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*Perspective for the World Revolutionary Movement*

# **The Continuing Struggle against Revisionism and Nationalism**

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# **ROAD TO REVOLUTION III**

## **The Continuing Struggle Against Revisionism**

### **STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY**

A scientific evaluation of history must have as its core the study of revolutionary movements. Our paper will therefore attempt to analyze the revolutionary sweep of world history since the Paris Commune. We want to absorb the lessons of previous experiences in order to advance beyond them. We seek to draw upon what is positive in these experiences and to learn from the negative.

Four great revolutions have marked the forward thrust of humanity: the Paris Commune, the Russian revolution, the Chinese revolution, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR). Each of these struggles advanced the world revolutionary movement to new heights. Each shed more light than its predecessor on the road away from bourgeois oppression. Each helped spell doom for societies dominated by a ruling class of exploiters. Workers and oppressed people have been able to advance because—and only because—of these revolutions.

Furthermore, these momentous revolutionary movements were not mystical events. They were all made and led by masses of people and their leaders. In each case, the process reflected the universal dominance of the antagonisms between the two principal classes. Hence, the revolutionary movement of the past hundred years has been a series of attempts by workers to wrest control of their lives from the ruling class. Revolution determines the class that holds state power, and each of these four revolutions attempted to resolve this central question in favor of the proletariat.

The struggle for state power is inseparable from the struggle between correct and incorrect ideas about how to win, keep, and consolidate it. The ideo-

logical struggle against revisionism—the ideas and practice of the class enemy within the communist movement—has taken place since the beginning of struggle for proletarian revolution. Revisionism attempts to pervert and distort the revolutionary content of Marxism-Leninism. It assumes many forms; it seeks to ride the revolutionary tide of world history by appearing in increasingly militant disguise; but its counter-revolutionary essence remains the same.

We believe that the struggle against revisionism has not nearly ended. The struggle rages in every Marxist-Leninist party and group in the world. No party has avoided it in the past. No party can avoid it now. No party will avoid it in the future. It will continue to rage until the realization of world communism. The long term error of the international communist movement has been right-opportunism.

We should not be alarmed at this prospect. Rather, we should welcome the destruction of the bourgeoisie's ideas just as we welcome the destruction of the bourgeoisie. If the military struggle for state power must be protracted, the ideological struggle to keep it will be even more so. In the course of this fight, we will face many twists and turns, many ups and downs, many victories and defeats. This is not a cause for resignation, passivity, discouragement, or cynicism. The fight against revisionism is a life and death struggle. *It cannot be avoided.* It has always advanced the cause of workers and oppressed people. In each period, new advances are made as revisionism is progressively unmasked. Because the political understanding of the masses increases, their fighting strength grows. They wrest power from and expose



the ruling class. In the course of ideological and political struggle, they rip away the red fig leaf from revisionist bosses. As the battle against revisionism intensifies, the people prove that they can win and hold state power. The struggle against revisionism is a protracted process. It is a good thing.

In the context of revolutionary advances and the continuing fight against revisionism, revolutionaries have made serious errors. These errors have allowed the local capitalist class and its imperialist allies to regain state power temporarily in some countries. In this report, we will attempt to identify some of these errors. If we understand them, we can avoid them and defeat revisionism qualitatively. We do not look to denigrate anyone, nor do we wish to minimize the great accomplishments of the revolutionary movements. On the contrary, we seek to comprehend and thereby remove those obstacles in revolutionary ideology that impede and set back revolution. Obviously, we could not carry out this task if OTHERS—many OTHERS—had not preceded us. We wish especially to credit the millions in the GPCR who opened new ideological horizons for us. We are now attempting to pursue the ideas they began to put into practice. We do not approach this task with arrogance or with the absolute certainty that we are right. We do know, however, that revisionism reversed the Soviet revolution. We know that revolutionary movements in eastern Europe that followed the Soviet path have all ended badly. And we know that the GPCR all along was a mass movement to defeat China's "red" bourgeoisie and re-establish proletarian dictatorship. When the GPCR broke out, the head of state, the mayor of Peking, the provincial secretaries, several top army officers, and the general secretary of the CCP were all called capitalist roaders. And now we view the spectacle of the Mao Tse-tung leadership pursuing right-wing policies (which they claimed to have rejected) with a vengeance. Current policies of the leadership of the Chinese communist Party (CCP) have reversed the revolutionary process in China, and have taken China back on the path of capitalism. How can such developments occur? How can they be reversed? In the following report, we will attempt to answer these questions by analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the four great revolutions. We will also discuss four other questions: infallibility and cultism, a general estimate of the present historical epoch, the united front viewed as a left-center coalition, and the need for a broadened internationalist perspective.

This report will not try to evaluate all the questions which need to be dealt with. In the first place we can't answer them all. Secondly, many questions will be dealt with in subsequent articles in PL and Challenge-Desafio. What we will try to do is give some of our thinking on a few of the basic questions.

### THE PARIS COMMUNE

The Paris Commune of 1870-71 was the first great

proletarian revolution in history. Ultimately, it failed and was ruthlessly smashed by the combined efforts of the French and German bourgeoisie. However, Marx, Engels, Lenin, and others were able to draw heavily on the experience of the Commune. The Commune clarified in practice for the first time the content and forms of working class power. It taught Marx and later Lenin four profound lessons about the revolutionary process:

1. The need to smash (as opposed to taking over or "appropriating") bourgeois state power and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

2. The need for equality—particularly economic equality—between revolutionary cadre and the masses of workers. In one of its first acts, the Commune abolished the gross discrepancy between the wages of working people and state functionaries.

3. Immediate recall of leadership by the masses if leaders failed to carry out the desires and aspirations of the working class.

4. The abolition of a bourgeois-type standing army and the distribution of arms to the masses of people. The Commune correctly foresaw that a standing army could serve as a "special repressive force" only against the workers and other oppressed people and not against the bourgeoisie. The workers had made the revolution; they—and only they—could defend it.

In *State and Revolution*, Lenin raised and expanded these points at some length. In analyzing the Commune's weaknesses, he also showed that the class struggle would continue after socialism.

The rich experiences of the Paris Commune provided a source of inspiration to all revolutionaries. They enabled the world communist movement to take a giant stride forward.

### THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The Russian revolution was the first serious attempt by workers and peasants to seize, hold, and consolidate state power. This revolution applied the concept of proletarian dictatorship to defeat the old ruling class and drive it from power. Between 1919 and 1921, the revolutionaries made a magnificent and victorious stand against military intervention by many foreign imperialist powers. In the course of this struggle, the masses showed great courage and determination to defend and build their revolution.

Prior to the revolution, Lenin had written *What Is To Be Done?* In this historic work, he fought the right opportunists who would have frittered the revolution away by relying on spontaneity, by engaging in economic and other reform struggles without introducing communist ideas, and by agitating for a bourgeois-democratic revolution instead of socialism. Furthermore, he developed the concept of the revolutionary party and described the type of professional revolutionary needed to enable the party to function.

The Soviet revolution did not fall out of heaven. It reflected the objective situation in Russia, and it



showed that the *masses*, the *leadership* of their revolutionary party, and revolutionary violence on the part of the working class and peasantry were vital to the seizure of state power.

From its onset, the Russian revolution drew an endless series of attacks from the international bourgeoisie. The sharpest *external* form these attacks took was the fascist invasion of the Soviet Union in 1940. The Soviet struggle against this invasion was a key factor enabling other revolutions—particularly the Chinese revolution—to develop. Communists all over the world led the fight against fascism and Nazism. The Soviet Union was the bulwark of this fight. The armed might of the Nazis, supported by the fascist “master race” theory, seemed invincible. Yet, the Red Army, the Soviet people, and the world communist movement smashed this “master race” of fascist imperialists and its Wehrmacht. However, this tremendous mass struggle to defeat fascism, which involved hundreds of millions who were led mainly by the communist movement, did not result in socialism. The leadership of the international communist movement, led by the Soviet Union, did not advocate socialism—the dictatorship of the proletariat—as its primary goal. So after the war western Europe, particularly France and Italy, was handed back to the bourgeoisie. This was wrong. The workers were armed. They believed in socialism. And they would have carried the class struggle through to the end. Instead communist leaders advocated the turning in of guns to the Allied Military government, and winning socialism through the parliamentary process. So capitalism was put back on its feet in western Europe, and it eventually engulfed eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

In his rise to power, Hitler had received full backing from other imperialists, particularly from the “democratic” imperialists of France, Britain, and the U.S. They encouraged his scheme to transform Germany from a defeated imperialist power into a potent war machine. The arrangement was simple: the imperialists would allow Hitler to develop a powerful army if he agreed to use it as a goon-squad against the Soviet Union. In this period, Hitler’s principal slogan was “Drang nach Osten” (March to the East). This march to the east resulted in the destruction of the Third Reich, as the Nazis double-crossed and attacked their original backers and masses of workers and peasants drove the Wehrmacht out of every country it had occupied.

