revolutionary situation is within one's perspective, but that it has not yet matured and its breaking out is not something immediate.

And within this orientation we must place the subjective factor, the question of the revolutionary political leadership, the task of building the Marxist-Leninist party capable of pushing forward the deepening of the struggle and of placing itself in front of the struggle and leading it, as the basic condition for the future confrontation to end in a triumphant revolution, and the results of the struggle to be favorable to the general cause of socialism and communism.

Thus to steel and strengthen even more the Party,





A section of the militant contingent of the CPL in the May Day march in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 1983.

to bolshevize without letup the CPL as the leading political force of the process, as the vanguard of the proletariat, must be the main objective of all our activities.

Dear comrades,

On this May 1st let us raise even higher that banner of the revolution, the victorious banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and let us march together with the other brother parties to push forward the strengthening of the unity of the Marxist-Leninist movement, as an indispensable necessity to face the coordinated activity of the imperialists and the revisionists against Marxism-Leninism and the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and peoples.

Let us salute on this May 1st the glorious Party of Labor of Albania, which is resolved to always march forward raising high the victorious banner of Marxism-Leninism, and its dear leader Enver Hoxha, eminent Marxist-Leninist and unyielding fighter for the cause of

socialism and communism, and the Socialist Republic of Albania, beacon of socialism in the world and the only country where the banner of socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat is victoriously held high, a permanent source of inspiration and example of militant solidarity for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, the liberation movement of the peoples and the Marxist-Leninist movement.

*Long live May 1st!*

*Long live proletarian internationalism!*

*Long live the fraternal and internationalist friendship between the MLP and the CPL!*

*Glory to Marxism-Leninism!!!*

Information Office  
Communist Party of Labor  
April 29, 1983

**United front tactics are an essential tool of the proletarian party**

## The Third Congress of the CI on the Relationship of the Party and the Masses

This is the third in a series of articles on united front tactics. The profound experience of the Communist (Third) International is a crucial part of any serious study of the united front. It was the CI that put forward the slogan of the united front and popularized united front tactics as one of the basic methods of overcoming the split in the working class movement caused by the soldout, opportunist leaders who went over to the side of the bourgeoisie in World War I (1914-1918).

In World War I, the old Second (Social-Democratic) International went bankrupt. Almost all its main leaders came out to side with the war machines of "their own" bourgeoisie. The majority of social-democratic organizations became nothing but machines to urge the workers to slaughter their class brothers in other lands for the sake of the supremacy and high profits of the local bourgeoisie. After the war, the social-democratic organizations and reformist leaders continued their treachery and worked to stamp out the revolutionary upsurge. As a result, the honest revolutionary and

Marxist forces who remained loyal to the working class abandoned the Second International and formed the Third International; they rallied the class conscious workers to build up the Leninist proletarian parties of a new type. The term "social-democrat" became a term of disgrace, and the class conscious workers proudly took up the name "communist."

The CI was formally founded in 1919, and it grew like wildfire in its first two years of existence. It won to its side the vanguard of the workers. But the corrupt reformist leaders and their social-democratic organizations managed to hold on to their influence over large parts of the working class. Thus the working class movement was split between the communist, genuinely proletarian, parties and the social-democratic (reformist or centrist) parties.

In this situation, the CI carefully elaborated and further developed the Marxist-Leninist ideas on the united action of the proletariat. It was the Third Congress of the CI (June 22-July 12, 1921) that first set forward the

<b>I. Winning the Majority of the Working Class for Communism</b> .....	50	Don't Separate the Economic and Political Struggles .....	60
The Heroic "March Action" of the German Proletariat .....	50	The Regular Participation of Every Communist in the Work of the Party .....	61
The "Theory of the Offensive" .....	51	<b>III. The United Front</b> .....	61
Learning to Link Up With the Still Undeveloped Revolutionary Sentiments of the Masses .....	53	Do Not Write Off the Workers Under Opportunist Influence .....	61
The Concept of the Masses .....	54	The Open Letter From the German Communists .....	62
Against Opportunist Interpretations of "Winning the Majority" .....	55	The United Front From Above and the United Front From Below .....	63
An Example From the Present .....	57	The Conference of the Three Internationals .....	64
<b>II. The Communist Parties Must Be Parties of Action</b> .....	57	No "United Socialist Front" in the Soviet Union .....	66
The Question of Partial Struggles and Partial Demands .....	58	The Right to Criticize the Opportunists Must Be Preserved and Utilized .....	67
Exposing the Reformists and Centrists on Concrete Issues .....	58		



V.I. Lenin — 1921

slogan of "building up a united proletarian front."

In the last article, we discussed the general role of the Third Congress in the development of the CI and the building up of new communist parties. We showed that it put forward the basic Leninist theses concerning the relationship of the communist party to the masses, thus establishing a firm basis for the more detailed discussions of particular questions of united front tactics in the later congresses of the CI. We grouped the lessons of the Third Congress that are particularly relevant to our present discussion of united front tactics into five general categories.

We shall now proceed to discuss these five general categories in more detail. We shall make special use of "Theses on Tactics" and the resolution entitled "The Organizational Construction of the Communist Parties and the Methods and Scope of Their Activity" (which we shall abbreviate as "Resolution on Party-Building") endorsed by the Third Congress.

## I.

### Winning the Majority of the Working Class for Communism

The Third Congress stressed that the communist parties must link themselves with the masses. This was a basic thesis of the first two congresses of the CI as well, but it received a new and more detailed elaboration at the Third Congress. The Third Congress stressed that the sympathy of the majority of the working people is needed for the success of the proletarian revolution. Thus, since the communist parties are parties of the revolution, they must strive to bring the majority of the working class and people into revolutionary positions. The parties must learn to gauge carefully the mood and political stands of the working masses so as to be able to lead them in revolutionary struggle.

This might seem like an elementary point or even a mere platitude. But when it came to using this principle in deciding what to do in various concrete situations, problems came up and some comrades even rejected the whole idea. Confusion had arisen due to a one-sided summation of the treacheries of the social-democratic opportunists. The reformist and centrist chieftains constantly justified their sellout by whining that their hands were tied by the backwardness of the masses. They condemned all militant action by the proletariat as adventurism, premature, untimely, ad nauseum.

The communist militants, on the other hand, were in tune with the burning discontent and anger of the masses against the exploiters. They were used to demonstrating that the masses were far to the left of the soldout social-democratic leaders. They were used to leading the masses into action. They were used to

seeing references to the mood of the majority used simply as a stupid lying excuse for inaction and for siding with the bourgeoisie against the masses. The byword of genuine Marxist practical work is: don't tell us how hopeless the masses are, but learn how to evoke, how to bring to the surface, the revolutionary strivings of the masses.

Hence it was easy, in the heat of passionate struggle and in the rush of events, to go a step too far and to regard with suspicion references to the need to win over the majority of the proletariat. This was done not just by semi-anarchist elements but by some of the best militants of the CI. It was easy to regard as reformist and centrist rot various references to the need for a sober and careful assessment of the situation among the masses as the guide for deciding what type of actions to undertake. But revolutionary sentiment cannot replace the accurate assessments and judgements needed to guide the class struggle of the proletariat. If the communist movement was not to suffer shipwreck, it was necessary for the CI to inculcate the scientific Leninist tactics among the communist parties.

#### The Heroic "March Action" of the German Proletariat

One of the places where this issue came to a head was over the evaluation of the heroic armed struggle of the German proletariat of March 1921 ("the March action"), which took place just three months prior to

the Third Congress. In this battle, hundreds of thousands of proletarians rose in an armed uprising as a response to provocations by the bourgeoisie. Only the German communists stood by the proletariat, while the reformist and centrist parties once again betrayed the masses. Lenin said that "...the March action was a great step forward in spite of the mistakes of its leaders" ("Speech in Defense of the Tactics of the CI," *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 470, at the Third Congress) and stressed the need to take heed of the lessons of this struggle. The rectification of the tactical errors of the United German Communist Party in leading this struggle was one of the major issues of the Third Congress.

To understand the situation facing the German proletariat, let us review the history leading to the March action.

The situation in Germany at that time was pregnant with socialist revolution. At the end of World War I, in 1918, the German proletariat had risen in revolution and, for a time, began to establish Soviets. The German emperor, Kaiser Wilhelm II, was chased out of the country.

But the tragedy was that the majority of the proletariat still had faith in the social-democratic collaborators with the bourgeoisie. The working class had not yet gained the political consciousness to throw aside the reformists and centrists. Of course, it should also be remembered that the communist elements had been fiercely persecuted during the war, while the social-democratic class traitors lounged about under the protection of the bourgeoisie and so were organized and ready to throw themselves against the upsurge of the masses.

Thus the social-democratic reformists were able to stop the revolution halfway. They were unable to save the monarchy but they had the proletariat give up the Soviets in favor of an ordinary capitalist republic. They took upon themselves the job of suppressing the revolutionary initiative of the workers and disarming them. In order to have a tool to fight Bolshevism and the threat of a new revolutionary uprising, the social-democratic leaders who now formed the government of Germany helped the bourgeoisie establish new shock troops for the reaction. The social-democratic government tolerated the formation of numerous illegal, ultra-reactionary armed detachments; indeed, the government itself sponsored the "free corps" which was the base for all these groups.

As a result, a turbulent period opened in German history. The social-democrats sought to preserve capitalism and to impose a bourgeois republic on the masses. The right-wing counter-revolutionaries, their positions saved by social-democratic treachery, organized themselves for attempts to install a dictatorship of the extreme reactionaries on the masses. Meanwhile the working class moved gradually to the left, and the German communists gained strength, founded the

Communist Party, and proceeded to rally the masses.

This was a period of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary attempts.

The extreme reactionaries, for example, attempted to seize state power in March 1920 in the "Kapp putsch." This was something rather similar to the Kornilov revolt in Russia of the tsarist generals against the Kerensky government in August 1917. The monarchist landowner Kapp and the reactionary generals encountered no resistance from the social-democratic government, and they proclaimed a military dictatorship. But this putsch collapsed due to a general strike of the workers of Berlin.

The proletariat, for its part, made several attempts to push the revolution further. The most notable was the Spartacus uprising of January 1919. In this entire post-war period the proletariat faced savage repression. The social-democratic government and the reactionaries conspired together to murder Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht and to slaughter 20,000 revolutionary workers in the various class battles.

By 1920 it was clear that the workers were again moving to the left. This frightened the bourgeoisie. It decided to provoke the class conscious workers into a premature insurrection in order to have an excuse to massacre the communists before they could gain more strength from the leftward motion of the masses. Thus, in March 1921, the bourgeois government, which had succeeded the social-democratic government, sent troops to suppress the workers of central Germany.

In reply, the United Communist Party of Germany led the workers in struggle. This was the "March action." The Communist Party proved itself to be the party that shared weal and woe with the workers, while the reformist and centrist leaders supported the bourgeoisie.

But the German Communist Party, while showing its militant and fighting spirit, made serious tactical errors. It misunderstood the nature of the March action. It didn't understand that this struggle was a defensive struggle forced on the proletariat, and instead it tried to convert it into an offensive struggle for power. As a result, the Party fell victim of the provocation of the bourgeoisie and conducted an armed uprising in a situation where it did not yet have the support of the majority of the proletariat and so was bound to suffer a heavy defeat.

#### The "Theory of the Offensive"

The March action despite the mistakes was a valiant deed of the proletariat. But a lasting danger, that could have been fatal if left unattended, lay in the fact that the German communists had a hard time judging the lessons of this struggle correctly because of the influence of the semi-anarchist "theory of the offensive."

This theory had been proclaimed at the Unity Con-



Lenin meeting with delegates to the Second Congress of the Communist International, July 19-August 7, 1920.

gress of the German CP and the left wing of the Independent Social-Democratic Party in December 1920. It held that the Party should always turn any struggle into an offensive struggle, independent of the political situation, and it negated the need to judge the objective conditions, the mood of the masses, and so forth. It simply regarded all talk of defensive struggles as opportunist. Such a theory threatened to doom the United German Communist Party to repeat the errors of the March action and to hurl itself to its destruction. This theory prevented the German communists from summing up the valuable experience they had gained during the March action and from using this experience to further temper the Party.

The March action illustrated the fallacy of the "theory of the offensive." It reminds one of Lenin's warning in his work for the Second Congress of the CI, where he wrote that:

*"It is just as if 10,000 soldiers were to fling themselves into battle against 50,000 enemy soldiers, when the thing to do would have been to 'stop,' to 'turn,' or even to effect a 'compromise' to gain time until the arrival of the 100,000 reinforcements which were on their way but which could not go into action immediately."* ("Left-Wing" Communism, An Infantile Disorder, Ch. IX)

It was the task of the Third Congress to review and stress this lesson. It centered its attention with regard to the March action on criticizing the "theory of the offensive" and to stressing the necessity for the com-

munist parties to win over the majority of the working class and other toilers in order to stage a successful socialist revolution. Its evaluation of the March action stated:

*"The action of last March was forced upon the VKPD (United German Communist Party) by the Government's attack upon the proletariat of Middle Germany.*

*"In stoutly defending the workers of Middle Germany, the VKPD has shown itself to be the Party of the revolutionary proletariat of Germany. In this first great struggle, which it had to sustain immediately after its formation, the VKPD committed a number of mistakes, of which the chief one was that it did not clearly understand the defensive nature of the struggle.... This mistake was further amplified by a number of Party theorists who represented the offensive as the principal means of the campaign of the VKPD in the present situation. ... The Congress of the Communist International considers the March action of the VKPD as a step forward. The March action was a heroic battle of hundreds of thousands of workers against the bourgeoisie. It is of the opinion, that in order to ensure greater success for its mass actions, the VKPD must in the future better adapt its slogans to the actual situation, giving the most careful study to the situation...."* ("Theses on Tactics," 7. The Lessons of Actions of March) The Third Congress further stated:

*"The March events in Germany have shown the*

*great danger, that the front ranks of the working class, the Communist vanguard of the proletariat, may be forced by the enemy into the fight, before the gathering of the great masses of the proletarians has taken place. ... [The Communist International] has welcomed the fact that the United Communist Party of Germany placed itself at the head of the working masses that hastened to the defense of their menaced brothers. But at the same time, the Communist International deems it its duty to declare frankly and distinctly to the workers of all countries: When the vanguard is unable to evade the open fight, when such fights cannot force the mobilization of the entire working class, the vanguard must not let itself be drawn in to decisive fights alone and isolated, that when forced into isolated fight, the vanguard of the proletarian army must evade the armed clash with the enemy, because the source of the victory of the proletariat over the armed white-guards consists in its reliance upon the masses."* (from "A Call to New Work and New Struggles" from the Executive Committee of the CI issued at the end of the Third Congress)

Similar questions came up in other parties. The Communist Party of France, for example, faced a difficult struggle to transform itself into a truly revolutionary party. It had the task of breaking with "the remnants of national pacifist and parliamentary-reformist ideology." ("Theses on Tactics," 3. The Important Task of the Present) But this could not be accomplished by simply mechanically carrying out the most extreme actions independent of the circumstances. The Third Congress pointed out that "The attempts of the impatient and the politically inexperienced to apply extreme methods, which by their very nature are methods of decisive proletarian revolution, to simple questions (e.g., ...the proposal for the forcible prevention of the occupation of Luxembourg, etc.) contain elements of most dangerous adventurism. If applied such tactics would put off for a long time the real revolutionary preparation of the proletariat for the conquest of power. That adventurism, which by its very nature forms no clear conception of the purposes of mass action and the difficulties in the way, merely brings sickly and oftentimes deadly premature travail instead of the revolution." (*Ibid.*)

Summing up the general ideological question involved, the Third Congress stated:

*"The distinction between the Communist International and the Social-Democrats of all colors does not consist in the fact that we are trying to force the revolution and set a definite date for it while they are opposed to any utopian and immature uprisings. No, the distinction lies in the fact that Social-Democrats hinder the actual development of the revolution by rendering all possible assistance in the way of restoring the equilib-*

*rium of the bourgeois state while the Communists, on the other hand, are trying to take advantage of all means and methods for the purpose of overthrowing and destroying the capitalist government and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat."* ("Theses on the International Situation and the Problems of the CI," Section VII, Point 37, emphasis as in the original)

#### Learning to Link Up With the Still Undeveloped Revolutionary Sentiments of the Masses

The evaluation of the March action and the criticism of the "theory of the offensive" are concrete examples of how the issue of the need to win over the majority of the working class came up in practice. At the Third Congress there were those, such as the Italian delegate Terracini, who actually advocated removing the references in the CI theses to the necessity to win the majority of the working class and even to the word "masses." In essence, the attitude that came up is that, if the German communists, or the Czechoslovak communists already had several hundred thousand workers in their parties, which they did, what need is there to consider how to win over the rest?