The Hitlerites were defeated by war. They were defeated in eastern Europe. Millions of other workers and oppressed people considered themselves communists. But because of serious errors (some mentioned previously) made by the international communist movement, which was led by Joseph Stalin, these advances were reversed and capitalism restored.

These developments did not happen overnight, nor did they drop like a bolt from the blue. As we attempt to sharpen the ideological struggle, we must seek out the roots of revisionism. In the case of the

Soviet Union and these other countries, these roots all converged at the point of granting concessions to the bourgeoisie, concessions that either allowed the old ruling class to reconquer power or paved the way for the emergence of a new, “red” bourgeoisie. (Once again let us restate that the concession granted to sections of the old ruling class rested on illusions about them. The old and incorrect idea that one part of the ruling class was better than the other part predominated. This is best seen today, when various communists and radicals still claim that liberals in the U.S. bourgeoisie are better than reactionaries.) Before proceeding further with our discussion of the Soviet Union, it will be useful to make a general enumeration of the forms these concessions assume:

1. In the course of conducting revolutionary struggle, prior to the seizure of power, the revolutionary party makes a wrong analysis of the bourgeoisie, falsely divides the bourgeoisie into a “left” and a “right” camp, calls for an alliance with the “left,” and consummates this alliance by granting the “left” certain privileges, such as immunity from expropriation, etc.

2. This alliance is maintained after the revolution, and the privileges granted to the “good” wing of the bourgeoisie are expanded. The rationale is that the party and the masses are too weak politically, economically, administratively, and ideologically for the revolution to survive without the active collaboration of “friendly” bourgeois forces.

3. Many of the privileges granted to the bourgeoisie inevitably assume other than purely economic forms, although economic concessions (toleration and encouragement of “limited” capitalist enterprise, maintenance and augmentation of wage differentials between bureaucrats or technicians and ordinary workers, etc.) play a key role. Economic concessions require prior ideological concessions: if you pay an architect far more than a bricklayer, a general a lot more than a private, or pay a mayor 20 times more than a peasant, you have to come up with a theory to justify the discrepancies. One of these ideological concessions is the promotion of nationalism. (“Let’s all be a little less piggy—all of us, that is, except the bourgeoisie—for the sake of the nation.”) Nationalism is a bourgeois theory. Like the bourgeoisie, it has no progressive aspects. Lenin and Stalin were consistent in defining nationalism as a totally reactionary *ideology*. But, they often suggested that a little nationalism could be useful. This is like saying, “the lady is slightly pregnant.”

4. Revolutionaries view the united front exclusively or primarily as an alliance between themselves and the “better” section of the bourgeoisie. Thus, the front unites around a bourgeois-nationalist line as opposed to a revolutionary line for the dictatorship of the workers. As part of this deal, communists make the biggest concession of all by renouncing the struggle to win the masses to a socialist program.

5. One of the principal reasons offered for the above concessions is the assumption that a large section of the masses—particularly the peasantry cannot be won to socialism. Therefore, the argument



is put forth that the socialist revolution must pass through a two-stage process, the first stage of which will be something other than socialism. The Chinese called this first stage "New Democracy." Others argued for a period of bourgeois democracy that would somehow transform itself into socialism.

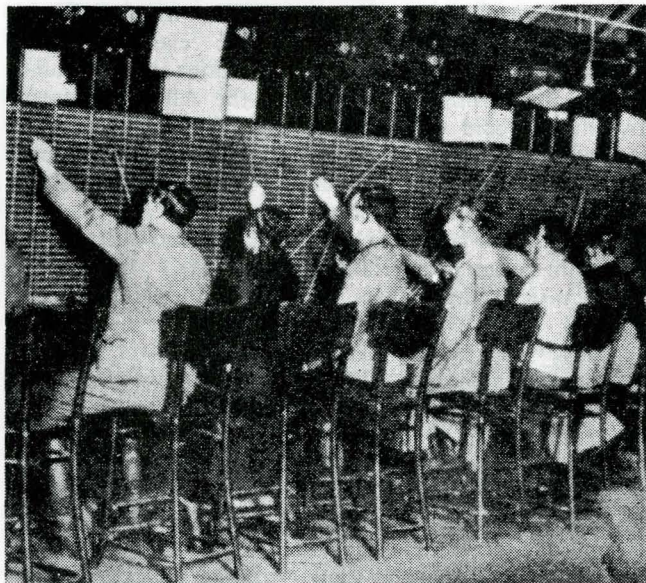
The writings of Lenin, Stalin, and Mao are filled with warnings about the inevitability of a comeback attempt by the bourgeoisie after the revolution. (However, both Mao and Stalin were inconsistent on this key question. Before the current CCP leaders rewrote *On Contradiction*, Mao spoke of how the class struggle in China would lessen after socialism had triumphed. Similarly, Stalin spoke on both sides of this question. Both of these revolutionaries had a hard time grasping Lenin's point that after socialism the old rulers would try ten times harder to make a comeback.) The historical experience of revolutionary movements seems to validate these warnings without exception. The bourgeoisie's *desire* to reverse socialist revolution is constant. *Its ability* to reverse socialism depends upon the amount of leverage and maneuverability it is left with. Historical experience also seems to confirm that every time revolutionaries have made concessions to the bosses, the bosses have been able to use the concessions to regain power.

After the revolution, Russia was decimated. The Civil War and the fight against imperialist aggression had torn the country to shreds. Times were very hard. After the defeat of the interventionists, the Bolsheviks undertook the task of building the first socialist society. Before long, the leaders of the party decided that the slow pace of socialist construction would lead to ruination. They contended that the revolution would go down to defeat unless they could win the "more advanced" members of the old ruling class to co-operate in building the workers' state. The assertion was that without the expertise of some of the old bosses, the workers would be lost. Therefore, sweeping class concessions were in order. Accordingly, in the twenties, the Bolsheviks began implementing a policy known as NEP (New Economic Policy). In a nutshell, the NEP called for the reintroduction of capitalist methods, capitalist competition, and capitalists into the government and economy. The program sought to restrict the development of capitalism. But communists were assigned to control and nurture this base of capitalism. Obviously, communists administering capitalist concessions is at least contradictory.

The Soviet party repeatedly contended that without the NEP, the economy—and hence socialism—were doomed. But the real failure began to materialize when communists were placed in the impossibly contradictory position of building capitalism. Profits and therefore exploitation were allowed. High living was tolerated. The equalitarianism that Lenin had admired in the Paris Commune and that he had called an indispensable aspect of socialism in *State and Revolution* never truly came into being. A well-heeled bourgeoisie with a toehold in the state apparatus and economy could not fail to begin penetrating the party, if not bodily at first, at least ideologically.

Communist cadre and leaders soon began aping the the old bourgeoisie. As the economic gap increased between them and the people, the ideological gap followed suit. As this disease progressed, the CP ultimately restored full-blown capitalism to the Soviet Union. This time the bourgeoisie consisted of CP leaders and the managerial class they represented. But this new bourgeoisie could not have developed strength to take power without the concessions initially granted to the old bosses in the twenties. The seeds of capitalist restoration were already inherent in the NEP. They did not bear fruit in the Soviet Union simply because Stalin made certain errors or because Khrushchev was a usurper. Like everyone else, Stalin made certain mistakes, some of them more serious than others; and the title of usurper is almost too generous for Khrushchev. But although these may be facts, they tell only part of the story. The devil theory won't work.