The main essence of this part of the work of the Third Congress, namely the struggle over the need to win the majority of the working class, was to inculcate in the parties the need to be sensitive to the political mood of the masses and find ways and means of linking up with them. The situation that the Third Congress dealt with is that denial of the need to win over the majority of the working class and of the need to carefully gauge the mood of the masses had formed an obstacle blocking effective consideration of a whole series of questions, such as understanding the role of defensive struggle, making proper use of partial demands, utilizing united front tactics, and so forth. Clearly, if one didn't recognize the need to win over the majority, if one thus didn't understand in general what the significance of the balance of forces was, this would be an obstacle to the rest of the work of the Third Congress, such as discussing the ways and means of changing the balance of forces in favor of the revolution, and even to making an accurate assessment of what the balance of forces at any time really was.

What does sensitivity to the political mood of the masses mean? The reformist politicians, liquidationist elements and other opportunists say that work among the masses means giving up a militant stand and watering down one's demands to nothing. They present it as requiring one to inscribe on one's banner the least common denominator of all the prejudices and backward ideas currently fashionable. In fact, this is not sensitivity to the masses, but just another way in which the opportunists blame their treachery on the alleged backwardness of the masses.

The Third Congress presented the matter of sensitivity to the masses differently. It showed that it was a question of learning to bring forth the revolutionary energy of the masses. The communist vanguard had to learn to link up with the still inconsistent, vacillating and incomplete revolutionary tendencies that exist among the working masses. It had to learn how to use various forms of agitation and organization that appeal to the still confused strivings of the still unawakened masses and help bring these masses forward to the communist stand.

Thus the Third Congress pointed out:

"In those capitalist countries where a large majority of the proletariat has not yet reached revolutionary consciousness, the Communist agitators must be constantly on the lookout for new forms of propaganda, in order to meet these backward workers half way, and thus facilitate their entry into the revolutionary ranks. The communist propaganda, with its watchwords, must bring out the budding, unconscious, incomplete, vacillating and semi-bourgeois revolutionary tendencies which are struggling for supremacy with the bourgeois traditions and conceptions in the minds of the workers.

"At the same time communist propaganda must not rest content with the limited and confused demands or aspirations of the proletarian masses. These demands and expectations contain revolutionary germs and are a means of bringing the proletariat under the influence of communist propaganda." ("Resolution on Party-Building," Point 22)

### The Concept of the Masses

The communist parties are proletarian parties. The united front tactics were put forth first and foremost to overcome the split in the working class movement and ensure that the proletariat fights as a united class. But, to carry out a revolution, the proletariat must also take the leadership of all the toilers and exploited, of all the "small people," including the semi-proletarians (such as the poor peasantry) and various strata of the petty bourgeoisie.

At the Third Congress Lenin pointed out that:

"...to win, we must have the sympathy of the masses. An absolute majority is not always essential; but what is essential to win and retain power is not only the majority of the working class — I use the term 'working class' in its West European sense, i.e., in the sense of the industrial proletariat — but also the majority of the working and exploited rural population." ("Speech in Defense of the Tactics of the CI")

Thus the communist parties must be sensitive not just to the political mood of the proletariat, but also that

of the rest of the working masses. The Third Congress discussed the particular methods to be used to rally the semi-proletarians and various petty-bourgeois strata around the revolution. It pointed out:

"In order to win the semi-proletarian sections of the workers as sympathizers of the revolutionary proletarians, the Communists must make use of their special antagonisms to the landowners, the capitalists and the capitalist state in order to win these intermediary groups from their mistrust of the proletariat. ... Communists must also endeavor to counteract the pernicious influence of hostile organizations which occupy authoritative positions in the respective districts, or may have influence over the petty bourgeois working peasantry, over those who work in the home-industries and other semi-proletarian classes. Those who are known by the exploited, from their own bitter experience, to be the representatives and embodiment of the entire criminal capitalist system, must be unmasked. All everyday occurrences which bring the State bureaucracy into conflict with the ideals of petty bourgeois democracy and jurisdiction, must be made use of in a judicial and energetic manner in the course of communist agitation." ("Resolution on Party-Building," Point 29)

The Third Congress discussed the tasks of the communist parties towards the process of fermentation taking place in the petty bourgeoisie. It stated:

"In Western Europe there is no other important class besides the proletariat, which might become a determining factor in the world revolution. ... But even in Western Europe a part of the peasantry, a considerable section of the petty-bourgeoisie in the towns, the numerous so-called 'new middle class,' the office workers, etc., are sinking into ever worse conditions of life. Under the pressure of the high cost of living, housing difficulties, and the insecurity of their positions, these masses are beginning to pass through a process of fermentation, which draws them out of their political inactivity.... The bankruptcy of imperialism in the defeated countries, the bankruptcy of pacifism and social-reform in the victorious countries, drives some of these middle class elements into the camp of open counter-revolution, and others into the revolutionary camp. ... The Communist Parties have to keep alive the fermentation among the petty-bourgeoisie, in order to utilize it in the most appropriate way, even though it does not lose its petty-bourgeois illusions." (from Point 9, Relation to the Semi-Proletarian Elements, of the "Theses on Tactics," emphasis as in the original)

Another important point about the concept of the masses, besides the question of the semi-proletarians and the petty bourgeoisie, is that it must be considered in relation with the particular situation facing the revo-

lution at any moment. For example, as the situation ripens towards revolution, more and more of the exploited and downtrodden awaken and take part in struggle. Lenin showed how the concept of the masses changes and expands in the course of the revolution. He stated:

"...I wish to say only a few words about the concept of 'masses.' It is one that changes in accordance with the changes in the nature of the struggle. At the beginning of the struggle it took only a few thousand genuinely revolutionary workers to warrant talk of the masses. If the party succeeds in drawing into the struggle not only its own members, if it also succeeds in arousing non-party people, it is well on the way to winning the masses. ... You have a mass when several thousand non-party workers, who usually live a philistine life and drag out a miserable existence, and who have never heard anything about politics, begin to act in a revolutionary way. ... When the revolution has become sufficiently prepared, the concept 'masses' becomes different: several thousand workers no longer constitute the masses. This word begins to denote something else. The concept of 'masses' undergoes a change so that it implies the majority, and not simply a majority of the workers alone, but the majority of all the exploited. Any other kind of interpretation is impermissible for a revolutionary, and any other sense of the word becomes incomprehensible. ... I would not altogether deny that a revolution can be started by a very small party and brought to a victorious conclusion. But one must have a knowledge of the methods by which the masses can be won over. For this, thoroughgoing preparation of revolution is essential. But here you have comrades coming forward with the assertion that we should immediately give up the demand for 'big' masses. They must be challenged. Without thoroughgoing preparation you will not achieve victory in any country." ("Speech in Defense of the Tactics of the CI")

### Against Opportunist Interpretations of "Winning the Majority"

The above statement by Lenin not only stresses the need to win over the majority to ensure the success of the proletarian revolution, but it also cuts in the other direction as well. It shows that in "slow" times, it can happen that the activity of relatively small numbers of workers suffices to prove the mass character of the movement. This cuts against the empty-headed reformists and our present-day demoralized liquidators who try to use the concept of "winning the majority" to disparage the "small numbers" in the present mass actions. Their attitude shows that they are slaves to the bourgeois ideologists, who down to the day of the insur-

rection repeatedly profess to believe that the masses just love their iron bonds of capitalist slavery and that all the mass outrage is really just the work of a handful of "outside agitators."

Lenin and the CI fought a ferocious and unrelenting battle against the opportunist interpretations of "winning the majority" by the reformists and centrists. The First Congress of the CI, for example, showed how the social-democrats defended the rule of the bourgeoisie by denouncing the proletarian revolution as a violation of "pure democracy." Some months later, Lenin, in his "Greetings to Italian, French and German Communists" of October 10, 1919, wrote about the necessity to win over the majority of the working people in the following passage, so rich in profound ideas:

"Only scoundrels or simpletons can think that the proletariat must first win a majority in elections carried out under the yoke of the bourgeoisie, under the yoke of wage slavery, and must then win power. This is the height of stupidity or hypocrisy; it is substituting elections, under the old system and with the old power, for class struggle and revolution.

"The proletariat wages its class struggle and does not wait for elections to begin a strike, although for the complete success of a strike it is necessary to have the sympathy of the majority of the working people (and, it follows, of the majority of the population); the proletariat wages its class struggle and overthrows the bourgeoisie without waiting for any preliminary elections (supervised by the bourgeoisie and carried out under its yoke) and the proletariat is perfectly well aware that for the success of its revolution, for the successful overthrow of the bourgeoisie, it is absolutely necessary to have the sympathy of the majority of the working people (and, it follows, of the majority of the population).

"The parliamentary cretins and latter-day Louis Blancs [a French reformist who, among other things, opposed the Paris Commune as a violation of the authority of the "freely elected" reactionary assembly at Versailles — ed.] insist absolutely on elections, on elections that are most certainly supervised by the bourgeoisie, to ascertain whether they have the sympathy of the majority of the working people. But this is the attitude of pedants, of living corpses, or of cunning tricksters.

"Real life and the history of actual revolutions show that quite often the 'sympathy of the majority of the working people' cannot be demonstrated by any elections (to say nothing of elections supervised by the exploiters, with 'equality' of exploiters and exploited!) Quite often the 'sympathy of the majority of the working people' is demonstrated not by elections at all, but by the growth of one of the parties; or by its increased representation in

the Soviets, or by the success of a strike which for some reason has acquired enormous significance, or by successes won in civil war, etc., etc. ...

"The proletarian revolution is impossible without the sympathy and support of the overwhelming majority of the working people for their vanguard — the proletariat. But this sympathy and this support are not forthcoming immediately and are not decided by elections. They are won in the course of a long, arduous and stern class struggle. ... After the conquest of power this struggle continues, but in other forms." (Collected Works, Vol. 30, pp. 58-60, emphasis as in the original)

This idea is repeated in many places by Lenin. An excellent discussion of the difference between the concept of winning the majority and the illusions and prejudices of petty-bourgeois democracy is given in his article "The Constituent Assembly Election and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" of December 1919. There he points out that:

"The traitors, blockheads and pedants of the Second International could never understand such dialectics; the proletariat cannot achieve victory if it does not win the majority of the population to its side. But to limit that winning to polling a majority of votes in an election under the rule of the bourgeoisie, or to make it the condition for it, is crass stupidity, or else sheer deception of the workers. In order to win the majority of the population to its side the proletariat must, in the first place, overthrow the bourgeoisie and seize state power; secondly, it must introduce Soviet power and completely smash the old state apparatus, whereby it immediately undermines the rule, prestige and influence of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois compromisers over the non-proletarian working people. Thirdly, it must entirely destroy the influence of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois compromisers over the majority of the non-proletarian masses by satisfying their economic needs in a revolutionary way at the expense of the exploiters." (Collected Works, Vol. 30, pp. 265-66, emphasis as in original)

Lenin further stressed that:

"It is no use thinking that the petty-bourgeois or semi-petty-bourgeois masses can decide in advance the extremely complicated political question: 'to be with the working class or with the bourgeoisie.' The vacillation of the non-proletarian sections of the working people is inevitable; and inevitable also is their own practical experience, which will enable them to compare leadership by the bourgeoisie with leadership by the proletariat.

"This is the circumstance that is constantly lost sight of by those who worship 'consistent democracy' and who imagine that extremely important political problems can be solved by voting. Such problems are actually solved by civil war if they are acute and aggravated by struggle, and the experience of the non-proletarian masses (primarily of the peasants), their experience of comparing the rule of the proletariat with the rule of the bourgeoisie, is of tremendous importance in that war." (Ibid., p. 267, emphasis as in original)

Among other things, Lenin also deals in this article with the relationship of town and country. He points out that:

"The country cannot be equal to the town under the historical conditions of this epoch. The town inevitably leads the country. The country inevitably follows the town. The only question is which class, of the 'urban' classes, will succeed in leading the country, will cope with this task, and what forms will leadership by the town assume?" (Ibid., p. 257, emphasis as in original)

At the Third Congress of the CI, Lenin returned to the issue of the relationship of the town and country. In his "Report on the Tactics of the Russian Communist Party, July 5, 1921," he discussed how the proletariat formed an alliance with the peasantry. At the same time, he opposed the Menshevik arguments of "pure democracy," pointing out that:

"The Menshevik argument runs like this: the peasantry constitutes a majority; we are pure democrats, therefore, the majority should decide. But as the peasantry cannot operate on its own, this, in practice, means nothing more nor less than the restoration of capitalism." (Collected Works, Vol. 32, p. 485)

After the Third Congress of the CI, Lenin again spoke against formalist interpretations of "winning the majority." In "A Letter to the German Communists" of August 14, 1921, he brought up a practical example from the struggle against the fascists:

"To win over the majority of the proletariat to our side — such is the 'principal task'....

"Of course, we do not give the winning of the majority a formal interpretation, as do the knights of philistine 'democracy' of the Two-and-a-Half International. When in Rome, in July 1921, the entire proletariat — the reformist proletariat of the trade unions and the Centrists of Serrati's party — followed the Communists against the fascists, that was winning over the majority of the working class to our side.

"This was far, very far, from winning them decisively; it was doing so only partially, only momentarily, only locally. But it was winning over

the majority, and that is possible even if, formally, the majority of the proletariat follow bourgeois leaders, or leaders who pursue a bourgeois policy (as do all the leaders of the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals), or if the majority of the proletariat are wavering. This winning over is gaining ground steadily in every way throughout the world. Let us make more thorough and careful preparations for it; let us not allow a single serious opportunity to slip by when the bourgeoisie compels the proletariat to undertake a struggle; let us learn to correctly determine the moment when the masses of the proletariat cannot but rise together with us. (Collected Works, Vol. 32, p. 522, emphasis as in the original)

### An Example From the Present

Lenin's example of the Rome demonstration brings to mind things that happen today. In the introduction to this series of articles, we pointed to our Party's use of united front tactics at demonstrations. For example, our Party works hard at the anti-militarist demonstrations, carefully gauges the mood of the masses, links up with their sentiment against the U.S. war drive, and helps move it forward to conscious struggle against imperialism as a system and against the capitalist parties.

These tactics have won the sympathy of the masses. This is seen in the support given to our contingents, in the cases of demonstrators taking up the anti-imperialist slogans put forward by our Party, in the warm reception given to the militant songs of our cultural groups, and so forth. It is seen in the masses joining us in denouncing the reaction, and in the pressure of the rank-

and-file activists inside the various groups for militancy. Our successful defiance of the reformists and liquidators is due to support from the masses, and it is an example of winning over the masses. True, it is even further from winning them decisively than the example of the Rome demonstration. But it is a practical example of winning the masses, even if very partially, very momentarily and very locally. This shows that even in the present difficult period it is fully possible, and in fact essential, to apply the Leninist teachings on winning the masses.

The liquidators deny that it is possible in this period to win the masses for revolutionary agitation. Instead they have abandoned agitation against U.S. imperialism and have thrown themselves on the mercy of the Democratic Party in the name of staying with the majority. In this way, they have completely trampled on the Leninist teachings on winning the majority, for these teachings are on winning the masses for communism, for the revolution. He who has lost faith in the revolutionary sentiment of the masses, he who has folded up the banners of class struggle and revolution, has at the same time renounced the true tactics of the united front and of winning the majority.

Our Party, on the other hand, applies the Leninist teachings on winning the masses. We pay close attention to the political mood of the masses and to finding the methods of linking up with the still undeveloped revolutionary sentiments of the masses. Our successes are another verification that the Leninist teachings are fully applicable, not just when the revolution surges forward, but also in the protracted work of preparation in "slow" periods.

## II.

### The Communist Parties Must Be Parties of Action

The Third Congress stressed that the communist parties must be parties of action. They must not simply try to win the masses with propaganda and general assertions, but they must lead the masses in struggle. This was the only way in which the communists could win over the majority of the working class. Thus the Third Congress stated that:

"The development of the communist parties can only be achieved through a fighting policy. Even the smallest communist units must not rest content with mere propaganda. In all proletarian mass organizations they must constitute the vanguard, which must teach the backward, vacillating masses how to fight, by formulating practical plans for direct action, and by urging the workers to make a stand for the necessities of life. Only in this manner will Communists be able to reveal to

the masses the treacherous character of all non-communist parties. Only in case they prove able to lead the practical struggle for the proletariat, only in case they can promote these conflicts, will the Communists succeed in winning over great masses of the proletariat to the struggle for the dictatorship [of the proletariat — ed.].

"The entire propaganda and agitation as well as the other work of the Communist parties, must be based on the conception that no lasting betterment of the position of the proletariat is possible under capitalism.... This conception, however, must not find expression in the abandonment of all participation in the proletarian struggle for actual and immediate necessities of life, until such a time as the proletariat will be able to attain them through its own dictatorship." (from Point 5 of the

"Theses on Tactics," emphasis as in the original)

### The Question of Partial Struggles and Partial Demands

The First and Second Congresses of the CI had also stressed that the communist parties must be parties of struggle, but the Third Congress elaborated this in relation to the celebrated question of partial struggles and partial demands. For the reformists, partial demands are an excuse to paint the capitalist system in glowing colors. But for the communist, the heart of the question of partial demands is linking up with the various currents of revolt among the working masses and leading the struggle on the economic and political questions of the day.

Thus the communist parties must know how to lead not just the crowning point of the struggle, the revolution itself, but also the "partial struggles" that lead to the revolutionary insurrection. Indeed, if a party is not built up in the midst of the class struggle, it will not know how to lead an insurrection either, even if it is handed one on a silver platter. Thus, rather than counterposing the various partial struggles to the revolution itself, the communist parties must learn how to make use of them so that the various revolutionary struggles will, "when united, form the flood of the social revolution." (*Ibid.*)

Perhaps the idea might arise that the need to wage partial struggles only applies during a "slow" period, while during periods of revolutionary crisis one can dispense with such things. But this is completely wrong. The Third Congress, in fact, took place during a time when the post-World War I revolutionary wave had not yet exhausted itself. It approached the question of partial demands in the context of a situation where there was a reason to believe that revolutions might break out very soon in various European countries. But during this crisis, as is usually the case in revolutionary crises, the issue of the livelihood and immediate interests of the masses took on an especially acute form. The very sharpness of these issues makes it essential to take advantage of them for rallying and organizing the proletariat and setting it in motion against the exploiters.

The Third Congress vehemently opposed the view that the raising of partial demands was, in itself, social-democracy and reformism. Indeed, it pointed to the fact that the social-democrats and reformists were handmaidens of the bourgeoisie who were helping the bourgeoisie squeeze the masses to the wall. This was why the social-democrats and reformists, on one front after another, were "continually demonstrating that they are unwilling to put up any fight, even for the most modest demands contained in their own programs." (*Ibid.*)

Today, too, we can see the trade union bureaucrats and reformists adapt themselves to productivity drives and Reaganomics. They wield the whip against the

masses. To fail to see this is to overlook the live issues of the class struggle going on right under one's nose.

Thus the Third Congress held that:

**"Every objection to the establishment of such partial demands, every accusation of reformism in connection with these partial struggles, is an outcome of the same incapacity to grasp the live issues of revolutionary action which manifested itself in the opposition of some communist groups to participation in trade union activities and parliamentary action. Communists should not rest content with teaching the proletariat its ultimate aims, but should lend impetus to every practical move leading the proletariat into the struggle for these ultimate aims. How inadequate the objections to partial demands are and how divorced they are from the needs of revolutionary life, is best exemplified by the fact that even the small organizations formed by the so-called 'left' communists for the propagation of pure doctrines have seen the necessity of formulating partial demands, in order to attract larger sections of workers than they have hitherto been able to." (*Ibid.*, Point 6)**

In fact, it is only through vigorously leading the various immediate struggles that the communist party can expose the empty chatter about reform. Thus the Third Congress pointed out that:

**"...the Communists must take part in all the elementary struggles and movements of the workers, and must defend the workers' cause in all conflicts between them and the capitalists over hours and conditions of labor, wages, etc. The communists must also pay great attention to the concrete questions of working class life. ...**

**"It is only through the everyday performance of such elementary duties, and through participation in all the struggles of the proletariat.... It is only by adopting such methods that it will be distinguished from the propagandists of the hackneyed, so-called, pure socialist propaganda, consisting of recruiting new members and talking about reforms and the use of all parliamentary possibilities, or rather impossibilities." (from Point 23 of the "Resolution on Party-Building")**

### Exposing the Reformists and Centrists on Concrete Issues

Thus participation in the mass struggle provides an effective means for the communists to expose the social-democrats in the eyes of the widest masses of the workers. The struggle for the immediate interests of the working masses provides a powerful battering ram that can be used to beat down and break through the illusions and prejudices spread by the reformists.

But if this exposure is to take place, then the criticism of the reformists and centrists had to focus not just on

general ideological questions, but also on the concrete issues of the class struggles. The more that the communists could demonstrate, on issue after issue, that the social-democrats and the trade union bureaucrats had joined with the offensive of the bourgeoisie or were facilitating it, the more powerful the struggle against opportunism would be. This required a change in the way that the struggle against social-democracy was often being waged.

Take, for example, the issue of trade union contracts. The reformists and trade union bureaucrats promoted the idea of labor contracts reached by friendly negotiation as the way of replacing class struggle with class collaboration. But it is not sufficient to denounce this general stand. Instead the particular agreements with which they betray the workers must be opposed and contrasted with a real struggle.

Thus the Third Congress pointed out:

**"For instance, instead of contenting themselves with resisting theoretically and on principle all trade agreements, they [communists — ed.] should rather take the lead in the struggle over the specific nature of the trade agreements recommended by the Amsterdam [the reformist international trade union federation — ed.] leaders. It is, of course, necessary to condemn and resist any kind of impediment to the revolutionary preparedness of the proletariat, and it is a well-known fact that it is the aim of the capitalists and their Amsterdam myrmidons to tie the hands of the workers by all manner of trade agreements. Therefore, it behooves the Communists to open the eyes of the workers to the nature of these aims. This the Communists can best attain by advocating a trade agreement which would not hamper the workers." ("Resolution on Party-Building," Point 25)**

One must learn how to formulate the partial demands correctly and how to distinguish between demands which help move the struggle forward and reformist illusions which impede the struggle. Thus, for example, the Third Congress dealt with the nationalization fraud of the social-democrats, which then as now has remained a favorite theme of these class traitors. It showed how the German reformists, at the crucial moment in March, 1919, had used chatter about the "socialization" of Germany under bourgeois rule in order to hold the workers back from revolutionary action. (See Part 1 of "Theses on Tactics")

The centrists had taken up and embellished this fraud in order to hold the workers back from all live struggle. The Congress stated that:

**"Not only did the centrists mislead the masses by trying to persuade them that nationalization alone, without the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, would deprive capitalism of the chief industries, but they also endeavored to divert the workers from the real and live struggle for their immediate needs, by**

raising their hopes of a gradual seizure of industry, to be followed by 'systematic' economic reconstruction. ... The theory prevailing among a portion of the centrists, that the program of the nationalization of the coal or any other industry is based on the Lassalleian theory of the concentration of all the energies of the proletariat on a single demand, in order to use it as a lever in revolutionary action, which in its development would lead to a struggle for power, is nothing but empty words. The suffering of the working class in every country is so intense, that it is impossible to direct the struggle against these blows, which are coming thick and fast, into narrow doctrinaire channels. **On the contrary, it is essential to make use of all the economic needs of the masses, as issues in the revolutionary struggles which, when united, form the flood of the social revolution.**" ("Theses on Tactics," Point 5, emphasis as in the original)

The Third Congress also denounced the social-democratic attitude to the unemployed. It stated:

**"While the capitalists make use of the ever increasing army of the unemployed as a lever against the organized workers for the forcing down of wages, the Social-Democrats, the Independents [centrists — ed.] and official trade union leaders maintain a cowardly aloofness from the unemployed. They consider them mere objects of state trade union charity and despise them politically as Lumpen-Proletariat. The Communists must clearly understand that under the present circumstances the unemployed represent a revolutionary factor of gigantic significance. The communists must take upon themselves the leadership of this army. ...**

**"The Communist Parties, in energetically supporting this section of the workers (now low down in the scale of labor) stand up, not for the interests of one section of workers, as opposed to those of other sections, but for the common good of the entire working class betrayed by the counter-revolutionary leaders in the interests of the labor aristocracy. The more workers in the ranks of the unemployed and part-time employed, the quicker their interests become transformed into the common interests of the entire working class. The momentary interests of the labor aristocracy must be subordinated to those common interests. Those who plead the interests of the labor aristocracy, in order to arouse their hostility to the unemployed, or in order to leave the latter to their own devices, are splitting the working class and are acting in a counter-revolutionary manner." (from Point 6 of the "Theses on Tactics")**

### Don't Separate the Economic and Political Struggles

The Third Congress spoke a great deal about the struggle for the economic needs of the working masses. But it by no means regarded that the category of immediate struggles and vital demands of the masses excluded political struggles. It is clear that the struggle against reaction, the struggle against national oppression, the struggle against foreign military adventures and other political struggles also are part of the immediate needs of the masses. For example, the German proletariat rose up against the attempt of the militarists and monarchists to stage a coup d'etat in March 1920, the so-called Kapp putsch that we have referred to earlier in this article. The Congress theses talk of "...acute political and economic crises causing, as they do, new movements and struggles..." (from Point 34 of the "Resolution on Party-Building")

The Third Congress thus opposed any attempt to create some sort of theory of stages — that first one takes up the economic struggle and then the political struggle. It stressed that right from the start the communist parties must undertake political action, stating that:

"For a Communist Party there can be no period in which its party organization cannot exercise political activity. For the purpose of utilizing every political and economic situation, as well as all the changes in these situations, organizational strategy and tactics must be developed. No matter how weak the party may be, it can nevertheless take advantage of exciting political events or of extensive strikes affecting the entire economic system, by a radical propaganda." (from Point 31 of the "Resolution on Party-Building")

Sometimes it is put forward that the class struggle should be split into two spheres: the political sphere which is the sole concern of the party and the economic sphere which is the sole concern of the trade union. This is actually a typical social-democratic theory. It shows that separating the economic and political struggle also involves upsetting the proper relations between the trade unions and the communist party.

The Third Congress denounced all such theories. It methodically demolished the theory of trade union neutrality, which is one of the most widespread theories of separating the economic struggle from the political struggle. It held that:

"But in reality the trade unions have never been and could never be neutral. Not only is neutrality harmful to the trade unions, it cannot positively be maintained. In the struggle between capital and labor no mass organization of workers can remain neutral. ... But just as it is imperative for the bourgeoisie that the masses should believe in the after life it is imperative for them that the trade unions should maintain neutrality with regard to politics

and with regard to the workmen's Communist Party." (from Sec. 1, The Fallacy of "Neutrality," of the resolution entitled "The CI and the Red International of Trade Unions")

Thus the Congress stressed that:

"Economics and politics are closely connected. ... There is not a single important question of political life which does not concern not only the labor party, but also the trade unions, and vice versa. If the French imperialistic government orders the mobilization of a certain class [i.e., of a certain age group of conscripts —ed.] for the occupation of the Ruhr basin and for the strangulation of Germany in general, can it be said that this purely political question does not concern the French trade unions? ... Or to use another illustration, — if there is in England a purely economic struggle such as the present lockout of the miners, can the Communist party declare that this does not concern it, that it is a purely trade union question?" (*Ibid.*)

The Congress pointed to the need for the closest coordination between the communist party and the trade unions, which it regarded as one aspect of the close connection between politics and economics. It held that:

"The theory and practice of fostering a split of the workers in the class struggle into two independent parts is extremely detrimental to the present revolutionary period. This struggle requires the greatest concentration of forces, a concentration characterized by the greatest expression of revolutionary energy of the working class, i.e., of all the Communists and revolutionary elements. Dual actions by the Communist Party on the one hand and the red revolutionary trade unions on the other hand are doomed in advance to failure and miscarriage. Unity of action and organic coordination of the Communist Party with the trade unions are therefore preliminary conditions to success in the struggle against capitalism." (*Ibid.*, "The Program of Action," Point 18, emphasis added)

This, however, did not mean that the party should mechanically control the trade unions. The party should instead guide the trade unions through the proper Marxist-Leninist methods. The Congress stated:

"The party must learn how to influence the Unions without attempting to keep them in leading strings. Only the Communist fraction of the union is subject to the control of the party, not the labor union as a whole. If the Communist fractions persevere, if their activity is devoted and intelligent, the party will reach a position where its advice will be accepted gladly and readily by the unions." (*Ibid.*, Sec. 4)

### The Regular Participation of Every Communist in the Work of the Party

The building of the communist parties as parties of action not only requires a correct attitude to the partial struggles, but it requires that the party be one in which all the members are active in the struggle. The Third Congress paid attention to the difficulties that the new communist parties were having in eliminating the old social-democratic form of organization, where the membership was inert and inactive and the leadership formed a ruling bureaucracy. It pointed out that "Regular participation on the part of most of the members in the daily work of the Party is lacking even today in the lawful Communist Parties. That is the chief fault of these parties, forming the basis of constant insecurity in their development." (from Point 8 of the "Resolution on Party-Building")

The Congress pointed out that: "A Communist Party must strive to have only really active members, and to demand from every rank and file party worker that he should place his whole strength and time, in so far as

he can himself dispose of it, under existing conditions, at the disposal of his Party and devote his best forces to these services." (*Ibid.*, Point 10)

The Resolution goes on to describe the necessity to form small working units and the difficulties that the parties will face in introducing general obligatory work. It notes that the transformation to the new methods cannot be carried out all at once, but takes protracted efforts and mature consideration.

However, since these and other organizational questions take us outside the scope of this article, we regretfully leave this subject unexplored. We only stress that all the theses on winning the masses and leading the revolutionary struggles become mere empty words if the party is not built up on the Leninist basis. Those who denigrate party-building, those who regard the party organizations as a hindrance to their "real organizing," those who scorn the hard work and sacrifice needed to build up a communist press, etc., have thereby become underminers and opponents of the methods of winning the masses as set forth by the Third Congress of the CI.

### III.

#### The United Front

The Third Congress was the first congress of the CI to put forward the slogan of building the united proletarian front. Of course, the basic ideas behind united front tactics had been a part of Marxism from the start. But the point was to elaborate and refine these ideas and recast them into the form needed by the new communist parties. The Third Congress began this process. It did not discuss the detailed features of united front tactics. What it did was to show that the principles of winning over the majority of the working class and of the utilization of partial demands required, when applied in the situation facing the CI, the use of united front tactics. It showed that these tactics were not reformism, but an indispensable tool in the fight against reformism.

Once the Third Congress had stated the problem of the united front to the world communist movement, the CI would then move rapidly to elaborate the issue. Within half a year of the Third Congress, in December 1921, the Executive Committee of the CI (ECCI) issued more detailed theses on the united front (the theses "On the United Workers' Front and the Attitude to Workers Belonging to the Second, Two-and-a-Half, and Amsterdam Internationals, as Well as the Workers Who Support Anarcho-Syndicalist Organizations"). The Third Congress had established the ideological basis for this resolution and the subsequent rapid progress of the CI in the use of the united front tactics.

#### Do Not Write Off the Workers Under Opportunist Influence

The Third Congress faced the situation where the working class movement was, in general, split on a world scale. The politically active proletarians were organized into various competing parties and trade unions. It pointed out: "In view of the fact that in Western Europe and in America the workers are organized in trade unions and political parties...it is the duty of the Communist parties to endeavor, by means of their influence in the trade unions, by increased pressure on other parties connected with the working masses, to bring about the struggle for the achievement of the immediate needs of this proletariat." (from Point 6 of the "Theses on Tactics," emphasis as in the original)

Thus the Third Congress stressed that the workers in the opportunist parties and opportunist-led trade unions should not be simply written off. The communists had to find some way to get their ear. They had to find ways to overcome the savage obstruction of the reformist and centrist leaders, who cursed communism and did everything they could to prevent the rank-and-file worker from joining the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

The Third Congress noted that the struggle for the immediate interests of the proletariat served the communists as powerful artillery to break down the prejudices spread by the opportunist leaders. In outlining

the tasks of developing political and economic agitation, it pointed to the need to try to draw in the workers under opportunist influence. For example, in describing how the communist parties should utilize new movements and struggles arising out of acute political and economic crises, it pointed out that one method was to "...appeal directly to the members of the Socialist [i.e., reformist and centrist — ed.] Parties and the Trade Unions, pointing out how distress and oppression have driven them into the unavoidable fights with their employers in spite of the attempts of their bureaucratic leaders to evade a decisive struggle. The organs of the Party, particularly the daily newspapers, must emphasize, day by day, that the Communists are ready to take the lead in the impending and actual struggles of the distressed workers, that their fighting organization is ready to lend a helping hand wherever possible to all the oppressed in the given acute situation. It must be pointed out daily that without these struggles there is no possibility of creating tolerable living conditions for the workers in spite of the efforts of the old organizations to avoid and to obstruct these struggles." (from Point 34 of the "Resolution on Party-Building")

Thus the communist parties work to have the entire proletariat take up the struggle. But even if the opportunist parties and the trade union bureaucrats succeed for the time being, in preventing the united action of the workers, this does not mean that the communist parties should abandon the struggle. The independent role of the communist party is essential at all times, and it leads to the awakening of the masses. For example, the Congress pointed out:

"Should the pressure of the Communist Party in the Trade Unions and the press not be strong enough to rouse the proletariat to a united front, it will become the duty of the Communist Party to endeavor to lead [by itself — ed.] the masses into the struggle. The latter policy will be successful, and will lead to the awakening of the backward masses, when it will become clear to them that our aims are their aims, although they are not yet able to put up a fight for them." (from Point 6 of the "Theses on Tactics")

#### The Open Letter From the German Communists

A practical example of carrying out united front tactics had been given by the United Communist Party of Germany some six months before the Third Congress. On January 8, 1921, *Die Rote Fahne* (The Red Flag), the newspaper of the Central Committee of the United CP of Germany, published an "Open Letter" calling for united action.