The transition from socialism to capitalism was a protracted process that unfolded over many years. The working class held fundamental power during this period. As in all developments, however, quantity turns into quality. The process of capitalist restoration was completed around the time of the



**Bolshevik telephone workers seize and operate the Petrograd exchange, 1917.**

Twentieth Party Congress in 1956. Led by Khrushchev, this congress set forth a systematic revisionist program. It called for unity between the Soviet Union and any party or nation calling itself socialist. The CPSU held this policy valid not only for itself but also for other parties. Thus, it gave the Italian CP the green light to unite with the right-winger Saragat. According to Khrushchev and the Twentieth Congress, it was possible and even desirable to envision a peaceful transition to socialism, because a new period had dawned in which socialism and imperialism could co-exist non-antagonistically. In the



course of this period, socialism would triumph not by force but by example. Khrushchev formulated a right-wing attack on the Stalin cult for use as a battering ram in demolishing Marxism-Leninism. He capitalized on bad errors made by Stalin and other revolutionaries to obscure his own reactionary ideas. There is no question Khrushchev had a lot of revisionism going for him. Over the years the Stalin leadership committed wholesale errors:

1. Making concessions to the old Russian ruling class.
2. Introduction of material incentives instead of political-moral incentives.
3. Relying on nationalism to defeat the Nazis—thus making the policy of the international working class subservient to the interests of the Soviet Union. So, nationalism triumphed over internationalism.
4. This policy led the Soviets into alliances with the international ruling class. This was most evident during the war against the Nazis. U.S., British, some French and other bosses were pictured as progressive forces.
5. Democratic centralism, which is the only system of revolutionary organization, was reduced to arbitrary centralism. Friends were not distinguished from enemies. Thus, many good revolutionaries were killed by the Stalin leadership because they might have had differences. Many counter-revolutionaries who should have been put down were able to slip through because of these abuses.
6. Probably the most important error Stalin and others made was not winning masses of people to Marxism-Leninism. So, an elite held power without much participation by workers and peasants. Socialism was for the party leaders. The masses were only involved in carrying out this or that policy. Because these policies seemed progressive at the time, there was little resistance to them. When the Khrushchev gang came to power there was only a slight adjustment needed to consolidate capitalist ways of life and production which had developed over the years. Finally, he capped off his revisionist program by asserting that the Soviet Union had completed socialist construction and could now undertake the transition to communism—and that therefore the dictatorship of the proletariat had become an obsolete concept to be superseded by the “state of the whole people.” Khrushchev heralded the return of capitalism by “decreeing” the end of class struggle. The Soviet leaders then proceeded to attack all those in the international communist movement who didn’t hold to these revisionist ideas, particularly the Chinese Communist Party and the Albanian Party of Labor. In the space of two generations, the Soviet Union had turned from a socialist state that allowed “limited” capitalist enterprise into a fascist dictatorship.

### **ARE CAPITALISTS MORE WINNABLE TO SOCIALISM THAN PEASANTS?**

As we said briefly earlier, Soviet concessions to

capitalism were predicated upon the assumption that the peasantry could not be won immediately to socialism. In the past, the international communist movement had sharply differentiated among those who could be won right off to a socialist program, those who could be won only after socialism had been established, and those who were unwinnable. In general, the peasantry was relegated to the second category. Communist theoreticians devoted many treatises to the peasants’ “backward mentality.” Marxist-Leninists claimed that the peasant was petty-bourgeois, either in his orientation or in his relation to the mode of production. Given this estimate, revolutionaries reasoned that the peasantry was unwinnable to socialism without initially passing through a “stage” of bourgeois democracy. According to this theory, each peasant first had to receive his own plot of land. Next, some of these plots could be turned into co-operatives. Then the co-operatives could be developed into collective farms. But even within these transitional phases, each peasant was entitled to his “own” land, cow, horse, chickens, donkey, etc. In reality, this bourgeois-democratic “revolution” consigned the vast majority of peasants to capitalist exploitation. Although Lenin and Stalin repeatedly condemned nationalism as a capitalist ideology, what other ideology could their program have produced? No matter how you sugarcoat it, capitalism is capitalism, and capitalist production relations breed a capitalist and nationalist outlook.

When peasants and oppressed people rebelled against imperialism in alliance with “anti-imperialist” local bosses, Marxist-Leninists supported this alliance. The theory was that since the fight against the imperialists took precedence over everything, local bosses in competition with the imperialists could help in building the united front. In practice, this produced two irreconcilable contradictions: in the first place, it called upon communists to win the peasantry to capitalism; secondly, it rejected nationalism as an ideology but often embraced it as a “tactic.”

We believe that virtually all the world’s peasants and oppressed people are proletarianized. (See next PL for more data.) The vast majority own neither land nor the means of production. This is certainly the case today, and we believe that it was also the case during Lenin’s lifetime. As a worldwide system of exploitation, imperialism proletarianizes people, whether they work on the land or in factories. As imperialism spreads its tentacles and engenders socialist revolution, worldwide industrialization also grows at an enormously rapid rate.

This development is particularly obvious in our own country. Millions of agricultural workers in the U.S. are fighting the bosses, not for individual plots of land, but for higher wages, shorter hours, improved working conditions, etc. These are proletarian class demands. If properly led, the struggle to win them can help develop socialist consciousness. In the case of the so-called “colonial” and “semi-



feudal" countries, tremendous economic growth has taken place. It is true that this growth has developed unevenly. It is also true that workers in the colonial countries are far more exploited than workers in imperialist countries. But why should communists attempt to convert these conditions into national capitalism, when this type of exploitation affords ample opportunity for winning workers and peasants—*especially* the most oppressed—to socialism? By drawing the conclusion that the peasants could not be won immediately to socialism, by deciding not to put forth proletarian dictatorship and a socialist program from the very start, communists found themselves making concession after concession to the bourgeoisie and thereby hastening the restoration of capitalism.

In this context, the concessions usually assumed the form of communist support for nationalism and bourgeois democracy. The theory developed to justify these activities asserts either that communists must carry forward the bourgeois-democratic revolution if the local ruling class abandons it or that they must initiate it if the rulers insist on clinging to other forms of exploitation. Needless to say, this theory "works"—in the worst possible way: communists who begin as apologists for capitalism become capitalists themselves.

History has proved many times that once national liberation movements seize power, they remain the pawns of imperialism. Algeria, Ghana, Guinea, and other cases all demonstrate that liberation without proletarian dictatorship is a fairy tale. History has also proved the futility of attempting to sneak socialism through the back door. The wreck of Cuba stands as a living monument to the theory of socialism by deceit. As her economy sinks yearly and she becomes increasingly dependent on the revisionist Soviet Union, the Cuban revolution must pay dearly for failing to win the masses to a socialist outlook during the war against Batista. (This includes the old CP which never advocated socialism before or after the revolution.) Withholding socialist ideas from part of the oppressed population because these ideas appear too "advanced" fatally undermines the development of a socialist society.

The notion that the masses cannot understand socialism and will not fight for it is a myth that leads to elitism: "only a select few of us can understand such lofty, complex ideas." This error also compounds racism, because it vindicates the bourgeois idea that non-white people are too backward and stupid to exercise full social responsibility, and that only "we"—the bosses—know what's good for them. We reject the idea that socialism cannot be put forth openly and in a forthright manner. We reject the idea that it must be inched forward by stages. If communists do not wage a protracted struggle for socialist ideology before and during the revolutionary period, impossible contradictions inevitably result after the revolution. At best, the masses have not been won to socialism but to *reform* within the context of continued capitalism. No decree or sleight-of-hand can develop socialism from these conditions.

Socialism does not belong to a chosen few; *it belongs to the masses*. They must develop socialist ideas, fight for them, and put socialism into practice. Superficially, this approach may appear more protracted than the old two-stage approach. In the final analysis, however, it may well prove to be the shorter route. In any event, we believe it is the only route. Socialism cannot survive if it remains the property of a few political "experts." It can and must become a truly mass phenomenon. Then and only then will it be irreversible.

## THE SEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS

The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International in 1935 marked another turning point for the international communist movement and the Soviet revolution. As the Congress opened, fascism was spreading throughout Europe. But neither the Congress nor the communist movement in general called for armed struggle, people's war, or revolution as the *only* method of defeating fascism decisively.

Fascism did not arise in Hungary, Italy, Germany, or Japan by fluke or default. In the first place, since these countries all had feeble economies, bourgeois democracy proved too weak a form for effective political control. The imperialist Allies had seen to this by stripping Germany and Italy of most of their wealth after World War I. But intra-imperialist competition alone—however cut-throat it may be—does not suffice to explain the growth of fascism. The Bolshevik revolution and the world communist movement it helped generate made fascism necessary for the bourgeoisie. Since 1917, the entire international ruling class had lived in dire fear of the spread of communism. Intervention in 1919-21 had failed to destroy the Soviet Union. Consequently, the world bourgeoisie, acting in its class interests, decided to establish fascism in certain strategic countries as a more violent form of anti-communism than bourgeois democracy. The imperialists armed Germany and Japan to the teeth. They entrusted Japan with the mission of fighting communism in Asia and Germany with the mission of fighting it in Europe and destroying it in Russia. Both Japan and Germany had to play this role in order to obtain armaments and raw materials from the bourgeois-democratic imperialists.