The evaluation of this letter was one of the important political issues facing the Third Congress. Lenin held that:

"The 'Open Letter' is a model political step. This

is stated in our theses and we must certainly stand by it. It is a model because it is the first act of a practical method of winning over the majority of the working class." ("Speech in Defense of the Tactics of the CI")

But there were those at the Third Congress who denounced the letter as an act of opportunism. This controversy raged inside the German Communist Party itself, as a result of which, although the "Open Letter" had been issued, the Party still did not "understand how to consistently continue the road it had started upon when it published the 'Open Letter,' the road of opposing the practical interests of the Proletariat to the treacherous policy of the social-democratic parties and the trade union bureaucracy." (from Point 3 of the "Theses on Tactics")

What was this famous "Open Letter"? Unfortunately, we have not yet been able to obtain a copy of this letter, so we have to rely on descriptions of it from various sources. But the general content of the "Open Letter" seems clear.

The "Open Letter" was addressed to the Socialist Party of Germany (the reformists), the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany (the centrists), the Communist Workers' Party of Germany (the semi-anarchists or "left" communists) and all trade unions. It called on all these organizations to cooperate in fighting the immediate attacks on the workers' livelihood by the capitalists and fighting the capitalist reaction.\* It should be noted that the issue at stake at the Third Congress of the CI was not the particular list of demands given in the letter and how it formulated them, but the general idea of writing such a letter.

The opportunist leaders rejected the proposals of the "Open Letter." They preferred to cooperate with the bourgeoisie against the working class. From their rejection of the "Open Letter" to their sabotage of the struggle against the establishment of the Hitler regime, the German reformists would repeatedly reject the communist proposals of united action for the immediate political and economic interests of the working masses.

Had the proposals in the "Open Letter" been accepted, then, in the course of the jointly-endorsed struggle, the German communists would have had more access to the workers under the influence of the opportunist or-

\* The "Open Letter" outlined a program that included demands on the following subjects: against unemployment; for higher pensions for war veterans; for laying the country's financial burden on the monopolies; for the introduction of factory committee control over all stocks of food, raw materials and fuel; for control by the Peasants' Councils and agricultural laborers' organizations of sowing, harvesting and marketing of all farm produce; for the establishment of workers' self-defense and the immediate disarming and disbanding of the reactionary paramilitary organizations; for amnesty of all political prisoners; for resumption of trade and diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia; etc.

ganizations. The opportunist leaders would certainly not have turned into angels, and they would have continued to sabotage the struggle and link up with the bourgeoisie. But the German communists would have used the opportunist sabotage of their own agreements and the lessons from the jointly-endorsed struggle itself to demonstrate to the workers the truths of communism and the rotten nature of opportunism and the outright betrayals by the opportunist leaders.

But the rejection of the "Open Letter" by the opportunist-led parties and trade unions did not mean that it had failed. The rejection of the "Open Letter" by the opportunist leaders helped demonstrate to the workers still under the influence of the opportunist organizations that it was the communists who stood for united action against the capitalists and the reaction, while it was the opportunist leaders who were standing in the way of the class struggle. The fate of the "Open Letter" helped show these workers why the German communists had had to organize their own party, and why this party should be supported. These things were, of course, already known to the communist workers. But, the point is, the "Open Letter" helped bring out this truth in a way which the less conscious sections of the masses could understand.

The Third Congress of the CI endorsed the "Open Letter." It held that:

"For example, the method of publishing a so-called 'Open Letter' was used in order to win over to the VKPD [the United CP of Germany — ed.], as a young mass party, the socially decisive sections of the proletariat to a greater extent than had been possible in certain districts. In order to unmask the treacherous Socialist leaders, the Communist Party addressed itself to the other mass organizations of the proletariat at a moment of increasing desolation and intensification of class conflicts, for the purpose of demanding from them, before the eyes of the proletariat, whether they, with their allegedly powerful organizations, were prepared to take up the struggle, in cooperation with the Communist Party, against the obvious destitution of the proletariat, and for the slightest demands, even for a pitiful piece of bread." (from Point 33 of the "Resolution on Party-Building")

#### The United Front From Above and the United Front From Below

The example of the "Open Letter" showed that, in order to influence the workers under the influence of the opportunist parties, it would sometimes, in the appropriate conditions, be necessary to issue appeals to the opportunist parties as a whole, that is, to their leaderships as well as the rank and file. The "Open Letter" was a public document issued right before the eyes of

the entire working class. But, since it was addressed to the opportunist organizations as a whole, it was a proposal made to the leaders and leading bodies of these organizations. It was an example of an appeal "from above." This, undoubtedly, was one of the reasons why the "Open Letter" became such a focal point of controversy.

Those comrades who objected to the "Open Letter" did not understand how it was possible to appeal for cooperation to the opportunist parties while not relenting in the struggle against opportunism. They believed that such appeals would simply create illusions in the minds of the workers about these parties.

As we have seen, the "Open Letter" in fact was a potent tool for destroying illusions in the reformists, centrists and other opportunists. But it is true that, if handled incorrectly, united front appeals can degenerate into liquidationist tactics of merging with opportunism. The CI resolutely fought against any liquidationist backsliding into accommodation with opportunism by setting forth the militant Marxist-Leninist principles that underlie correct use of united front tactics. For example, the CI insisted that a fundamental rule of general application to all communist parties was that the united front agreements must not impinge on communist independence and that the parties must retain the full right to criticism of opportunism. We shall discuss this aspect of united front tactics in more detail later on.

Another fundamental rule of the CI's tactics that went against liquidationist tactics was its emphasis on the united front "from below." For the CI, the appeals and agreements "from above" were but a complement to the basic method of united front work, which was unity "from below." The Third Congress had no faith in the opportunist leaders at all. Its concern was to find ways to rouse the masses to rise in struggle, convinced that the experience of the struggle would lead the masses closer and closer to communism.

Thus the Third Congress opposed any interpretation of its tactics as meaning faith in persuasion of the top leaders. For example, in discussing trade union work, it stated:

"In the struggle against the social-democratic and other petty-bourgeois trade union leaders, as well as against the leaders of various labor parties one cannot hope to achieve much by persuasion. The struggle against them should be conducted in the most energetic fashion, and the best way to do that is by depriving them of their following, showing up to the workers the true character of these treacherous socialist leaders who are only playing into the hands of capitalism. The Communists should endeavor to unmask these so-called leaders, and subsequently attack them in the most energetic fashion." (from Point 26 of the "Resolution on Party-Building")

Indeed, the communists must even understand the



of bourgeois governments. **The united front means the association of all workers**, whether communist, anarchist, social-democrat, independent or non-party or even Christian workers, **against the bourgeoisie. With the leaders, if they want it so, without the leaders if they remain indifferently aside, and in defiance of the leaders and against the leaders if they sabotage the workers' united front.**

"And this genuine united front in the common struggle is bound to come. ...

"We appeal in particular to the non-party workers and to those who still support the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals. We say to you: You are not yet communists, many of you are even openly hostile to communism. The time will come when you will recognize the correctness of communist ideas. We will wait patiently until that time comes, which will mark the beginning of the true emancipation of the entire working class. But until then...we say: Despite all the differences in our political views, work together with us to organize the united front against the capitalists....

"**Build the united front locally too, without waiting for the permission of the leaders of the Second International....** In every factory, in every mine, in every district, in every town, the communist workers should arm together with the socialist and non-party workers for the common fight against the bourgeoisie. ...

"Once more: Demand the immediate convening of a world congress of the working class. ...

"We appeal to the press of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, and of the anarchists, syndicalists, non-party workers, etc., to publish this statement of ours in full, and we are ready to publish in full corresponding statements by the said organizations in our press. The time has come when it must be openly stated who is for and who is against the united proletarian front." (emphasis added)

In the meantime the reformists and centrists were busy sabotaging the decisions of the Berlin Conference. Within one and a half months, on May 21, 1922, several major parties of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals passed resolutions to call for a world congress without the communists. This showed that they were tearing up the united front agreements from the Berlin Conference. They wanted to gain every political advantage they could from the participation of the CI in the nine-member "Organization Committee" and use this as a cover while they stepped up their coalition with the bourgeoisie against communism. Hence the CI delegation to the "Organization Committee" withdrew on May 23, 1922.

This marked the collapse of the Berlin decisions. This whole process was an instructive episode for the world

proletariat. It is also another illustration that the use of united front tactics requires, when appropriate, the use of agreements "from above." And it shows that the CI used such agreements "from above" in order to encourage the basic process of "unity from below."

#### No "United Socialist Front" in the Soviet Union

United front tactics can thus involve, when appropriate, agreements "from above," even with the reformist and centrist internationals. But united front tactics do not mean that a socialist republic should bring into the government diehard enemies of the dictatorship of the proletariat, such as the Russian reformists, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries (SR's). Lenin commented on this as follows:

*"The purpose and sense of the tactics of the united front consist in drawing more and more masses of the workers into the struggle against capital, even if it means making repeated offers to the leaders of the II and II½ Internationals to wage this struggle together. When the majority of the workers have already established their class, i.e., their Soviet, and not 'general national' (i.e., in common with the bourgeoisie) representation, and have overthrown the political domination of the bourgeoisie, then the tactics of the united front, of course, cannot require cooperation with parties such as that of the Mensheviks...and the S.R.s...for these have turned out to be opponents of Soviet power. Influence upon the working class masses under Soviet rule has to be extended not by seeking cooperation with the Mensheviks and S.R.s..."* ("Proposal to the Draft Resolution on the Report of the RCP(B) Delegation in the CI," *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, p. 411)

The Mensheviks and the SR's had, ever since the October Revolution of 1917, involved themselves in one whiteguard plot after another against the Soviet power. They wavered constantly and always ended up on the side of the bourgeoisie against the new socialist state. There was hardly a revolt by a reactionary general or a restorationist plot by the big bourgeoisie that the Mensheviks and SR's were not actively involved in. As Lenin pointed out at the Third Congress of the CI: "*The whole of the bourgeoisie is now helping the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are now the vanguard of all reaction.*" ("Report on the Tactics of the Russian Communist Party, July 5, 1921")

The Mensheviks and SR's, while shooting down communists and serving as front men for the whiteguards, hypocritically put their hands in the air and demanded a "united socialist (or, alternatively, democratic) front." They demanded that the Bolsheviks let them into the government and stop its "terror" against the bourgeoisie. The Mensheviks and SR's counterposed "pure democracy" against the suppression of the bour-

geoisie, the whiteguards, and their allies by the Bolshevik-led dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus the content of the formation of a "united socialist front" would be the elimination of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Third Congress of the CI, in its "Theses on the Tactics of the Russian Communist Party," supported the relentless struggle of the Bolsheviks against the Menshevik and SR counter-revolutionaries. It noted that the shrewdest leaders of the bourgeoisie, such as Milyukov, head of the counter-revolutionary Cadet party, the main party of the Russian big bourgeoisie, were openly welcoming a Menshevik and SR government, regarding it as simply a transition to bourgeois rule. The tactics of the big bourgeoisie were to agree for the time being to anything, even "Soviets without Bolsheviks," so long as the Bolsheviks were overthrown. As the theses of the Third Congress put it:

"Milyukov, the leader of the big bourgeoisie, has correctly appraised the lesson taught by all revolutions, namely that the petty-bourgeois democrats are incapable of holding power, and always serve merely as a screen for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and a stepping stone to its undivided power."

This, for example is what happened in Siberia where the "rule" of the Mensheviks and SR's was simply the way that Kolchak, the whiteguard "Supreme Ruler of all Russia," inaugurated his military dictatorship.

The Third Congress noted that the position of the Menshevik and SR supporters of "pure democracy" had been foretold by Engels, when he wrote:

*"Pure democracy...when the moment of revolution comes, acquires a temporary importance...as the final sheet-anchor of the whole bourgeois and even feudal economy.... Thus between March and September 1848 the whole feudal-bureaucratic mass strengthened the liberals in order to hold down the revolutionary masses.... In any case our sole adversary on the day of the crisis and on the day after the crisis will be the whole of the reaction which will group around pure democracy, and this, I think, should not be lost sight of."* (Letter to Bebel of December 11, 1884, cited by Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 461)

#### The Right to Criticize the Opportunists Must Be Preserved and Utilized

Another aspect of united front tactics that shines clearly through all the work of the Third Congress is that the communist parties must preserve the right to criticize opportunism. To be precise, they must not just preserve this right, they must utilize it constantly.

Thus the Third Congress was full of discussion of how to improve the criticism of the reformists and centrists. For example, earlier in this article we have



Lenin speaking at the Third Congress of the Communist International, June 22-July 12, 1921.

already discussed how the Third Congress called for changing the character of this criticism to make it more hardhitting and to direct it at the concrete ways in which the reformists and centrists betray the working class every day.

The first CI theses on the united front, those of the Executive Committee of the CI in December 1921, also brought out sharply the need for the communist parties to maintain the right to criticize opportunism when using united front tactics. Point 18, entitled "Communist Independence," states:

"The Executive Committee of the Communist International counts as a primary and fundamental condition, of general application to the Communist Parties of all countries, that every Communist Party which enters into any agreement with parties of the Second or Two-and-a-Half Internationals should retain absolute independence and complete autonomy for the expression of its views and for the criticism of its opponents. Imposing on themselves a discipline of action, it is obligatory that Communists should preserve for themselves, not only up to and after action, but if necessary even during action, the right and possibility of expressing their opinion on the policy of all working-class organizations, without exception. The rejection of this condition is not permissible under any circumstances. While supporting the watchword of the maximum unity of all working-class organizations, Communists, in every practical action taken against the capitalist front, must not on any account refrain from putting forward their views, which are only the logical expression of the defense of the interests of the working class as a whole."

It would be hard to stress the importance of the right to criticize any more than by connecting it with the issue of communist independence. This meant that to jeopardize the right to criticize was to jeopardize the separation of the communists from the reformists and centrists. This separation is the historical accomplishment won by the advanced workers through sacrifice and hard work, and it is the precondition for further steps forward.

But, given that the communist parties maintain their freedom to criticize the opportunists, there is the issue of making sure that this criticism stays sharp and effective. The main method is to make sure that the criticism stays clearly directed to the ongoing class struggle.

However, it may also be necessary to pay attention to the tone of this criticism, and there are times when extravagant language hinders the penetration of this criticism among the masses. For example, in the period right after the holding of the Berlin Conference of the Three Internationals, it was important to criticize the reformist and centrist internationals to their rank-and-file followers. Since the point of making such united

front agreements "from above," such as those at the Berlin Conference, is to gain the ear of these rank-and-file workers under reformist and centrist influence, it is clear that one must immediately utilize the agreements by addressing these workers. To do this, Lenin pointed out, it would be necessary to avoid extravagant language at meetings which these workers attended and instead to speak straightforwardly and patiently. Thus, in discussing a proposal to the Presidium of the CI Executive Committee concerning how the CI and its sections should step up criticism of the opportunists following the Berlin Conference, he commented:

"Criticism of the policy of the II and II½ Internationals should now be given a somewhat different character, namely, this criticism (especially at meetings attended by workers who support the II and II½ Internationals and in special leaflets and articles written for them) should tend to be of a clarifying nature, made with particular patience and thoroughness, so as not to scare away these workers with harsh words, and bring home to them the irreconcilable contradictions between the slogans their representatives have adopted in Berlin (for example, the fight against capital, the eight-hour day, defense of Soviet Russia, aid to the famine-stricken) and the entire reformist policy." (Collected Works, Vol. 42, p. 416, April 11, 1922)

Here Lenin points to the need to follow up the Berlin agreements by exposing to the workers the hypocrisy of the reformists and centrists, who declare that they are for all the good things, just as the communists are, but who in practice do the very opposite. The adjustment in the form and tone of this criticism was to help ensure that it spreads widely among the workers. Otherwise there was the danger that the vile maneuvers of the leaders of the reformist and centrist internationals, which we have discussed above in the section on the Conference of the Three Internationals, would succeed in fooling their followers.