The Seventh World Congress advanced the same strategy of concessions that we discussed earlier in this report. This strategy divided the imperialists into fascist and anti-fascist camps and proposed a united front with the same bourgeois-democrats who had helped bring fascism into being. Naturally, the social-democrats—the most rabid anti-communists on the pseudo-left—were viewed as co-leaders of the united front.

During and after the conference, a "great debate" raged between communists and Trotskyists over the timing of the alliance with the social-democrats. The Trots accused the communists of selling out because they hadn't initiated the alliance five years earlier!



The Trots argued that only this timing could have stopped the spread of fascism.

In reality, both fascism and bourgeois democracy are forms of capitalist dictatorship. Both are equally counter-revolutionary, although fascism is the more consistently aggressive of the two. Neither can be smashed without proletarian revolution. If revolution was not imminent at the time of the Congress, revolutionary preparation and agitation—not alliances with “good” bourgeois democrats—should have been the order of the day. The parliamentary tactics adopted by the Seventh Congress served only to create the fatal illusion that fascism could be prevented without armed struggle. By systematizing unity with the “better” section of the bourgeoisie, the Congress strangled the communist movement and substituted opportunism for communist tactics. In the final analysis, a world war was necessary to defeat fascism. Although the bourgeois-democratic imperialists intervened with their armies, communist-led armed struggle by the masses was the decisive factor.

However, the communist movement failed to give this struggle revolutionary leadership. Because the Seventh Congress did not make a correct distinction between friends and enemies, it put forth the revisionist “main danger” theory. This theory became the anti-fascist line of the communist movement during World War II. The Soviets tried to forestall Hitler’s invasion by making a pact with him. He doublecrossed them. Then they entered into a full-blown alliance with the liberal imperialists who had initially sponsored Hitler and whom Hitler had also doublecrossed. This alliance served to deepen illusions about qualitative differences among imperialists: since Hitler was the “worst,” the others must be “better.” Today, the Chinese Communist Party still pursues this idea. At present, the CCP version of the “main danger” theory appears to be a call for unity among all those who oppose U.S. imperialism or Soviet revisionism. Ironically, the CCP is creating an alliance with the U.S. What a contradiction to swallow. It doesn’t matter that U.S. imperialism and Soviet revisionism are essentially the same. It doesn’t matter that many of the forces opposed to them are imperialists, nationalists, revisionists, or fascists. What matters is that contradictions exist within the imperialist camp. This wrong theory explained the CCP’s support for DeGaulle and its relations with Pakistan, Rumania, North Korea, Yugoslavia, Greece, etc.

The two-bit CPUSA has been pulling this bit for about thirty years. It attempts to unite everybody against the “ultra right.” We have all been treated *ad nauseam* to the spectacle of CP alliances with “lesser evil” Humphrey against “main danger” Wallace (or was it Nixon?), “lesser evil” Johnson against “main danger” Goldwater, etc. But we also know from experience, as do millions, that the liberals are as bad as or worse than the so-called “ultra-right.” (The current “Pentagon Papers” destroy the myth of the good and bad rulers.)

The line of the Seventh World Congress and the line of modern revisionism are essentially the same. They fail to grasp that although contradictions exist within the bourgeoisie, bourgeois class unity always predominates in the case of *opposition to communism*. This was a big lesson from the Paris commune. Therefore, they fail to see that liberal bourgeois democracy feeds and develops anti-communism and fascism. Now, after decades of “lesser evil” imperialists, the CCP has taken the theory a step further by advancing the concept of “lesser evil” revisionists. The CCP has rearranged the same old hackneyed song and begun to play it on different instruments: the Soviets are the “worst,” the others are “better.”

When put into practice, the “lesser evil” line has two main consequences: it either prevents revolutionary movements from seizing power or causes parties in power to restore capitalism. Today’s Soviet Union furnishes a developed example of the latter consequence. Today, the only struggle conducted by the Soviet bosses is for a senior partnership in or leadership of the international bourgeoisie. They are aided in this quest by the opportunism of the CCP.

The Soviet bosses must be treated like any other section of the bourgeoisie. Lenin’s idea of recall by the masses might have been feasible when the Soviet Union was still a socialist state, but the party leadership had eliminated this idea in the earliest stages of the revolution. Since the masses were too “backward” to understand socialism, they were also too “backward” to understand the “need” for reintroducing limited capitalism or for allying with the “lesser evil” section of the bourgeoisie. In a word, they couldn’t be trusted.

Today, the Soviet bosses have less reason than ever to trust the masses, because the masses now need to “recall” all of them by means of violent revolution. Overthrowing the Soviet leadership is a necessary and desirable goal. Revolutions are bound to erupt in all the former socialist countries. Recent events in Poland, where workers stormed the CP headquarters singing the *Internationale*, sent shivers down the Soviet bosses’ spines and proved that revisionism leads to capitalism, oppression, and revolutionary struggle.

## THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

The Soviet revolution provided an impetus and helped create favorable conditions for the Chinese revolution. Once proletarian dictatorship had been established in Russia—one-sixth of the world’s land surface—the international relationship of forces changed irrevocably in the direction of revolution. Millions of communists and their supporters were actively engaged in political struggle from one end of the earth to another.

A vibrant communist movement had begun to develop in China. Despite certain key mistakes in the initial period, (eg. reliance on the Chiang Kai-shek nationalists), the party and revolutionary masses had



grown in numbers and strength. By the late 1940s, they had won control of the Chinese mainland and established the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Chinese revolution proved conclusively that a non-industrial country could move directly to socialism. Heretofore, many Marxist-Leninists had thought that socialist revolution was feasible only in countries with an industrial development at least on a par with Russia before 1917. The theory was that high industrialization—and hence a large urban working class—was a necessary objective condition for socialist revolution. Although China had some industry and therefore also a small working class, the number of city-dwelling workers was small before and during the revolution. But Mao Tse-tung and others understood that the peasantry could be a revolutionary force and unite with workers in the cities to seize power.

This titanic battle helped clarify and enrich many other important revolutionary concepts, such as party building, cadre training and development, inner-party struggle, etc. The success of the Chinese revolution threw imperialism—especially U.S. imperialism—into a panic. By 1949, another huge section of the world had gone over to the revolutionary camp. Asia had taken its first qualitative step away from colonialism and imperialism. The international relationship of forces was more than ever tipped in favor of workers and oppressed people. Mao's statement that the "East wind prevails over the West wind" summarizes this historic development.

However, the Chinese revolutionaries never broke with the old policy of concessions to the so-called "progressive" bourgeoisie. On the contrary, they implemented it with a vengeance, so their revolution stood on wobbly legs from the outset. In the Soviet



**In the weeks before the October Revolution, revolutionary workers from the Petrograd factories, led by the Bolshevik party, organized Red Guard units, applying Marx and Lenin's concept of the proletarian militia.**

The period that elapsed between the founding of the CCP and the seizure of power took nearly thirty years. Therefore, Mao correctly pointed to the need for an outlook of protracted struggle. Here, as in the case of the Russian revolution, organized armed struggle led by a communist party was one of the main aspects of the struggle. And unlike Thorez, Togliatti, & Co., Mao always insisted that revolutionaries must never surrender their weapons to local nationalists.

Union, this policy did not begin to develop fully until after the revolution. In China, on the other hand, it reached maturity well before the seizure of power. In the course of the anti-Japanese war, the CCP made alliances with large sections of the "national" bourgeoisie. As usual, these alliances required serious ideological and economic concessions. One of the most important—in fact, the concession without which the nationalists would never have consented to the alliance—was the CCP's willingness to curtail



its open advocacy of proletarian dictatorship and socialism.

After wresting power from the "right-wing" nationalists, Mao called for a period of "New Democracy," a supposed joint dictatorship of four revolutionary classes, including the "progressive national bourgeoisie." We do not believe that a state commonly ruled by several classes ever existed in China or any other country, or that it will ever exist anywhere, for that matter. In the modern epoch, either the proletariat or the bourgeoisie, and no one else, is capable of wielding state power. We believe that, regardless of terminology, and despite serious weaknesses, what actually existed in China during the "new democratic" period was essentially proletarian dictatorship. The People's Liberation Army was led by communists, and the party was the only effectively functioning political instrument in China. In essence, the "theory" of New Democracy served merely as a tactic to justify the serious concessions made by the party to the bourgeoisie. Mao believed in the necessity of these concessions. With a few twists, New Democracy was nothing more or less than the Chinese version of the NEP. New Democracy enabled the bourgeoisie to acquire footing and maneuverability in the party, the state apparatus, and the economy. Small wonder, then, that educational institutions never changed their class character or that after nearly twenty years of proletarian dictatorship, Chinese culture was primarily bourgeois.

Additionally, copying the Soviet model of socialist construction, and granting significant concessions to the bourgeoisie, the CCP managed to subvert socialism in China much more rapidly than it had been subverted in the Soviet Union. By the time the GPCR had broken out, even the moderate wing of the mass movement in China (those who supported Mao) understood that the basic task of the Cultural Revolution was to seize power from the "red" bourgeoisie.

The influence of China's "red" bourgeoisie manifested itself clearly in the field of foreign policy. After the Twentieth Party Congress, the CCP issued a text called *The Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. This piece basically supported the revisionist Soviet line. Shortly thereafter, the CCP issued another text called *More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. This piece heralded the beginning of the apparent break with Soviet revisionism. Before the break, however, the Chinese signed the "81 Party Statement," a jumble of pacifism. They also signed the "12 Party Statement." Although couched in Marxist rhetoric, the "12 Party Statement," approved by parties holding state power in twelve socialist countries, was in reality an abject apology for Soviet revisionism. China's signature, coupled with the internal developments later brought to light by the GPCR, indicated the extent to which revisionism had progressed within the CCP.

### THE GPCR

Like the Paris Commune, the Soviet revolution,

and the first Chinese revolution, the principal question raised by the GPCR was the class nature of state power. By the early sixties, the ferocity of class struggle in China had begun to intensify dramatically. The concessions granted to the bourgeoisie by the policy of New Democracy had enabled a new ruling class to emerge and gain ascendancy. It differed in form from the old ruling class, but its capitalist essence remained identical.

The heart of this new ruling class was the party itself. In the space of a few short years, the CCP had turned into its opposite. Virtually all of its leading cadre had become a "red" bourgeoisie. The GPCR therefore constituted an effort on the part of the masses to win power back from these revisionists.

The GPCR erupted within the framework of a worldwide anti-revisionist struggle apparently led by the CCP. In the late fifties, the CCP launched a significant attack against Soviet revisionism and Yugoslav opportunism. But this attack was not comprehensive, it took aim at several branches of revisionism without digging deep enough to ferret out its roots. According to the formulations advanced by the CCP between 1955-66, the Soviet Union had become revisionist because it had repudiated armed struggle and was now calling for peaceful co-existence with imperialism. This criticism was correct—but *only as far as it went*. During this entire period, the CCP never critically examined socialist construction in the Soviet Union or China, never repudiated the theory of concessions to the bourgeoisie, and never conducted an all-out ideological struggle against nationalism and the 7th World Congress. Given the nature of the CCP, a thorough evaluation of these questions was inconceivable. Why should China's "red" bourgeoisie have put into question the very principles that had helped foster its development as a class? China's "red" bourgeoisie didn't fundamentally oppose revisionism; it attacked the Soviets because the Chinese masses were too advanced politically to swallow the obviously right-wing line of the CPSU. A more militant left cover was necessary in order to restore capitalism in China. The only hitch came when the Chinese masses began to take seriously the idea of overthrowing the bourgeoisie and reconquering state power.

The GPCR helped inject a number of vital ideas into the world revolutionary movement:

1. The absolute primacy of political incentives over material incentives. From the earliest days of the Bolshevik revolution, Soviet leaders were convinced that the masses could be won to socialism only if they were impelled by the promise of special material rewards. The Stakhanovite movement concretized this theory. The Soviet leaders reasoned that a worker would be willing to increase his production if he received additional pay for producing over the norm. (In the U.S., we call this method piece-work.) Correspondingly, it was felt that peasants would also produce more if they owned a part of the land they worked. The same system had developed in China. In the course of the GPCR, the left



mass movement tried to smash it.

2. The primacy of politics over technique. The GPCR demonstrated that the prime requisite for socialism was not a bevy of "experts" or technocrats but rather the masses' understanding and implementation of socialist ideas.

3. Intensified struggle against revisionism. One of the slogans advanced by the left during the GPCR was "no aid from revisionists." China's own experience had shown that Soviet "aid" would lead to its opposite by creating illusions about revisionism and diluting the class struggle. The left also stated its opposition to negotiations with revisionists and imperialists.

4. Intensified struggle against imperialism and its nationalist stooges. The left and the masses led a series of attacks on imperialist diplomats residing in China. Chinese workers laid siege to the British "crown colony" of Hong Kong. These developments helped strengthen all revolutionary movements in Asia and many in the West. They helped sharpen the contradictions between the Chinese government and nationalist leaders in other oppressed countries. When the left seized power in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it didn't duck the implications of this policy. The revisionists and imperialists were always babbling that Peking was "isolated from the community of nations." The left said that isolation from imperialists like DeGaulle or stooges like Sihanouk *was just fine*, because it was a necessary condition for *unity with revolutionary forces, workers, and oppressed people around the world*.

5. The revolutionary doctrine that the masses are more important than weapons and can defeat any imperialist war, including nuclear war. The U.S. imperialists and Soviet revisionists increased their war provocations against China during the GPCR. These took the form of over-flights, the presence of the U.S. Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Straits, the buildup of U.S. military forces in southeast Asia, increased U.S. military aid to Chiang, Soviet threats of preemptive nuclear attack on Chinese installations, and Soviet border provocations. The GPCR was not intimidated by these provocations. It took the following line: "China will never launch a nuclear war or any war of aggression. Despite the apparent superiority of your weapons, the Chinese people and the workers and oppressed people of the world are invincible. Imperialism and revisionism will be crushed. Start your war—we will finish it."

The Chinese masses took many of these ideas in dead earnest and attempted to act upon them. A large organized movement developed against Soviet aid to Vietnam. Shipment after shipment of Soviet arms was derailed by left forces in the GPCR. The purpose of these actions was to show revolutionary solidarity with the people of Vietnam by opposing the machinations of the revisionists. The Soviet bosses went wild, because these actions made it more and more difficult for them to use "aid" to sell out the struggle in Vietnam. Only the direct, violent intervention of the Mao Tse-tung controlled PLA was able to put

a stop to this movement.

Underlying the GPCR was the premise that the class struggle grows sharper after the seizure of power. The capitalist class becomes increasingly desperate in its efforts to restore exploitation, and at the same time, a new capitalist class strives mightily to emerge and gain hegemony. The GPCR was a struggle for state power. It proved that workers and revolutionaries must fight back to win power away from the "red" bourgeoisie and keep the red flag of revolution in the vanguard of the mass movement.

Various forces allied with Mao Tse-tung have portrayed the GPCR as "personally led and initiated" by Mao. This is a myth. The GPCR really began in the late fifties, when masses of people rebelled against the new "red" bourgeoisie and attempted to implement a program for drastic change in Chinese society. The commune movement of the fifties was one of the first expressions of this struggle. It is worth noting that although the commune movement was basically identified with Mao, it was crushed while he dominated the Chinese political scene.

Two distinct elements participated in the GPCR: a left, represented by certain forces in the party, by the Red Guard movement, and by revolutionary workers' councils; and a right, represented by Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-chi. The initial actions of the GPCR took place independently of Mao and had nothing to do with him. One of the first struggles launched by the pre-Red Guard movement was a rebellion against revisionism at Peking University. This movement and the workers' movement rapidly grew into huge mass phenomena. Mao and the forces allied with him used them in a struggle against the more exposed rightists like Liu and P'eng Ch'en.

The only differences between Mao and Liu centered around the question of whether or not China would continue its development along the Soviet line.

Some of Liu's friends who were Marshalls in the PLA wanted to build the Chinese army with Russian weapons, thereby making China economically and militarily dependent on the Soviet Union. Mao and his allies wanted the Chinese economy to develop independently of the Soviet Union. They wanted to produce their own brand of national revisionism. Led by Mao, they used the revolutionary mass movement as a battering ram to drive the very exposed right-wingers like Liu out of the party. *But the masses wanted to drive out the entire party leadership. This was the necessary condition for seizing back state power and the means of production.* Mao uttered left formulations and issued left directives to ingratiate himself with the masses and win their confidence. But every time the masses went "too far" in carrying out his instructions, he immediately called upon the PLA to beat them into submission.