Naturally liquidationist elements have regularly, at all times and places, interpreted the need to speak patiently to the rank-and-file workers under the influence of reformism and centrism as a justification for repudiating all criticism of reformism and centrism. They regard it as meaning that the criticism of opportunism must be toned down to nothing, if not immediately stopped altogether. This is just another expression of their idea that united front tactics means the repudiation of struggle against opportunism. It is another way in which they express their drive to liquidate communist independence.

The real art, however, consists in maintaining the same content of the criticism, that is, burning condemnation of the reformists and centrists, but expressing it in a form that will be understood and taken up by wider masses of workers. The form of the criticism may

change somewhat, depending on the circumstances, but the struggle goes on. Indeed, it has happened more than once that the need to replace extravagant literature with explanatory criticism has required that more thought be given to the matter so that the result was sharper and more accurate criticism. But, in any case, the maintenance of the right to criticism and its effective utilization remains an important precondition

for the success of united front tactics.

The two remaining sections of this article, Section IV: "The Reformist and Centrist Parties are Bulwarks of Capitalism" and Section V: "Vigilance Against Rightist Interpretations of United Front Tactics," will be contained in the next issue of The Workers' Advocate. □

## On liquidationism in Trinidad and Tobago

We reprint below the article "On the so-called 'Communist Party' of Trinidad and Tobago" which appeared in a recent special issue of *The West Indian Voice*, newspaper of the Caribbean Progressive Study Group (New York). This article is from the resolution which was unanimously adopted by the conference organized by CPSG to mark its fifth anniversary, held in June 1983.

*The Workers' Advocate* resolutely supports the stand taken by the comrades of the Caribbean Progressive Study Group against liquidationism in Trinidad and Tobago. In the last regular issue of *The West Indian Voice* and in the article below, the CPSG has launched a detailed exposure of the renegade spirit of liquidationism which has emerged in recent years in Trinidad and Tobago.

For several years now, the Marxist-Leninist Party of the USA has been conducting a vigorous fight against liquidationism which has gripped the revisionist and opportunist circles in this country. As well, in the course of our polemic against the Maoist and liquidationist deviations of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), we have noted that the emergence of liquidationism is by no means a phenomenon unique to the U.S. A number of Marxist-Leninist parties internationally have pointed to similar phenomena in their countries. The analysis of *The West Indian Voice* regarding the situation in Trinidad and Tobago also verifies this. Indeed, the fight against liquidationism and similar phenomena is one of the burning issues facing the revolutionary movement in many countries.

The fight that *The West Indian Voice* has launched against liquidationism in Trinidad and Tobago is a continuation of its longstanding tradition of championing the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants of the West Indies. *The West Indian Voice* is the voice of revolutionary militance in the West Indian community in the U.S. It has consistently stood up against the opportunist infatuation with the national bourgeois regimes and the local exploiters in the West Indies.

This struggle has led *The West Indian Voice* to speak out on the issue of the so-called Communist Party of Trinidad and Tobago. The CPTT claims to be the party

of the proletariat in Trinidad and Tobago. At its founding in 1979, it claimed to be the continuation of the revolutionary traditions of the National Liberation Movement of Trinidad and Tobago, the Marxist-Leninist force which emerged in the early 1970's out of the heart of the revolutionary movement in that country. But as *The West Indian Voice* points out, experience has shown that the CPTT is not the proletarian party. Nor can it lay claim to the revolutionary traditions of the NLM. It is today simply another liquidationist group.

Our Party's predecessor, the COUSML, had warm fraternal relations with the NLM. It also supported the founding of the CPTT in 1979 in the belief that it represented the carrying forward of the revolutionary traditions of the NLM. But in mid-1980, the leadership of CPTT unilaterally broke relations with our Party. In a totally cavalier attitude to the principles of proletarian internationalism, the CPTT leadership offered no reasons for its hostile act. Our Party tried to urge the CPTT leaders to abandon the unprincipled road they had chosen and called on them to return to the road of Marxist-Leninist principle. But to no avail.

The real reason behind the hostile action of the CPTT was that they became ensnared in the factional conspiracy against the MLP, USA launched by the leadership of CPC(M-L). As well, as *The West Indian Voice* points out, the CPTT has taken up the liquidationist and petty-bourgeois nationalist deviations of CPC(M-L). These deviations pose a grave danger to any organization which takes up such positions. The fate of CPTT is a graphic confirmation of this warning.

The tragedy of CPTT is a grave indictment of the CPC(M-L)'s factional activity against the international Marxist-Leninist movement. The National Liberation Movement of Trinidad and Tobago came up as a real Marxist-Leninist force out of the bosom of the revolutionary movement in that country. It held great promise for the future of the revolution and communism in Trinidad and Tobago. But the leadership of CPC(M-L) took advantage of the trust which NLM placed in them, to interfere in its moment of crisis so as to impose a leadership which agreed to subordinate itself to the factional "special trend" of CPC(M-L). This imposed leadership

had a scornful attitude to the traditions of the NLM. Step by step it ate away all that was alive and healthy in the NLM and frittered away its traditions. This is a grave crime of CPC(M-L)'s leaders against the revolutionary movement of the toilers of Trinidad and Tobago.

Despite the setback, the struggle to construct the proletarian party begun there a decade ago will blossom again. The class conscious workers and revolutionary activists will throw off the momentary liquidationist baggage and march forward on the glorious road of Marxism-Leninism.

## On the so-called 'Communist Party' of Trinidad and Tobago



I. The spread of liquidationism poses serious dangers to the revolutionary movement in Trinidad and Tobago. Liquidationism in the movement signifies open opposition to the working masses being politically independent from the bourgeoisie, in favor of subservience to the political influence of the bourgeoisie and particularly in tailing behind the policies of the PNM [People's National Movement] government. Above all, liquidationism is decidedly hostile to the working class constructing its own truly Marxist-Leninist communist party, forming its own political leadership.

Liquidationism is the manifestation in the revolutionary movement of the influence of the political crisis facing the bourgeoisie and especially of the liberal mood fostered by the bourgeoisie through "petrodollars." It is the result of the further degeneration of the opportunism of the followers of Soviet and Chinese revisionism in the workers' movement in Trinidad and Tobago. In recent years, the rise of liquidationism has meant the quelling of the 1980-81 strike wave; tacit support for the PNM in the 1981 national elections; the growing political merger of the Council of Progressive Trade Unions with the reactionary Trade Union Congress on the basis of TUC's politics; and finally, in the CPTU leaders joining with the TUC, the Employers Consultative Association and the Chamber of Commerce in the PNM's "Consultations on Productivity" — a process which has helped to weaken the resistance of the working masses to extensive layoffs such as is taking place in the oil industry.

The sabotage of the revolutionary movement must be fought. Class conscious revolutionaries and progressive people must wage resolute struggle against liquidationism and against renegacy from the revolutionary traditions of working people. There must be painstaking and systematic work for the positions of Marxism-Leninism, for the political independence of the working masses. Only Marxism-Leninism offers the movement a way out of the present impasse. Above all, only work for the

founding of a genuine communist party — a real Marxist-Leninist advanced guard of the working class — can secure the future of the revolutionary movement.

II. These tasks require that our organization, the Caribbean Progressive Study Group (of New York), no longer remain silent on the fraud perpetrated in 1979 with the founding of the Communist Party of Trinidad and Tobago (CPTT), allegedly as the party of the proletariat in Trinidad and Tobago. The founding of the CPTT was hailed in good faith by our organization, the CPSG, in the belief that the CPTT, carrying forward the best traditions (and, to some extent, forces and mass influence) of the National Liberation Movement (NLM), was founded on the basis of Marxism-Leninism. History has proven otherwise. The CPTT is not based on Marxism-Leninism. It is not descended from the revolutionary trends in the society nor heir to their traditions. It in no way constitutes the organized, advanced detachment of the working class in Trinidad and Tobago.

III. The founding of the NLM in 1974 was a tremendous achievement of the working class in Trinidad and Tobago. The founding of the NLM was an attempt to group the advanced elements from the 1970 rebellion under the banner of Marxism-Leninism and to constitute a Marxist-Leninist center. NLM represented the living revolutionary spirit of Marxism-Leninism in Trinidad and Tobago. It advanced the need for building a real communist party and took up lively battle against revisionism and opportunism. This work invigorated and greatly inspired all honest revolutionary elements and won wide respect, adherence and support from the revolutionary activists and from among the broad masses. The NLM also had serious ideological, political and organizational weaknesses which contributed to its going into severe crisis in 1978 — a time when disintegration had set in in the revolutionary movement because of the treachery of the revisionists and trade union leaders, and at the time when the NLM came face to face with the problem of uprooting Maoism and consolidating its work. But these problems cannot obliterate the great historical importance of the NLM. Today and in the future, the revolutionary traditions of the NLM will belong to the proud heritage of the working class and genuine revolutionaries in Trinidad and Tobago.

IV. The CPTT can in no way lay claim to the banner

of the revolutionary heritage of the NLM. On the contrary, such fiery traditions as the NLM's revolutionary spirit and its life-giving fight against revisionism have been gutted and kicked into the dust by the CPTT. In its place, the CPTT has bankruptcy and crying political impotence. The CPTT is mired in right opportunist policy dressed up in flowery language. It is not surprising that it, too, has been overtaken by the liquidationist mood that has gripped the entire opportunist wing of the left.

This is shown in CPTT's utter inability to address any burning question in the society from a truly communist standpoint; in the rightward lurch of its line in the last national elections; in its aversion to the systematic work needed to build a Marxist-Leninist party and to the carrying out of essential organized activities of a party character, such as sustaining a regular and real party press. It is shown in CPTT's inability to wage a consistent and principled struggle against revisionism and the substitution thereof of hollow phrases devoid of content against the leading revisionist groups, combined with trailing in the wake of these groups in practice. This all reveals that the CPTT is as bankrupt and as divorced from the society as it is from Marxism-Leninism.

V. The source of this bankruptcy lies in the liquidationist and petty-bourgeois nationalist deviations of the Communist Party of Canada (M-L). The leadership of the CPTT did not emerge from the crisis in the NLM. Rather it was imported from abroad under conditions of that crisis and with no concern for the NLM and for the future of Marxism-Leninism in Trinidad and Tobago. There is nothing wrong with international experience; on the contrary, the wider the exposure to the experience of the revolutionary struggles internationally the greater the benefit to the movement in Trinidad and Tobago. But the lessons of this experience must be

revolutionary and Marxist-Leninist in character if they are to be of value. This cannot be said of the opportunist deviations of the CPC(M-L). In fact, the CPC(M-L) has launched an international faction on the basis of negating the lessons of the international experience of the working class and substituting instead CPC(M-L)'s own deviations. Thus, the CPTT cannot rightfully lay claim to the heritage of the NLM nor to the international teachings of Marxism-Leninism. In their stead the deviations of the CPC(M-L) were imported and the result today is CPTT's bankruptcy and utter impotence. Whereas the NLM arose on the basis of deep historical roots, grouped the best revolutionary elements into a Marxist-Leninist center and embodied their connections to the masses — hence its revolutionary spirit and the powerful impact of its work — the CPTT ekes out a marginal existence characterized by empty posturing against the other revisionist and opportunist groups which simply masks the lack of any real political differences with them. The CPTT is in no way the party of the proletariat in Trinidad and Tobago. The urgent fight against liquidationism requires opposition to the CPTT, its empty posturings and opportunist practices.

VI. We of the CPSPG have no doubt that the almost 10-years-old struggle begun by the NLM to wield the political leadership of the working class — its truly Marxist-Leninist communist party — will be shouldered by the class conscious revolutionaries of Trinidad and Tobago and be victorious.

For our part, our organization sets forth its views on the so-called "Communist Party" of Trinidad and Tobago and will continue its trenchant exposures of revisionist betrayal in Trinidad and Tobago and its outstanding work in support of Marxism-Leninism and the revolution in Trinidad and Tobago. □

## The West Indian Voice

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## On the 20th anniversary of the Internationalists:

# The Myth of the Glorious Past— CPC(M-L)'s Pretext for International Factionalism

The Myth .....	74
The Real Historical Record — The Earliest Years .....	76
The Center-Left Period — Avid Filtrations with Social-Democracy .....	77
The Necessity for Change — New Leftism in the Guise of Shrieks Against New Leftism .....	79
On the 1968 Reorganization of the Internationalists .....	82
International Factional Activity .....	83
Concluding Remarks .....	86

This spring the leadership of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) made a big clamor about the 20th anniversary of the Internationalists, an organization of the 1960's which they descended from. They organized a special celebration in Vancouver on March 13, the day of the anniversary, which was followed by a campaign of public meetings across the country. In addition, *People's Canada Daily News (PCDN)* serialized the speech given at the Vancouver meeting by CPC(M-L)'s leader **Hardial Bains** under the grandiose title "Twenty Years of Glorious Struggle in Defense of Marxism-Leninism, the Revolution and Socialism."

What is all this fuss about? Is it simply a matter of their Party's history which they are discussing for the purpose of training the revolutionary movement in Canada today? Not at all.

In the first place, the hoopla about the Internationalists is meant to justify the factional activities which CPC(M-L) carries out at present in the international Marxist-Leninist movement. It is well known that CPC(M-L) does not just consider the Internationalists to be a historical phenomenon of the 1960's but also the basis for a "special trend" within the present-day international movement. The leadership of CPC(M-L) believes that those who are members of this trend should have "special relations," the essence of which is subordination to the dictates of CPC(M-L). While today, out of embarrassment, CPC(M-L) does not publicly speak of the Internationalists as an international trend, this idea

is openly defended in the publications of other members of CPC(M-L)'s "special trend," such as the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (ML). (For more on CPC(M-L)'s international factionalism, see "Introducing the Correspondence Between the MLP, USA and the RCPB(ML)" in the September 5, 1982 issue of *The Workers' Advocate* as well as the two-part series "The Truth About the Relations Between the MLP, USA and the CPC(M-L)," in the June 30 and August 10, 1981 issues of this newspaper.)

Secondly, the issue of the Internationalists is used to prop up the myth of the infallibility of their leader, **Hardial Bains**. It is used to assert that the leadership of CPC(M-L), in particular **Hardial Bains**, has some deserving claim to two decades of consistent Marxist-Leninist leadership. The history and work of the Internationalists are presented as a great international experience, as having broken the path for Marxism-Leninism in the modern world, as something which the revolutionaries of all lands should pay special homage to. As part of this, at the Vancouver meeting on March 13, CPC(M-L)'s Central Committee even went so far as to present **Hardial Bains**, "the founding member of the Internationalists on March 13, 1963, with a medal of honor specially struck for the occasion." (*PCDN*, March 14, 1983) The claims of the special attributes of **Hardial Bains** in turn provide the justification why the "special trend" should subordinate itself to CPC(M-L).

Our Party takes questions of the history of the revolutionary movement seriously. We have long held that it is proper and essential for the Marxist-Leninist parties to study their history, to draw lessons from it, and to discuss it with class conscious workers and activists from the mass movements. This helps develop a sense of how the proletarian movement develops and assists in promoting party spirit.

But CPC(M-L)'s discussion of the history of the Internationalists has nothing to do with a serious and honest study of history. Instead they offer a carefully embellished myth. We have given our general assessment of the Internationalists elsewhere in the course of our polemic against the Maoist and liquidationist deviations and international factionalism of the leadership of CPC

(M-L). In this article we would like to speak to the history in more detail. This article is based on a speech given at the First National Conference of the MLP, USA in the summer of 1981, revised and updated with new material.

We will show that the actual historical record simply does not bear out the stories put out by CPC(M-L) about how the Internationalists stood up for revolutionary Marxism-Leninism since 1963. Rather the Internationalists were a group of activists, similar to a multitude of other groups that came up in the 1960's. They wandered in all sorts of directions and reflected the ideological confusion of the times.

We will show that in their earliest years, the Internationalists exhibited nothing particularly revolutionary about them. They were a group of students and faculty engaged in organizing a left-liberal discussion forum, that was essentially a liberal uplift program for improving the academic atmosphere on campus.

Later, when the Internationalists began to take up the question of building organization, they did not try to build revolutionary organization. Instead they actively flirted with social-democracy and tried to build a "center-left" group in collaboration with elements from official social-democracy.

The Internationalists repeatedly manifested suspicion towards the mass movement. For example, they even went to the extent of denouncing the student upsurge in Berkeley in the mid-60's in the most disgusting terms.

It has been claimed by the Internationalists and their heirs that they fought against New Left ideology. But the record shows that they were in fact mired in many of the New Left fashions of the time, including advocacy of theories of personal liberation.

We will also show that there is no truth at all in the assertion that the Internationalists worked to build the international Marxist-Leninist movement. In fact, their international activity began with an attempt to float their own trend internationally, which was allegedly anti-revisionist but not Marxist-Leninist. Later, when they began to describe themselves as a Marxist-Leninist youth movement, the Internationalists engaged in factional intrigues inside the international Marxist-Leninist movement. They tried to carve out a trend under their own hegemony within the international movement, now basing their claim to international leadership on the assertion that it was they who had brought and were applying the lessons of Mao Zedong Thought and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution to various advanced capitalist countries.

Such were some of the basic features of the Internationalist movement. At the same time, it should be remembered that at the core of the Internationalists, during all of its different stages, was their leader, Hardial Bains. Bains came from a background as a political activist in India, where he had been an active member of

the youth and student organization of the Communist Party of India in the 1950's. By that time, the CPI had become completely dominated by revisionist leadership and it offered a thoroughly opportunist training to its political activists. After Bains came to Canada in 1959 to go to college, he was associated with the Communist Party of Canada, which had been thoroughly corrupted by revisionism by then. Sometime in the first half of the 1960's, Hardial Bains broke with the CP of Canada, but as the history of the Internationalists shows, he remained imbued with many of the revisionist concepts on how to organize among the masses.

Thus, instead of setting out to organize along revolutionary lines, Hardial Bains organized the Internationalists along the revisionist ideas of "broad fronts" and "center-left" organization, in alliance with certain of the fashionable left-liberal trends and ideas of the times. The Internationalists justified this policy under the opportunist plea that in the early 60's one first had to work for "the development of a material base in which a left-wing stand was possible." (Internationalist pamphlet, *One Struggle, Two Enemies, Three Guidelines, Four Levels of Work*, August, 1968, p. 31) This is of course nothing but the standard revisionist trash that revolutionary work cannot be carried out because "conditions" don't exist yet. Yet this is paraded as a great example of the tactical genius of Bains!

Let us now proceed with our study of the Internationalists.

#### The Myth

This report on the history of the Internationalists is not meant to be a comprehensive and complete assessment. Instead it seeks to provide a survey of the crucial real-life features of the Internationalists. It is meant to provide a sufficient basis to judge the claims made by CPC(M-L) as well as the other promoters of the Internationalists, such as the RCP of Britain (ML). This study is based on the historical documents and cuts through later reinterpretations and rewritings of the record.

Strictly speaking, the Internationalists were three organizations: the Canadian Internationalists launched in Vancouver in 1963, the Irish Internationalists launched in Dublin in 1965 and the English Internationalists created in London in 1967. By 1970 all these organizations had ceased to exist, having given rise to other organizations that became the CP of Canada (M-L), the CP of Ireland (ML) and the CP of England (M-L) (which in turn became the RCP of Britain (ML) in 1979).

All three of these organizations promote a similar story about the Internationalists. For this study, we will focus on the Canadian group, although, since the history of the three groups is so closely linked, we will also examine documents from the Irish and English groups.

First let us begin with the current myth about the

Internationalists promoted by CPC(M-L). In its essentials this is similar to the story which is also told by the RCP of Britain (ML) and the CP of Ireland (ML).

The myth about the Internationalists is that in March 1963 at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, an organization called the Internationalists was founded which formed the anti-revisionist center for Canada. It is claimed that right from the outset this group opposed imperialism, capitalism and revisionism, that it defended revolutionary Marxism-Leninism, and that it took up the tasks required for the reconstruction of the Marxist-Leninist proletarian party. Furthermore, the story goes that at the core of this process was the all-sided, wise and Marxist-Leninist leadership of Hardial Bains, who step by step provided the conscious guidance to this entire process.

The latest expression of this myth occurs in Hardial Bains' recent speech in Vancouver. Here he declares: "The founding of the Internationalists fulfilled the need of that period, the necessity to organize and direct the revolutionary energies of all the forces who wanted an end to capitalist exploitation and imperialist oppression and plunder into taking up the task of creating the conditions for the founding of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) as the major and the only task of that period. The Internationalists were the rallying point for all the anti-revisionist forces who came forward to oppose the treachery of Tim Buck revisionism and of Khrushchov...." (*PCDN*, April 11, 1983, p.2)

Let us recall a couple of other examples of the same myth from the early 70's. In 1973 the Second Congress of CPC(M-L) declared: "The Internationalists were founded and built by those youth and students who, on the basis of their own experience in the revolutionary mass movement united around the basic task of 1. opposing revisionism, upholding Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and 2. building the Marxist-Leninist party. Following this, the Internationalists developed in a step-wise manner from 1963-73." (CPC(M-L), *Documents — Political Reports 1970 and 1973*, 1976, p. 55)

The same year, *PCDN*, celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Internationalists, proclaimed in feverish enthusiasm: "The entire development of THE INTERNATIONALISTS has been led by their leader, Comrade Bains. Amongst THE INTERNATIONALISTS he has always commanded respect for his thorough-going scientific analysis of the situation, for his insistence on opposing revisionism and dogmatism by remaining in the heart of the mass movement and for his all-sided leadership over the years." (*PCDN*, Special Supplement, March 13, 1973)

A major problem in studying the history of the Internationalists is that one is straightaway confronted by the fact that there is no clear, factual and consistent record available from CPC(M-L) or the other descendants of the organization. This does not mean there are no historical accounts. Quite the contrary, there are

many, many such accounts. In fact, over the years with each and every twist of CPC(M-L)'s declared positions the world has been treated with amazing new refinements of the memory of Hardial Bains. This has meant ever newer and different versions of the history.

We have already noted the current version of history, which is in essence the same one that can be found throughout the 1970's. This version claims that the Internationalists were Marxist-Leninists from 1963. However there is another category of historical accounts. These appeared in the late 1960's. On the surface these accounts appeared to be more modest. They claimed that the Internationalists started out as a small group of petty-bourgeois intellectuals, with a generally progressive stand but confused on many questions, who step by step moved to clearer and more revolutionary positions, towards embracing Marxism-Leninism.

But even these accounts embellished things. They tried to maintain that there was something extraordinary about this group right from the beginning. Thus in August 1968, the International Committee of the Internationalists declared: "Since 1963, ours has been the only youth and students movement based on 'Action with Analysis'.... All other liberal bourgeois youth and students organizations have either been involved in elitist politics of the student councils, or engrossed in problems of 'peace'.... We were the only organization which stood against cold war rhetoric and anti-communism, including all the muck of pacifism." (Internationalist pamphlet *One Struggle, Two Enemies, Three Guidelines, Four Levels of Work*, August 1968, p. 31, emphasis added) In the same statement, they hinted at what sort of analysis this "action with analysis" group was guided by. It said, "Our movement was clearly a 'new type' of movement. Our analysis started from various bourgeois philosophers as the guide to conscious adoption of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought." (*Ibid.*, p. 33, emphasis added)

To be sure, it was an important question to oppose engaging simply in mindless activism; revolutionaries had the responsibility to work so that practical activity in the mass movement was guided by revolutionary theory. But this is not what the Internationalists did. When such a group admits that it was guided by "bourgeois philosophers" and when it counted itself as one among many "liberal bourgeois" organizations, one cannot help but wonder at why they boast about being the only group based on "Action with Analysis." The fundamental character of the group cannot be decided on the basis of the issue of combining action with analysis, but what sort of analysis was being combined with what sort of action.

Another feature of the historical accounts from this period is the claim to have rediscovered certain of the Marxist-Leninist principles out of the Internationalists' own "direct experience." For example, take an article "On Methods of Work" by Hardial Bains, which was

widely promoted in their circles in the early 1970's. This appeared in the journal of the Hindustani Ghadar Party (ML), an organization of East Indians resident abroad which was closely connected with CPC(M-L) and led also by Hardial Bains. In this article, referring to what could only have been the experience of the Internationalists, Bains wrote: "In our work, we started from our own ideas on the methods of work. We were faced with the problem that the revisionists and neo-revisionists did not have any method of work apart from building bureaucracies. Out of necessity we had to develop a new method of work. The soul of this new method of work was to integrate theory with practice. **We did not read any books on this, and it was only later that we, to our surprise, found that Marx was the first person who said that a communist is one who integrates theory and practice.**" (*Chingari*, organ of the HGP (ML), September-November 1970, p. 7, emphasis added) The article went on to describe how these people discovered the principles of democratic centralism on their own.

This is very surprising coming from a person who, CPC(M-L) has many times pointed out, came from a communist party background in India. Now it is certainly true that the revisionists do not teach you much, but student leaders around even a revisionist-dominated party like the CPI of the 1950's would be somewhat familiar with the idea of combining theory with practice. It is the height of dishonesty for Hardial Bains to claim that "only later we, to our surprise, found that Marx was the first person" to say such things!

But there is something behind this sort of dishonesty. It is to promote that there was something really exceptional about the Internationalists. It is meant to boost the allegedly great theoretical acumen of their leader, Hardial Bains. Unlike the rest of us ordinary mortals, he didn't have to learn Marxism by studying it; oh no, this great genius rediscovered the Marxist ideas out of his own profound experience. What complete balderdash!

#### The Real Historical Record — The Earliest Years

Clearly one will not get a real picture of the Internationalists from any accounts published by CPC(M-L). They have rewritten and reinterpreted history so many times that one has to go directly to the documents of the Internationalists themselves. We do not have a complete collection of all that was ever written by them, but we did manage to gather enough material which blows up CPC(M-L)'s myth to smithereens.

The Internationalists were first founded in Canada in 1963 at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver where Hardial Bains was a graduate student in microbiology. They have themselves described their earliest years, through 1966, as a period in which they were an

"informal discussion group." In 1965, after Hardial Bains started teaching as a lecturer at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, the Internationalists were launched there as well.

In both these cases, the program of the group was similar. It was launched under the slogan: "to promote student-staff relations and to create an academic atmosphere on the campus." (p. 1 of a journal called *The Canadian Internationalist*, July 15, 1968)

And what did this program amount to in reality? Another journal explained in 1969: "The Internationalists correctly analyzed that there 'was no academic dialogue on the campus' and that various issues were drowned in reactionary rhetoric. The first task, therefore, was to open a discussion on western philosophical tradition, to encourage discussion based on facts, and to mobilize students against the reactionary Student Council." (*Canadian Internationalist*, Vol. 1, No. 1, February 1969)

The activities of the group were described thus: "Discussions flourished, from a handful of people meeting once in the evening to four annual symposia, regular weekly 'evening academic sessions,' faculty programs organized with the cooperation of the undergraduate faculties, noon hour lectures...." (*Canadian Internationalist*, July 15, 1968)

A glimpse of the activity of the group in Ireland in its early days is given in an article "History of the Internationalists" published in the Irish Internationalist journal *Words* in early 1967. It writes, "They [referring to two students and two lecturers who founded the group — WA] decided to start a society specifically for the promotion of student-staff relations, and for the provision of a forum for serious discussion. Meetings were held in students' flats. A paper would be read, the reader would answer questions on the paper and other people would express their views. Then the meeting would break up into informal groups, and personal discussions would go on for several hours." (No. 12, back cover)

Although we do not have available any documents from their earliest years, these accounts from a few years later, however, make it quite clear what sort of group this was. The Internationalists were essentially a left-liberal campus improvement group, whose activity centered on organizing discussions. As they themselves put it, this discussion started on "western philosophical tradition," i.e., bourgeois philosophy. As well, since they themselves admit that they were only a "loose discussion group," it is quite clear that in those early years there really was no true organization.

These are hardly the features of a conscious anti-revisionist center, as CPC(M-L) claims. In fact, from the above accounts, there is nothing particularly revolutionary about the activity or the character of the Internationalists of that time. Nevertheless the Internationalists and CPC(M-L) have always promoted the view

that their program was the only revolutionary thing to do in the early to mid-1960's. For example, in 1968, the Internationalists wrote about the slogan to create an academic atmosphere: "Thus it was correct to give this slogan, because only through such a program could the most universal contradiction [which they described as the clash between "exploiter and exploited" — WA] be resolved. **Any other slogans were counter-revolutionary.**" (Pamphlet entitled *One Struggle, Two Enemies, Three Guidelines, Four Levels of Work*, pp. 14-15, emphasis added)

Just imagine! According to them, the only really revolutionary slogan for the Marxist-Leninists in 1963-66 was "to create academic atmosphere on the campus"! What complete trash!

This amazing assertion was justified under the banner of the need to fight Cold War ideology. The Internationalists made the claim that only through such a program could the Cold War ideological atmosphere have been smashed. To be sure, it was an important question in the 1950's and 60's to smash the stultifying Cold War ideology. But history has shown that this was smashed among the broadest masses not by some liberal discussion group talking about Western philosophical tradition but by the rise of the stormy mass movements in the heartlands of imperialism. This ferment was inevitably accompanied by ideological ferment which blew up the Cold War propaganda about the "end of ideology." And the place of revolutionary Marxism-Leninism within this ferment was ensured by the historic polemic against modern revisionism carried out in the 1960's by the world's Marxist-Leninists; this rescued the prestige of Marxism-Leninism among the activists who looked at the revisionist communist parties with disgust because of their right opportunist corruption.

But the Internationalists did not fight for the place of Marxism-Leninism within the mass ferment. They counterposed to Cold War ideology not revolutionary ideology but bourgeois philosophy. In fact, as we shall shortly see, they were cowardly in the face of anti-communism, and Hardial Bains, for one, was perfectly willing to join in anti-communist rhetoric himself.

Clearly the record of the early years does not verify the claim that the Internationalists were a group fighting for Marxism-Leninism.

#### The Center-Left Period — Avid Flirtations With Social-Democracy

Having examined the earliest years, let us now proceed to 1966-67, when we have been told the Internationalists built up the "disciplined group" and waged "the struggle against bourgeois hang-ups." Is there perhaps anything in this period which could justify the boastful declarations of CPC(M-L)?

No, these years too do not verify their claims. This is in fact the same period which was described in a 1969

publication as the period in which the Internationalists were a "center-left organization based on opposition to imperialism." As the journal *World Revolutionary Youth* put it, "The Internationalists developed from an 'informal discussion group' in 1963 to a 'center-left' organization based on opposition to imperialism in 1966, anti-imperialist youth and student movement in August 1967 and Marxist-Leninist youth and student movement in 1968." (February 1969, p. 6)

Clearly one could not have been a "center-left" group and a Marxist-Leninist center at the same time. It may be recalled that in the 1960's the concept of building "center-left" organization was very popular with the revisionists, who used it to oppose building revolutionary organization in favor of merger with social-democracy, liberals, labor bureaucrats, etc.

Indeed, when one examines the documents of the Internationalists from these years, one discovers that their concept of center-left organization was not much different. It was a form with which to actively flirt with social-democracy.

A vivid example of how far the center-left group was from Marxism-Leninism is provided by a controversy which appeared in the Irish Internationalist journal *Words* in early 1967. In this magazine, Hardial Bains has a letter of protest against a Mr. Warner, an editor of *TCD*, the Trinity College magazine, who had apparently tried to rebait the Internationalists. Bains writes:

"Mr. Warner, may I ask you — who were you writing about? Hardial Bains as I know him, or an imaginary Hardial Bains as created by you? You write, 'The Internationalists are the brain-child of Mr. Hardial Singh Bains.... His avowedly marxist-leninist political ideology also owes much to the American 'New Left' movement. Not that Mr. Bains is concocting Berkeley-style revolutions in our green island — he is a realist.'

"What do you know about Marxism-Leninism, Mr. Warner? And what do you know about the American 'New Left' Movement? ... Have you ever heard me talking about my political beliefs? If you had, you would know that **I am a card-carrying member of the New Democratic Party of Canada (the equivalent of the British Labor Party)**, which did not emerge from the 'New Left,' but was established as a result of the depression of the thirties. Furthermore, I have declared my opposition to the COMMUNIST PARTY OF CANADA, and all similar parties in the Anglo-American world. **I have denounced the 'New Left' as CIA-inspired groups, who do nothing but rationalize their impotence and immorality. I took this stand in 1962. As to the staging of a Berkeley-type revolt, you have insulted my capabilities** — and it won't be too long before the Irish people realize the capabilities of people like you. There will be a revolt against character assassination, malignment and

elitist oppression." (*Words*, No. 12, early 1967, p. 2, emphasis added)

It may be noted that while this statement from the leader of the Internationalists is characteristic of the general character of the group, it also ranks as among the worst articles that appear in their journals of that period. This was generally true of Bains' contributions as compared to many other writers. Let us then see what Bains' statement shows.

First, far from taking a Marxist-Leninist stand against redbaiting, Bains does not even take a position appearing to be sympathetic to communism. Clearly there was a limit to how far the Internationalists' much-vaunted struggle against the Cold War ideology went. Bains does not distinguish between revisionism and revolutionary Marxism-Leninism. So what is he denouncing when he curses the Communist Party of Canada and "all similar parties in the Anglo-American world"? Moreover, what does he counterpose to the CP of Canada et al.? Not the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist forces, but straight-up official social-democracy, represented by such right-wing forces as the NDP of Canada and the British Labor Party.