Basically, Liu and his associates were used as scapegoats. Mao and the forces close to him used them to obscure their errors. Many of the errors pinned on the "black gang" were errors made by



Mao Tse-tung. During the thirties Mao had said not to advocate the dictatorship of the proletariat; Mao advocated concessions to landlords and other businessmen in order to win them to the anti-Japanese struggle; Mao called for alliances with every kind of nationalist fink. This policy culminated at the Bandung conference, where even Adam Clayton Powell was hailed by the CCP as an anti-U.S.-imperialist force. And the CCP current policy is even outdoing the corrupt policy of Bandung.

The left of the GPCR wanted to model socialism in China after the principles of the Paris Commune. By establishing himself as the "symbol" of these principles, Mao was able to deceive much of the left. His own apparatus and many honest forces in the mass movement worked swiftly to elevate him to the status of demi-god. He was soon identified with the moon, the sun, and the stars; he became the "red sun in our hearts;" it was discovered that he had never said or done anything wrong. He was able to get away with this by giving lip service to the revolutionary aspirations of the masses.

Mao helped put his man Lin Piao in charge of the armed forces. In this way, he succeeded in creating the impression that the GPCR was being carried out within the PLA. Millions of Red Books were distributed to PLA soldiers. Since the Red Book is basically an anthology of Mao's old ideas, many of which lead straight to revisionism, Mao and Lin were able to prevent the power-holders from being thrown out of the army by the GPCR. According to opportunists, the PLA had already become "a great school of Mao-Tse-tung thought;" therefore any disruptions in it would be harmful to China's stability and would render China vulnerable to external attacks from the imperialists and revisionists.

After Mao's rapid ascension to divinity, his authority was enormous. How can one question someone who controls the army? The political self-reliance of the masses could not possibly have developed in these circumstances. Bit by bit, Mao methodically whittled away the reforms initiated by the GPCR and dismantled the organizations that had led the fight to win them. He dispersed the Red Guards and other leftists. He removed those leaders of the GPCR who opposed him or who "mistakenly" persisted in "ultra-leftist" thinking. He distorted the great slogan "serve the people" until it became indistinguishable from the slogan "serve Mao."

In order to carry out this slogan, Mao's forces established new "three-in-one" committees, consisting of PLA members, old party cadre, and hand-picked forces from the mass movement. This even included genuine leftists to serve as a fig leaf. But they were without power. Power rested mainly in the PLA. In reality, these committees were the most streamlined form yet developed for exercising "red" bourgeois political power "out of the barrel of a gun." In the initial phase of the GPCR, when the masses said they wanted to drag out all the power-holders, they meant concretely that 90 percent of the senior party cadre should "stand aside." Mao

claimed, however, that only 5 percent of the cadre were hopeless right-wingers. He said that since 95 percent were good, they could be rehabilitated and reintegrated into the party. This fable completely contradicted the aims of the GPCR. In addition, Mao called for a *non-violent* revolution, although he accurately described the GPCR as a class struggle for state power. But Marxist-Leninists, including the left of the GPCR, know that there is no such thing as a non-violent revolution. The class struggle for state power has never been peaceful; it was not peaceful during the GPCR; and it will never be peaceful.

The turning point in the GPCR came once the PLA had been granted immunity from the revolutionary struggle. Backed by the prestige of Mao's vast authority and the power of the PLA, the opportunists were able to impose the old revisionist methods in China. This development is most readily discernible when viewed from the outside. A clearly revisionist foreign policy began to emerge toward the end of the GPCR. Since then, it has rapidly progressed further rightward. In 1967, masses of workers and students threw snowballs at the French ambassador in Peking. In 1968, hundreds of thousands demonstrated in Peking to support the French worker-student rebellion. But by 1970, the leaders of the Chinese party and state were holding "cordial talks" with Pompidou's emissaries, and Chairman Mao "personally led and initiated" the sending of a heart-struck letter of condolence to Mme. De Gaulle. This love-letter was the symbol of New Democracy on a world-wide scale. According to the CCP, De Gaulle had been independent of U.S. imperialism. Therefore his memory should be revered. His role in suppressing the same worker-student rebellion that the Chinese masses had rallied to defend was conveniently overlooked. The Chinese leadership has now entered into negotiations with the Soviets, whom the GPCR characterized as "worse than Hitler." These negotiations have already led to the resumption of trade agreements and ambassadorial relations. The list of sorry examples is endless. A particularly ironical one is that the CCP gave Yahya Kahn \$20,000,000 worth of aid for the Pakistani bosses a few short weeks before the devastating cyclone in East Pakistan. These bosses knew the cyclone was coming but did nothing to help or warn the Pakistani masses. Coincidentally, East Pakistan has long been a center of opposition to the Pakistani ruling class. Two years ago, the Pakistani army met rebelling workers on the steps of the palace in the capital with Chinese tanks and guns. The CCP had given arms to the Pakistani rulers because of their feud with the Indian bourgeoisie. The Indian bourgeoisie was allied with U.S. imperialism and Soviet revisionism. The Pakistani bourgeoisie was in competition with it. Therefore, the Pakistanis were "better," and the Indians were the "bigger enemy." In fact, however, as is always the case when this revisionist line is applied, the main enemy of the opportunists in Peking proved to be the masses themselves.



Because the CCP never really broke with the old policies that eventually led to revisionism, some of the ideas it now advances to explain developments in the Soviet Union and China are inadequate. According to the CCP, the revisionists were able to "usurp" power in Russia because Stalin failed to distinguish correctly between friends and enemies and therefore could not understand the difference between antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions. Of course, this point has some validity. But, as we stated earlier, the Chinese never made a thorough analysis of the development of errors in the general line of the international communist movement. The CCP does a relatively good job of summarizing the manifestations of the revisionist line of the Soviet Union, and of pointing to the consequences of this line. It fares less well in explaining how and why this line was adopted.

A similar situation prevails with respect to China itself. The CCP says that the "black gang" of capitalist roaders (i.e. the right led by Liu) have been rotten for decades, and that a "handful" of them usurped power before the GPCR. Mao's only self-criticism is that, some years ago, he allowed himself to be outmaneuvered by them and kicked upstairs. Although Mao's critique of Liu contains many correct points, it fails to explain how Liu managed to become top dog in the state. In essence this cri-



**Peking Red Guards publicly humiliate officials accused of counter-revolutionary acts, 1967.**

tique is unprincipled and opportunist, because Mao nowhere explains why he and Liu held many of the same political positions during the thirties and forties. We believe there is overwhelming evidence to prove that Liu & Co. were right-wingers. But this fact by itself cannot explain the growth of revisionism in China. Because the CCP never correctly analyzed its own development or the development of revision-

ism in the Soviet Union, it has not solved this problem.

Therefore, it is no surprise that the GPCR has been crushed. It is no surprise that the changes fought for in China have been reversed. It is no surprise that the momentary left direction of China's foreign policy has turned into its opposite, and that Chinese foreign policy is now to the right of the right-wing Bandung Conference program of the fifties. Additionally the CCP never mounted an anti-revisionist attack on the Cubans, the North Koreans, or the North Vietnamese. (In the recent period, this troika has served as a figleaf for revisionism.) They have used engagement in and support of armed struggle as a cover for their own right opportunism and nationalism. But their opportunism becomes increasingly apparent nonetheless. Cuba hailed Allende's election in Chile and now advocates the peaceful road to socialism. The North Koreans have calmed down. And North Vietnamese participation in the Paris negotiations has qualitatively reduced struggle on the battlefield. The North Vietnamese revisionists recently announced their public advocacy of capitalist production relations. Le Duan, who seems to be the big boss in North Vietnam, issued sweeping orders to enlarge material incentives, grant private ownership, and allow increased profits. Typically, the CCP does not issue the slightest criticism of these developments. Why should it? Le Duan, Castro, and Kim Il Sung are faithfully carrying out Chairman Mao's thesis of New Democracy.