Secondly, a significant feature of this statement from Bains is his denunciation of the mass student struggle at Berkeley. Berkeley was a prominent center of the student upsurge of the 1960's and by 1964-65 it was a

place where the student movement had reached a particularly militant intensity.

The denunciation of Berkeley is an example where the skepticism the Internationalists repeatedly demonstrated towards the mass movement showed through. While at various times they participated in various mass actions, the Internationalists were never enthusiastic about the mass movement. Earlier we saw in a quote from them how they counterposed the allegedly great revolutionary significance of the slogan for academic atmosphere to how other student groups were "engrossed in problems of 'peace.'" They want to make this appear as an example of their opposition to a liberal and pacifist line for the anti-militarist movement. But they do not counter to pacifism a militant line; instead they call for directing their attention entirely to some other activity.

Finally it is instructive how Hardial Bains deals with the New Left. A reactionary labels the entire mass movement as New Left and what does Hardial Bains do? He says, in effect, yes, the movement is New Left and it is all CIA-inspired. What this combines is a disdain for the mass movement and a refusal to take up any serious struggle against the ideology and politics of New Leftism. In fact, as we shall see shortly, the Internationalists themselves adapted to New Left ideology. As for their sweeping charge about how all the New



In the spring of 1960, a visit of the anti-communist witch-hunting House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) to San Francisco was met by thousands of demonstrators, many of whom came from the emerging student movement at the University of California at Berkeley. It was the rise of the stormy mass movements of the 1960's that smashed up the stifling hold of Cold War anti-communism. The Internationalists, however, claimed that the only way to fight Cold War ideology in the early 60's was by improving the "academic atmosphere" on campus through organizing discussions on "western philosophical tradition." In fact, Hardial Bains went so far as to denounce "Berkeley-style revolts," which included such things as the anti-HUAC struggle shown above.

Left groups were CIA-inspired, this was not an attempt to expose particular police agents but just random mud-slinging. In fact this was not an attempt to seriously fight New Leftism, but the early example of a method which they increasingly adopted in later years of denouncing anyone who opposed their pretensions as "agents provocateurs," "police agents," and so forth.

The efforts of the Internationalists in the 1966-67 period to flirt with social-democracy were not restricted simply to such disgusting statements by Hardial Bains. There was more to it than that. During these years, the Internationalists can also be found writing articles advising social-democracy how to improve itself.

For instance, a few weeks prior to Bains' avowal of social-democratic credentials above, *Words* No. 8 wrote in reference to an expulsion from the Irish Labor Party (a thoroughly right-wing social-democratic party of the Irish bourgeoisie): "Instead of wielding the axe, the Labor Party should try to re-think its policies in order to discover its role in building a Socialist Society — at the moment its energies are too concentrated in re-organization of the party infrastructure — hardly a substitute for relevant policies which are always said to be in preparation, though we have had only one comprehensive document, that on education, since 1963." (p. 7)

It appears that these were not just a few minor articles indicating illusions in the allegedly progressive potential of the Irish Labor Party. Rather, they look like part of unprincipled maneuvers with elements within the ILP itself. In the middle of spring 1967, the Internationalists stopped publishing their journal *Words* and launched another journal, with yet another flabby apolitical name, *Words and Comment*. The first issue of this journal had an editor's note which explained what kind of publication it was. It said: "*Words and Comment* is a weekly newspaper produced by the Internationalists in cooperation with individuals from the Universities Branch of the Irish Labor Party." It went on to explain, "We would ask our readers, and the powers that be, to take careful note of the following facts: — 1) *Words and Comment* does in no way necessarily reflect or support the official views of either the Universities Branch of the Labor Party or the national Labor Party itself."

Irrespective of this disclaimer about not necessarily reflecting the views of the ILP, the content of this newspaper was certainly not revolutionary. Rather, its content did not go beyond what was acceptable to the left-wing section of social-democracy in the British Isles, which was willing to engage in a bit of anti-imperialist phrasemongering in the late 60's. The newspaper had articles against corporate control of the news media, articles from the pacifist liberal Bertrand Russell, and pieces opposing imperialism in Viet Nam, South Yemen, South Africa, etc.

We are not suggesting that there was necessarily

something wrong about the Internationalists cooperating with individuals from the ILP campus group. We simply do not know enough about the situation to judge that. However, what is clear is that this is not an example of a Marxist-Leninist group sorting out how to carry out joint work with people from a different political trend. Instead it is an example of one unclear group of activists, the Internationalists, working with a section from official social-democracy. The cooperation remains within the bounds of what would be acceptable to a section of social-democracy. Thus, the Internationalists' much-vaunted "anti-imperialism" at this time didn't take them beyond the social-democratic milieu, not to speak of approaching Marxism-Leninism.

And most significantly, this joint project is not some auxiliary project of the Internationalists while they carry on their own independent work. No, the Internationalists abandon their own journal in favor of the joint newspaper, giving up any independent agitation of their own. These are hardly the attributes of a consistent Marxist-Leninist center!

#### The Necessity for Change — New Leftism in the Guise of Shrieks Against New Leftism

The Internationalists repeatedly boasted of their opposition to New Leftism. We have already seen an example of their empty shrieks against New Leftism. We have pointed out that the Internationalists did not carry out a serious struggle against New Left ideology. Indeed, behind their shrieks, the Internationalists themselves advocated various of the fashionable New Left ideas blowing at that time.

New Left ideology had emerged in the 1950's in the ideological vacuum created in the left by the revisionist degeneration of the communist parties. It preached an alternative to both Marxism-Leninism, which it decried as outdated and dogmatic, and also to official social-democracy, which it considered too wrapped up in Cold War liberalism. It preached activism and took a critical attitude towards U.S. imperialism and the Cold War.

But it remained essentially social-democratic. Among other things, it rejected the class struggle and the need for proletarian revolution; it denied the role of the working class as the basic agency of social transformation; and it rejected the need for a proletarian party.

The Internationalists also reflected the ideological confusion of the period. They reflected many of the major New Left ideas and prejudices. For instance, the Internationalists were utterly confused about the role of the working class. Although they may have been willing to recognize the working class as an oppressed class, in practice they never took it seriously as a revolutionary force. Like many other New Left-influenced groups of the 1960's, they too were engaged in the search for an original and "creative" analysis with which to justify

putting the student youth and professors in the center of the revolution. Many such ideas were floated in the 1960's, such as "youth as a class," "the new working class," etc. The main difference between the Internationalists and the others was that they promoted their theories under the guise of opposition to New Leftism.

This was the real essence of their much-heralded analysis of the "cultural front" — the gobbledygook known as the Necessity for Change (NFC) analysis. This was written up as the key document for the NFC Conference which the Internationalists organized in London, England in August 1967. It was at this conference that the Internationalists formally launched themselves as an international movement, with sections in different countries, an international leadership, an international headquarters, etc. The NFC analysis was the ideological basis for this international movement. It was held to be applicable to all the Anglo-American societies and by implication, to all the advanced capitalist countries generally.

It is significant to note that this document and conference are still promoted, a decade and a half later, as glorious revolutionary happenings by the heirs of the Internationalists. Therefore, because of the significance attributed to it, we would like to examine some of the main features of this analysis.

A whole section of the document was devoted to the issue of "material abundance." This went into a pseudo-critique of the "consumer society." In the 1960's this was a familiar view among the New Left ideologues who argued that the working class in the developed capitalist countries had been bought off. The NFC analysis didn't quite say this in so many words, but instead stressed the New Left view that all the well-established Marxist concepts of economic exploitation and the class struggle of the proletariat were outdated. They called for replacing the Marxist positions with "new" "brilliant" concepts of "the liberation of the individual." Thus it denounced both Marxists and revisionists equally for sticking to the outdated concepts:

"In terms of material abundance there has been much confusion created in contemporary society; this confusion stems from two main sources. 1. The confusion created by those who are renegades from Marxism, and 2. those who consider themselves to be Marxists. In Anglo-American society the Marxist parties have never posed the question of material abundance in the correct Marxist form, i.e., from the standpoint of the living person.... In the last two or three years, mainly due to slumps and inflation, there exists a danger in terms of shortage of these goods. ...according to these people, whenever there is a lack of objects there will be a revolt in favor of restoring the availability of these objects."

Further on, it declared: "The correct Marxist approach to material abundance is unequivocal opposition to the consumer goods-based society and the concomitant struggle for the liberation of the individual,

liberation in terms of seeking truth and serving people." (Internationalist pamphlet *The Necessity for Change*, 1967, pp. 17-19, emphasis added)

Having presented the issues of economic exploitation and class struggle as outdated because of the "consumer society" in the developed capitalist countries, the NFC analysis showed a marked tendency of representing the tasks of the anti-imperialists in these countries merely in terms of support work for the national liberation movements and the "revolutionist societies" such as "China, Cuba, and one or two others." (*Ibid.*, pp. 19, 23) This represented a tendency towards primeval "three worldism," which was fashionable in the New Left too.

Several years later, in 1971-72, CPC(M-L) fought against an ultra-three worldist faction which gave the line that Afro-Asians are more revolutionary than North Americans. But CPC(M-L) never admitted that the roots of this could be found within their own most prominent historical documents. The NFC analysis itself had said, for example: "Historically it can be seen that the more liberated the person, the more revolutionary zeal is released; African, Asian and Latin American countries are good examples of this." (*Ibid.*, p. 18)

Having set aside the working class, the NFC analysis focused on putting the student youth and professors in the center of the revolutionary movement. They put forward the view that "At this stage our struggle is on the cultural front." (Resolution of the NFC Conference reprinted in *Mass Line*, September 17, 1969, p. 8, col. 2) In the 1960's the bourgeoisie did indeed launch a powerful offensive on the cultural front to confuse the activists and divert them from the path of revolutionary struggle. The Internationalists observed that there was a need for fighting on this front, but they did not really fight on these questions. Their actual attitude was to merge with some of the cultural theories put forward by the bourgeoisie and attempt to give them a somewhat "left" and "revolutionary" coloring. Moreover, they also used the issue of the need to fight on the cultural front as a pretext to put the petty-bourgeois youth instead of the proletariat at the center of the revolution.

Marxism-Leninism recognizes the importance of work among the youth, especially at a time when the youth are in ferment, as took place in the 1960's. But it does not counterpose work in the proletariat to work among the youth. It does not try to organize the youth on an independent a-class basis but as a force on the side of the revolutionary proletariat. It strives to organize the youth under the leadership of the proletariat, the vanguard of the revolution.

But the Internationalists were also thoroughly confused on how to mobilize the youth and students to take up revolutionary positions. From their disdain for the mass movements, they did not believe that it was possible to mobilize the students to take up an anti-imperialist position through their participation in the

general political movement. Instead the Internationalists alleged that the key was analysis of their own particular "cultural oppression." As a document of theirs put it: "Once this 'cultural oppression' was properly understood and related to the economic base, the broad masses understood the class struggle." (*One Struggle, Two Enemies, Three Guidelines, Four Levels of Work*, p. 3)

Hence the bulk of the Necessity for Change analysis was devoted to a most confused discussion of the psychology of taking an anti-imperialist stand. One of the striking things about this analysis is that it poses everything entirely in a-class terms, simply in terms of the "individual." Thus it advocates overcoming "anti-consciousness" with "consciousness," without ever indicating that the different class environments individuals grow up in affect this question.

The basic thrust of the analysis is that the "individual" can resolve one's personal crises through introspection and, by the sheer dictate of one's "will-to-be," opt for an anti-imperialist position in favor of "The Necessity for Change." And this is presented as the only solution if one seeks to really resolve one's crisis; after all, as the document puts it, "The will-to-be demands fundamental change." (NFC pamphlet, p. 7)

The analysis points out that as individuals develop skepticism over the dominant ideas of society, they are faced with two basic approaches. It then contrasts "going-in" to "going-out." First, individuals attempt "going-out." This is described as participation in various kinds of reformist activity. This road is described as no solution at all. It is cursed as "the root cause of discord which confuses the fundamental issue." This gives rise to crisis. The solution to this crisis is then said to be in "going-in." It waxes enthusiastically, "Going-in reveals the true nature of being that is to seek truth — to serve people." (*Ibid.*, p. 15) This "going-in" is left vague, but it is quite clear that it is a psychological act, some sort of introspection.

The document equated "going-out" with reformist activity. But since this is contrasted not to revolutionary activity in the mass movement but to introspection, it is quite clear what is being denounced as "going-out." It is merely a euphemism for participation in the general political movement.

This analysis has nothing in common with Marxism-Leninism, which teaches that one transforms oneself by transforming the world, through taking part in the revolutionary struggle to change the world.

In reality this whole analysis was nothing but a theory of personal liberation. Such a theory could only play a negative role in the struggle to build a political movement. This analysis wreaked havoc when the English Internationalists took it literally and tried to apply it for several years after the Necessity for Change Conference in 1967. The Political Report to the Founding Conference of the Communist Party of England

(M-L) in March 1972 provided a hint of this. It stated:

"From 1967 to October 1970 the main left opportunist tendency to oppose was the line of solving the problems of inner party life and inner party building detached from and separate from mobilizing the broad masses of the people. The crudest example of this was the line 'Problems of the individual can be solved without overthrowing British monopoly capitalism.' We have suffered many grave setbacks as a result of this line. For example, soon after August 1967 our Party actually divided as a result of this problem. Some comrades were preoccupied in trying to solve their 'sexual' problems instead of making revolution. In opposing this trend, other comrades simply 'walked out,' left the Party and continued their revolutionary activity elsewhere.... A further example. Up until October 1969 comrades working in Sussex University used to give the slogan 'Be a communist and solve your hang-ups.'" (*The Marxist-Leninist*, a journal of CPE(M-L), 1974, p. 11)

Although this report describes some of the severe problems of the English group, it does not connect any of this to the Necessity for Change analysis. But the facts clearly show that the spirit behind the slogan "Be a communist and solve your hang-ups" is exactly the spirit of the Necessity for Change analysis.

Whatever this garbage is, it is not Marxism-Leninism. In fact, it is a hodgepodge of ideas drawn from various fashionable bourgeois ideological currents of the 1960's. It includes, among other things, the bourgeois psychological theories of "identity crisis" à la Erik Erikson, the existential ideas of Jean-Paul Sartre, the anti-working class prejudices of Marcuse, and so forth. The original formulations were changed, a few new formulations were thrown in to make the whole thing look really original and profound, and voilà — you have the Necessity for Change!

Finally it should be noted that this trash has never been repudiated by the descendants of the Internationalists. For example, even after they declared themselves to be Marxist-Leninist, they continued to justify that their petty-bourgeois confusion and disdain for the working class had been the correct thing for the mid-to-late 1960's. Thus, even when they founded CPC(M-L) and proclaimed that the working class was the main and leading force of the revolution, CPC(M-L) still justified the Internationalists' promotion of the petty bourgeoisie as the central focus of the revolutionary movement in the 1960's. The Political Report of April 1970, the founding document of CPC(M-L), declared in reference to their work during the mid-to-late 1960's:

"We pointed out that during this period and afterwards that because of the temporary and transient economic expansion of U.S. imperialism, the contradiction between the U.S. imperialists and their



lackeys, the Canadian compradors, and the Canadian people was becoming most acute on the cultural level. This takes the form of large-scale ideological propaganda for imperialist ideology... as well as the propagation of a fascist and decadent lifestyle.... These qualities were reflected in most concentrated form amongst the urban petty bourgeoisie, who were feeling oppression at a tremendous level. **The petty bourgeoisie being an intermediate class were worst affected.**

"...We pointed out that because of the intensification of the contradiction between the U.S. imperialists, their lackeys, and the Canadian people on the cultural level, **the economic contradiction was temporarily relegated to a secondary position.** Because of this, the petty bourgeoisie, especially the students in the universities, would be the first to rise. Within four years, we comprehensively developed this analysis to show how the masses of the students are oppressed by imperialist culture, and that their revolt had its roots in the imperialist expansion. **Our analysis has been proven completely correct and has been tested in practice.**" (CPC(M-L), *Documents, Political Reports 1970 and 1973*, pp. 14-15, emphasis added)

This passage shows that although the Canadian Internationalists had by this time declared themselves to be the Marxist-Leninist party, they refused to purge themselves of their earlier confused positions. Rather, they simply rewrote the analysis of the Necessity for Change document in a new terminology, replacing the existential and psychological phraseology of the earlier period with Marxist-Leninist-sounding phrases.