Consequently, it is a very logical development that the Mao Tse-tung leadership moves for accommodation with U.S. imperialism. Ping-pong diplomacy is a consistent development of right-wing policies. How ironic that the CCP feverishly tries to get into the U.S.-Soviet imperialist's UN, after giving the ex-Indonesian leader, Sukarno, roses for leaving it. During the GPCR the CCP attacked the UN. They carefully explained the class role it played in the world. And they were emphatic that they had no intention of trying to get into this nest of vipers dominated by U.S. and Soviet bosses. Finally, the trickle of attempts of the right-led leadership to reestablish relations with capitalist powers has now become a torrent. This includes virtually all the large capitalist powers who were accurately described as monsters of all kinds, every right-wing nationalist hack and every revisionist leadership in the world. Obviously, the CCP has changed its policy of reliance on the masses to reliance on the world's bourgeoisie. The rationale is to prevent an attack on China, but this policy has never worked on its own terms. It has subverted, confused and held back revolutionaries.

We would be guilty of the same error committed by the CCP in analyzing the roots of revisionism, however, if we ascribed the defeat of the GPCR and the present right drift of Chinese policy to Mao's errors alone. The key error in the GPCR was made by the left, when it failed to separate itself ideologically and organizationally from Mao. It tolerated and



in some cases encouraged the anti-Marxist Mao cult. The principal task in China remains the overthrow of the "red" bourgeoisie. If the left is to give leadership in accomplishing this task, it must regroup and irrevocably split from Mao & Co. This is the only course that can lead to the realization of the excellent slogans advanced by the GPCR: serve the people; no "aid" from revisionists; no negotiations with revisionists and imperialists; support only the broad revolutionary masses; bombard the headquarters; drag out the power-holders; draw a clear line between us and the enemy; and no unity-of-action with revisionists.

We are convinced that the defeat of the GPCR is temporary. This profound revolution enriched Marxism-Leninism and enabled the international communist movement to advance. We would never have been able to discuss many of the ideas in this report without the forward thrust of left forces during the GPCR. True, Mao and his group were able to turn the left's own weaknesses against itself, but in order to do so, he had to popularize left ideas and slogans to millions. We believe in these ideas and slogans. They light the way forward for our party, and we must strive to carry them out.

### INFALLIBILITY AND THE CULT OF THE INDIVIDUAL

We have already attempted to show how this bourgeois concept helped reverse the GPCR. The myth of leaders' infallibility has been a millstone around the neck of the communist movement for decades. Whenever the movement dilutes itself by making concessions to bourgeois forces, it leaves itself open to the Pandora's box of bourgeois ideas.

Cultism and the doctrine of infallibility did not originate with the struggle for proletarian dictatorship. They are as old as the hills. The Greeks had an oracle at Delphi. The pre-feudal Orient produced Buddha. Christianity gave us God the Father, Jesus the Son, and Casper the Holy Ghost, along with the Pope and the mumbo-jumbo surrounding all of them. Infallibility and cultism have appeared down through the ages and have affected every aspect of social life. The Nazi Hitler claimed infallibility, as did the bourgeois democrat Roosevelt and the communist Stalin.

This reactionary doctrine thwarts the political development of the masses. Since someone "up there" does our thinking for us, why should we bother to do it ourselves? It takes political power out of the hands of the masses. It encourages bourgeois individualism, by urging the masses to seek individual self-improvement through emulation of the "infallible one."

Khrushchev attacked the Stalin cult from the right, in order to discredit Marxism-Leninism and secure political power for the new Soviet bourgeoisie. We attack the cult from the left, in order to serve the masses and win socialism. We believe in a revolutionary working-class party directly tied to the masses and controlled by them. We believe in democratic-centralism. We believe in *leadership that*

*sets proletarian dictatorship and socialism as its goal.* We believe in criticism and self-criticism by all party members and leaders. We view infallibility and cultism as class questions.

Today the U.S. ruling class consciously uses cultism to impede the growth of the left. The bosses are only too happy to use their media to build up a left leader. They would like to turn his head, transform him into a "celebrity," and thereby separate him from the masses. Since they like to take as few chances as possible, they also glorify scores of their own heroes and urge us to emulate them. By using cultism, extreme egoism, and individualism, the bosses try to determine the identity of the people's leaders and the content of their leadership. Leadership by publicity is the current vogue. The bosses choose certain "leaders" and slate them for instant stardom. Suddenly, everyone is reading their books or watching their interviews on the tube. Then, when the bosses decide they need a fresh image, they shunt these gurus into oblivion by shutting them off the tube and publishing someone else's books.

In the final analysis, we must decide once and for all who is the prime motive force in history—individuals or the masses.

### PERIOD OF WARS AND REVOLUTIONS

Many people will react to the ideas in this report by saying that PL is arrogant and cruel: "They sit on their asses and say it was wrong to make this concession or that one. Do they want people to fight and starve endlessly?" The masses—not we—have already answered this question. If everything had been hunky-dory in China, why did the GPCR erupt? How come the workers in Poland rebelled against their revisionist bosses? How come the people of Vietnam rebelled and built their revolutionary movement after the 1946 negotiations with the French? How come they rebelled again and built an even stronger movement after the Geneva accords? Both China and the Soviet Union signed the 1954 Geneva agreement to break up Vietnam. They relied on imperialist promises of free election guaranteed by the UN. But the South Vietnamese people never went along with this sellout. Before the ink had dried on the Geneva agreement, they were organizing and fighting. Ho Chi Minh didn't organize them. He and the other Vietnamese leaders latched on to their movement only after it had become the fact of life. These revisionists made sure the Vietnamese revolution would remain well within the bounds of nationalism and bourgeois democracy.

The people never accept betrayal. They always see through it and fight back. Even on its own terms humanism fails, because every time "humanitarian" arguments are induced to bring about negotiations, the people have to *pay a stiffer price* after the inevitable sellout. They are left with the same rotten, murderous exploitation that they attempted to smash in the first place. They often have to rebuild their movement from scratch. Their fight for socialism becomes longer and harder than it would have been



without the betrayal. But no deal, no concession can stop this fight. Nothing can.

Every time revolutionaries foist a nationalist hack like Sihanouk on the backs of the people, the people must pay a high price to get rid of him. How many Indonesians did Sukarno's line enable the bosses to slaughter? Yet the Chinese hailed Sukarno. They praised him to the skies. When he pulled out of the U.N., they congratulated him for his courage and principles. Yet today they are dying to get into the U.N. themselves. Every time they buy the vote of another nationalist or fascist, *Peking Review* hails the event as a momentous victory. Ironically, the Chinese have restored or are attempting to restore ties to many of the capitalist powers with whom Sukarno severed relations.

There is no correct way to unite with nationalists or imperialists. Where did such unity ever advance the cause of revolution? During the GPCR, the masses rejected this old, wrong, despicable policy. They will do so again.

In this period, the mounting contradictions faced by U.S. imperialism are embodied in its economic, political, and military weaknesses. Contradictions in revisionist countries are helping to intensify class antagonisms. These contradictions are clearly manifested by sharpening class struggle in Poland and Yugoslavia. Revolutionary ideology will strengthen its foothold among the masses, and the revolutionary process will spread internationally. Imperialism and revisionism cannot stop this process. For this reason, we say that the present period is one of wars and revolutions.

We hope and work for more revolutions. We welcome mass armed struggle. Conditions for sharper, more serious struggle are constantly maturing in the U.S. We believe that nuclear blackmail—as it was used by the Soviets during the Sino-Soviet border clashes—won't work. It may have scared Chou En-lai & Co. to back down. But it will not intimidate the masses. The left in China and the rest of the world will not be bamboozled by any kind of blackmail. The GPCR and the initial stages of people's war in Vietnam have shown that in the period that has seen great increases in the sophistication of imperialist weaponry and in imperialist ferocity, revolutionary struggle has taken giant strides forward.

#### UNITED FRONT AT ALL TIMES

As we have repeatedly pointed out, we reject the concept of a united front with bosses. We reject the concept of a united front with revisionists. We reject the concept of a united front with Trotskyists and the herd of various fakes on the left. We believe in a united front that advances the struggle, not one that leads the masses into the arms of the enemy. We can't and won't run after every leader or group that may appear left but is really right in essence.

We believe in a united front from below that takes the form of a left-center coalition. Many people in our country are ready to grasp socialist ideas now. The contradictions between them and their leaders are increasing daily. In addition, there are many

millions of good people who have no basic organizational or political allegiance to the bourgeoisie. In some cases, the party can help organize groups and work with them around questions of *immediate interest*. This would be an alliance between center forces and ourselves. In other cases, we can attempt to ally with groups that already exist. Finally, we may also ally with formations within national or state organizations that separate themselves from the policies of their liberal-imperialist or revisionist "leaders." The united front necessarily assumes the organizational form of an alliance between ourselves and other groups. Within this alliance, we must implement the policy of "*struggle with—struggle against*."