Thus they made it a special point to reaffirm that the struggles on cultural questions weren't just a part of the general mass upsurge of the 60's but the central feature of the upsurge. In addition, this statement from 1970 continued to hold that it was correct to reject the struggle against economic exploitation of the working class because allegedly the "economic contradiction" had been relegated to a secondary position! And when CPC(M-L) starts to call for work among the proletariat, this is connected to the assessment of the economic crisis looming up. But their earlier prejudices regarding the working class continue to give them a lot of trouble in sorting out what to do among the workers. Their opposition to the struggle against economic exploitation leads them into advocating semi-anarchist positions for the working class movement, until 1974-75 when they switch to economist and reformist positions. (CPC(M-L)'s historical deviations on the working class movement were discussed in our article "Economist Distortions of the 'Make the Rich Pay!' Slogan," in the March 10, 1981 issue of *The Workers' Advocate*.)

But it was not just in 1970 that the CPC(M-L) continued to justify the ideological confusion of the Inter-

nationalists. Even when they were repudiating Mao Zedong Thought in 1978-79 and claiming to sweep out their errors of their past, CPC(M-L) continued, nevertheless, to laud the legacy of the NFC analysis to the skies. Thus speaking at the New Year's Meeting in Montreal for 1979, Hardial Bains declared:

"Although the Party was founded in 1970, we started our work before that because prior to the founding of the Party, the Internationalists were carrying out work since 1963, and specifically since the Necessity for Change Conference in 1967, we have been organizing for eleven years. ...what was the thesis advanced in 1967? On what basis did we organize? We said **Necessity for Change.** The clarion call was **Necessity for Change, Necessity for Revolution.** From the very conditions of life the demand for revolution was put forward. We did not read books for purposes of writing essays or start analyzing who said what, when they said it, etc. We paid attention to the concrete conditions of that period and advanced the slogan **Necessity for Change!** We advanced other slogans as well such as **Smash the Triple 'I' of Imperialism, Impotency, and Ignorance!** which were revolutionary slogans for that period." (*PCDN*, January 15, 1979, p. 4, col.3)

What does it mean to still promote this trash today? It means that those who participate in CPC(M-L)'s "special trend" in the international movement today must not only shout hosannas to CPC(M-L)'s present-day deviations but also have to uphold all the confused bag and baggage of the "glorious history" of two decades!

#### On the 1968 Reorganization of the Internationalists

In their discussion of the history of the Internationalists, CPC(M-L) has always considered May 7, 1968 to be an important turning point. This was the time when the Canadian Internationalists reorganized in Montreal, after Hardial Bains returned to Canada from the British Isles. In the old days, they used to celebrate this date as the reorganization of the Internationalists "on a Marxist-Leninist basis." These days, when they promote the fantastic lie that the Internationalists were always Marxist-Leninist, they simply refer to it as the date of the reorganization of the Internationalists. On May 7-8 this year, CPC(M-L) held its 8th Consultative Conference, one of whose slogans was the celebration of the 15th anniversary of the reorganization of the Internationalists.

But what did this reorganization amount to in reality? This has always been kept vague in the public documents of CPC(M-L).

It is true that from around this time the Internationalists began to take up various theses from the interna-

tional Marxist-Leninist movement. They began to speak of the importance of the working class, of the need for Marxist-Leninist ideology, of the need to oppose Castroism and other forms of opportunism, and so forth. Shortly afterwards, they also began to agitate for the building of Marxist-Leninist parties.

No doubt, there were people in the ranks of the followers and sympathizers of the Internationalists who were enthusiastic to take up Marxist-Leninist ideology. By this time, Marxism-Leninism had become very prestigious among the activists in the mass movements.

However, for Hardial Bains and his close circle, the central issue of reorganization was not the question of ideology; it was something else. Let us allow Hardial Bains to explain this himself. On May 7, 1978, the 10th anniversary of the reorganization, in a presentation to CPC(M-L)'s Special Congress, Hardial Bains explained what the reorganization was:

"Many times the comrades ask — what was this reorganization, how many comrades were there and they think that there was a very big gathering that took place. **On May 7th, there were two-and-a-half individuals who got together** (laughter). I say two-and-a-half in the sense that one person didn't want to be around, at the same time he wanted to be around and we had to argue with him a lot. **The central question on which the argument took place with him, on which the other comrade resolutely supported myself was the question of leadership.** The issue was dealt with in the following way. The third person resolutely agreed that Comrade Bains was the practical leader, that **throughout this period of five years he had consistently led.** But he said to admit that publicly is impossible. Privately you can get it even in writing and any document, as long as it is private, he is quite willing to sign away everything. But don't ask me to say publicly that this is the situation. We could have easily and simply said that this is fine, you privately agree with us and you are our brother and all this, and not have this big conflict which took place — I think the meeting lasted two-three days, **the fight took place for several days in a row, a continuous fight on this question.**" (From the transcript given to our Party by CPC(M-L), May 7, 1978, emphasis added)

Incredible! Clearly this is not the description of an organized movement attempting to reorganize itself on the basis of Marxist-Leninist ideology. Rather, it is an account of the sordid internal maneuvers of a clique, to which what was important was not the question of ideology but the issue of establishing Hardial Bains' personal hegemony.

A serious effort at the reorganization of a movement would have called for taking a critical attitude towards the past, for carrying forward what was positive in the past while rejecting the negative traditions. But as we

have noted earlier, the Internationalists did not take such an attitude. With regard to their traditions, they merely rephrased the confused views of their earlier days in Marxist-Leninist-sounding terminology. And by making a central issue of their reorganization the public proclamation of the cult of Hardial Bains, based on his "consistent" leadership over the previous five years, they in fact reinforced the negative traditions of the past. It is from this time that the extreme promotion of Hardial Bains begins in the publications of the Internationalists.

It is amazing that 10 years later this issue is raised as a subject of Hardial Bains' presentation to a Congress of CPC(M-L). But there is a reason behind this. At this time, Mao Zedong Thought was coming under criticism as the struggle against Chinese revisionist "three worldism" intensified. Hardial Bains felt threatened that his activities would be called Maoist, so he reasserted his leadership of CPC(M-L). Thus he felt it necessary to remind everyone that the real issue of importance in the reorganization of CPC(M-L) in 1968 hadn't been a matter of ideology but the issue of establishing Bains' leadership. Ideological issues may come and go but Bains' personal leadership must always be upheld.

#### International Factional Activity

No discussion of the Internationalists is of course complete without commenting on their "international activity." Today Hardial Bains claims: "The attitude towards the unity of the International Marxist-Leninist Communist Movement was a matter of principle to the Internationalists as was the attitude towards proletarian internationalism.... The Internationalists and later the Party considered themselves as a contingent of the International Communist Movement and if relations with other Parties were not established during the early period, it was through no fault of ours." (*PCDN*, April 15, 1983, p. 2)

This is a joke. Are we to believe that when the Internationalists were just a "loose discussion group" or when they were a "center-left" group, they were a part of the international Marxist-Leninist movement? Clearly that is absurd. And in 1967 when the Internationalists floated themselves as an international trend, they did not consider themselves as part of the international Marxist-Leninist movement either, because at this time they only claimed to be "anti-revisionists" but not Marxist-Leninists.

The crucial issue in proclaiming themselves as an international trend in 1967 was the demand to be recognized as international leaders, as pathbreakers of exceptional importance for the revolutionary movement worldwide. This issue remained paramount even after the Internationalists began to describe themselves as Marxist-Leninist. At that time, they did not choose to

participate in the international Marxist-Leninist movement on the basis of supporting the Marxist-Leninist forces and helping to build the international movement, but on the basis of the demand to be recognized as international leaders. Thus, the matter of ideology was not considered to be of much importance; irrespective of whether they declared themselves to be Marxist-Leninist or not, the Internationalists demanded the right to become international leaders.

In August 1967, the Necessity for Change Conference marked the launching of the Internationalists as a formal international organization. The English Internationalists were founded at this conference. The Irish and Canadian groups had already been founded, though it is unclear how much of an organization existed in Canada at the time. The NFC Conference also opened up the "international headquarters" in London and proclaimed an international center, the "International Committee of the Internationalists." The ideological foundation of this movement was not declared to be Marxism-Leninism but the Necessity for Change analysis.

So what were the Internationalists supposed to be at this time when they floated their own international trend? The Chairman of the Internationalists explained at the conclusion of the NFC Conference: "We are neither a party nor an official anti-revisionist group; we are a movement for the defeat of U.S. imperialism and its accomplice, modern Soviet revisionism, and all kinds of reaction." (Reprinted in *Mass Line*, September 17, 1969, p. 9)

There are a variety of accounts regarding this period which verify that the denial that they were an "official anti-revisionist group" refers to the fact that the Internationalists considered themselves to be "anti-revisionist" but not Marxist-Leninist. For example, the Political Report delivered to the founding meeting of the CP of England (M-L), in discussing the NFC Conference, referred to questions that were raised by other groups about this distinction the Internationalists were trying to make. It sneered: "We were branded as non-Marxist-Leninist or anti-Marxist-Leninist. 'How can you be anti-revisionist without being Marxist-Leninist?' we were told.... These were some of the 'repudiations.'" (*The Marxist-Leninist*, a journal of the CPE (M-L), 1974, p. 80)

The Internationalists also gave a call to consolidate their trend further. The Chairman of the Internationalists declared in his concluding speech: "We are going to organize an International Congress next year in which we will adopt our political program, the structural form of our organization, and give birth to a genuinely anti-imperialist and anti-revisionist movement." (*Ibid.*)

Thus in 1967, when the Internationalists had not even declared themselves as parties, they arrogantly declared themselves to be international leaders. Even

when they didn't consider themselves to be Marxist-Leninist, they demanded that they should be recognized as leaders of the international "anti-revisionist and anti-imperialist" movement.

There is no recorded evidence that the International Congress of the Internationalists was ever held. However, a year later, the International Committee of the Internationalists announced: "We are very proud to announce that the Youth and Students Wing of our movement is convening the FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST YOUTH AND STUDENTS (sometime during 1969). In so doing, we are executing the great historic resolution passed at the Historic Necessity for Change Conference." (*One Struggle, Two Enemies, Three Guidelines, Four Levels of Work*, 1968, p. 2) By early 1969, there is no more word about the International Committee of the Internationalists. But now we find a publication called *World Revolutionary Youth* which claims to be the "official organ of the Preparatory Committee of the First International Congress of Marxist-Leninist Youth." There is no mention of who is on this Committee.

The International Congress of the Internationalists has thus metamorphosed into the First International Congress of Marxist-Leninist Youth. And we are told that the plan for this new congress of Marxist-Leninist youth is based on carrying out the decision of the NFC Conference. But wait. The NFC Conference had called for an international congress for consolidating the **internationalist trend**, at a time when the Internationalists did not consider themselves to be Marxist-Leninists. How is it that a year later, that same decision is reinterpreted to have been a decision for the convening of an international congress of **Marxist-Leninist youth**? Clearly, the answer to this glaring contradiction lies in the fact that the leadership of the Internationalists didn't give a damn about the ideological issues involved; rather, they only considered important the issue of proclaiming themselves as international leaders.

The Resolution of the Preparatory Committee for this new Congress of Marxist-Leninist youth shows how the Internationalists used Maoism as a convenient banner under which to carry out their international factional activity.

We noted in the introduction to this article that in organizing the Internationalists Hardial Bains followed the general method of adapting to one or another fashionable trend of the time. Thus in the days of the "center-left group," he flirted with social-democracy, while at the time of the NFC Conference, he took up various of the fashionable theories of the New Left, albeit by giving them a somewhat left coloration. In 1968, when the Internationalists demanded the right to become leaders of the world's Marxist-Leninist youth, they found the banner of Mao Zedong Thought to be

very convenient for their maneuvers. Maoism was not just a theory which justified factional chaos and negation of the hegemony of the proletariat in China, but it was also useful for the Internationalists' factional activity and to justify many of their confused non-Marxist ideas.

From now on the Internationalists and their heirs were to start making the claim that they were "creatively applying" Mao Zedong Thought and the lessons of China's Cultural revolution to the concrete conditions of Anglo-American society. The basis for this claim was their Necessity for Change document. However, at various times in their history the Internationalists and their heirs preferred to keep the above claim at a general level without mentioning that it was originally based on the NFC analysis. However, at other times, they openly talked about how the NFC analysis itself had been the creative application of Mao Zedong Thought to the concrete conditions of the advanced capitalist societies in the 1960's. Indeed, the Internationalists and their heirs repeatedly claimed that their exceptional character lay precisely in the fact that it had been they who had brought the lessons of the Cultural Revolution to Canada, Britain, Ireland, etc.

In their 1968-69 document calling for the Congress, however, the Internationalists did not dare openly demand leadership of the world's Marxist-Leninist youth on the basis of the NFC analysis. Instead they hinted at this with their talk of the "creative application" of Mao Zedong Thought, which was their way of referring to their experience. Hence the Resolution of the Preparatory Committee for the Congress called for unity on the basis "that there is an urgent need for all genuinely Marxist-Leninist youth who follow Mao Zedong's Thought creatively and in an all-sided manner to gather together." (*World Revolutionary Youth*, January 1969, p. 3) The Internationalists demanded that the Congress be constituted not just on the basis of Marxism-Leninism but on the basis of Mao Zedong Thought. The Resolution made a point of explicitly denouncing "various 'anti-revisionists' and 'Marxist-Leninists' [who] are, through dubious means, attempting to stop the spread of Marxism-Leninism of our era, Mao Zedong's Thought, to the broad masses of the working and oppressed people...." (*Ibid.*)

Finally there is another side to the intriguing nature of the Congress proposed by the Internationalists. The Internationalists had not only unilaterally set up the "Preparatory Committee" but they also promised to give full voting power only to Marxist-Leninist youth organizations. The Marxist-Leninist parties and other organizations which weren't officially youth groups could only send observers.

But at that time the issue was to establish contact between the various Marxist-Leninist parties and forces which had come up, not just between the youth groups. This is verified by Bains' complaint quoted in the be-

ginning of this section, where he talked of the lack of contact between the Internationalists and the Marxist-Leninist parties. But the Internationalists, since they weren't a party, couldn't have asserted their leadership in a general meeting of the parties. Therefore they tried to make the fact they weren't a party into a great virtue by calling for uniting only the youth organizations, hang all the rest.

What all this boils down to is an attempt by the Internationalists to set up a special international organization of Marxist-Leninist youth under their hegemony. They sought to use Mao Zedong Thought as the convenient banner under which to carry out their maneuvers. This was nothing but factional activity directed against the international Marxist-Leninist movement.

In any case, the International Congress was not heard from after the early months of 1969 and a few issues of *World Revolutionary Youth*. It was a total fiasco. At that point, the Internationalists ceased to claim themselves as Marxist-Leninist youth movements and declared themselves to be full-fledged Marxist-Leninist movements, the nuclei of future communist parties.

#### Concluding Remarks

We have come to the end of our examination of the key features of the actual historical record of the Internationalists.

This study, while not trying to give a complete assessment of the history, has nevertheless sufficiently shown that there is not a shred of truth in the boastful claims of CPC(M-L) about how the Internationalists and Hardial Bains consistently fought for Marxism-Leninism since 1963.

Instead the Internationalists appear to have been similar to many other groups of activists which came up in the 1960's. In many respects, however, the record of the Internationalists is in fact far less distinguished than many other groups. This is especially so with respect to their propensity for declaring themselves international leaders and for painting up their ideological confusion as international experience of epoch-making significance.

Of course, it is no sin, in and of itself, to be descended from groups that were confused or wandered in the wilderness. Marxist-Leninist organizations do not come into being out of thin air or emerge full-blown from the head of Minerva, but out of the revolutionary movement of the times. The task of the heirs of the Internationalists, after they declared their allegiance to Marxism-Leninism, was to rebuild themselves on the firm foundations of Marxist-Leninist theory. This required purging themselves of the ideological confusion of their infant years.

But CPC(M-L) did not take this road. Hence their old sins inevitably continued to haunt them. Not only did

the leadership of CPC(M-L) continue to laud their earlier confusion to the skies as the acme of revolutionary achievement of the 1960's, but they also came under the strong influence of Maoist positions on many basic questions of strategy and tactics. Even after declaring their opposition to Mao Zedong Thought in 1978, CPC(M-L) has fought tooth and nail to preserve their Maoist deviations and has also taken to flaunting a liquidationist deviation.

As a result of this stand, there has been grave damage to the revolutionary movement in Canada. As well, since the promotion of the Internationalists'

experience has served as the justification for international factional activity, the leadership of CPC(M-L) has also caused serious damage to the revolutionary movement in other countries. Because of their ambitions of international leadership, they have tried to bring other organizations into their "special trend" and impose their Maoist and liquidationist positions on them. This serves to reaffirm the importance of our Party's struggle against the deviationist positions and international factional activity of the leadership of CPC(M-L). □

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