We also work *within* reactionary groups if they have a political, ideological, or organizational hold on significant numbers of people. We set no particular restrictions on this type of work. But this is not united front work. Generally, speaking, the purpose of our presence in such groups is to win their membership to socialism and our party, not to build the groups. We can't develop the united front or the party by wagging our tail after right-wingers.

The political basis of the united front is our mass line on whatever issue workers and others deem important at any given moment. At present, the fight against racist unemployment constitutes the principal aspect of our mass line. Our participation in this fight enables us to make a united front with many different forces. Without a mass line, the united front is meaningless. Unlike the Trots and other nuts on the "left," we know that the masses are always embroiled in struggle. Every struggle carries with it a mass line. We attempt to raise the level of political consciousness both within and outside the mass movement. The process of politicization can be accomplished only if we involve ourselves in work on immediate issues. We should never separate ourselves from the people by abstaining from the class struggle. A party that doesn't fight dries up and dies. A party that holds itself aloof from the masses is no better than a high-class coffee-klatsch. A party that doesn't bring communist ideas into the movement isn't a communist party; at best, it is a reform group.

We can best support the people's struggles by fighting for socialism and by defeating revisionism. This approach is as applicable to wars of liberation as it is to the fight at home for more jobs. The best support we can give our comrades in Vietnam is to struggle for the U.S. to get out now, to organize for the defeat of imperialism at home and in Vietnam, and to reject revisionism in the U.S., Vietnam, and everywhere else.

The united front is a critical form for winning people to socialist consciousness. Ultimately, no struggle can succeed unless its goal is proletarian dictatorship—and the only way to win proletarian dictatorship is to defeat imperialism and revisionism.

Basically, this means that there are many ques-



tions around which the mass struggle is raging. These include; unemployment, wages, prices, taxes, more schools, improved medical care, racism, war, and all living conditions. There are plenty of principled questions which we can unite and fight on with millions. Within these struggles we can link the fight for reforms to the need for socialism. Most people in our country are not yet for socialism. However, many more people than we ever dreamed of are open to struggle for working class ideas—ideas for workers' power. In doing this we can avoid the old error of creating illusions that capitalism can reform itself; and we can avoid the old Trotskyite error of separating ourselves from the struggle of all people. We are a working class party. No struggle is meaningless to us. No struggle is something that belongs to other people whom we are just helping out. We need to fight on all questions of principle. Socialism is not just something we need—it is necessary for the survival of our class.

### **BROADEN OUR INTERNATIONALIST OUTLOOK**

In the past, we have been too reticent in seeking out and working with other forces in the international movement. We have been slow in raising support for the class struggles conducted by workers in other countries. However, we know that class struggle is sharpening everywhere. We know that each struggle abroad is interrelated to struggle in the U.S. We also know that communism can't advance with a bad line.

We have no reason to bemoan our fate or to pity ourselves for being the only ones with these "way out" ideas. The ideas we hold did not fall from heaven, nor do they belong to us exclusively. We know that millions in China hold them. Many other groups and individuals around the world either share some of these ideas already or are open to them. In the final analysis, *everyone* is open to them. We have no lock on the objective situation. Everyone else is as "smart" as we are. Millions will draw the same conclusions we have drawn, enrich them, and advance them. The ideas in this report by no means constitute the final word on the subject.

In our paper, magazine, pamphlets, and organizational work, we must strive to make internationalism more than a nice word on a hunk of paper. International Solidarity Day (ISD) was a significant step in this direction. Curiously enough, our enemies at home went ape after ISD. All the little cockers started hustling their groups together and issuing one manifesto after another. All these groups push the line of nationalism in opposition to internationalism. The banding together of our enemies reflects the bosses' panicked efforts to preserve nationalism in the face of growing proletarian-internationalist mass consciousness. We know that the police are pushing these people along every step of the way. Keep up the good work, fellows. All your puny actions prove that we are pursuing the right course.

### **OUR ERRORS**

Over the years we have been guilty of many of the same errors made by the CCP. In our earlier period we supported many nationalists at home and abroad. We were unable to make the correct link-up between nationalism—the "militant" variety—and capitalism. We believed that "revolutionary" nationalism as espoused by a Malcolm X, Robert Williams or a Sukarno or Boumedienne type would be a transition belt from capitalism to socialism. Sometimes we arrived at these erroneous conclusions ourselves, or we were guilty of following the CCP policies unquestioningly.

In doing this we deluded ourselves into taking incorrect class positions. This cop-out from the ideological struggle often led us into making racist errors. It was our belief that most black and minority workers couldn't be won to socialist ideas. Hence, we didn't engage in sharp ideological struggle. Many black and minority people who were won to the party drifted away as they recognized that the party had two standards for black and white. White members had to believe in socialism. Minority members could believe in anything they wanted. Naturally, they reasoned, if the party had a nationalist outlook why did you need a party in the first place. After all, many non-communists in the mass movement advocated many national reforms.

The other side of the coin was reached when we rejected nationalism as a bourgeois outlook. Then many of our members developed a racist pattern. Many considered everyone an enemy who had a nationalist outlook. In every section of the people among whom we are working there is acceptance of many ruling class ideas. If they all were our enemies we could all disappear. To the extent nationalism is a mass phenomenon it is a response to racism. We have found that it isn't that difficult to win many people away from a nationalist outlook. Not to do so would result in the vilest racism. Additionally, if we accept the point that many, if not most, white workers are racists whom we should have nothing to do with, we would lose by default. This inverse racism would be an acceptance of the status-quo.

Another serious error we made was to take a superficial view of the CCP's fight against Soviet revisionism. We didn't seriously question the limited nature of the struggle against revisionism. We were satisfied by the superficiality of the struggle as opposed to the need for ferreting out the roots of revisionism. We were too content to hear the Chinese berate Khrushchev instead of analyzing, ourselves, the fundamental reasons for Soviet opportunism. (Perhaps we haven't come up with all the answers or even the right ones; but we have tried to go beyond the simple shibboleths dished out by various forces in the movement.)

So when the GCPR was launched we didn't question it sufficiently. While we questioned the adulation of Mao, and the fact that workers were not immediately in the leadership of the GCPR, and that





**Communists and other workers and students from U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico march in International Solidarity Day parade; New York, October 1970.**

many of the errors attributed to Liu were errors made by Mao we were satisfied that Mao and Co. were going in the right direction. We weren't able to see the trends in the mass movement. We were unable to see that Mao and others were really right-wingers wrapping themselves in a red flag. We didn't recognize the above-mentioned errors to be of sufficient principle, as to throw into question the entire Mao leadership. In other words, we couldn't see how the Mao Tse-tung leadership was taking away the initiative of the left in order to put over a right line.

We were fooled for a while into believing that basic differences existed between the Mao and Liu factions. In essence, differences which did exist were tactical, not strategic. They are like differences which exist in the ruling class in our country between liberals and conservatives. We are against picking sides at home because we know that every faction in the ruling class is for capitalism. We didn't know enough to take a similar position in regard to the CCP. We weren't sharp enough in drawing the proper lessons from Mao's one-sided support of the Hanoi leaders. The right-wingers in Hanoi and in the NLF held many, many positions which were contrary to the CCP. For example: the Vietnamese supported Soviet revisionists. They took Soviet "aid;" they supported most of the counter-revolutionary actions of this group—like their invasion of Czechoslovakia. Hanoi opportunists never fought revisionism. They always sought to unify Peking and Moscow. Obviously, they knew more than we did. We had illusions about the Mao leadership. Ho Chi Minh must have understood that the differences between China and the Soviet Union—as well

as differences between Mao and Liu—were secondary.

Another area in which we erred for some time was our method of relying on the masses. From our inception we rejected the idea of withholding our socialist ideas from workers. And to some extent we put it into practice. But this practice was limited. In the past two years we have begun to reach out to workers and all people opposed to the ruling class in a much larger way with communist ideas. The response has been excellent. More workers have come into or drawn closer to the party. While we have improved in putting forward our ideas in a much more vigorous and consistent way we have not yet achieved what is possible.

Still too little time is spent in winning workers to communism, either through mass agitation or mass struggle. And only by overcoming our weaknesses in building united fronts and base-building can we correct this shortcoming. Either we rely and have confidence in workers or we perish. Either we become communists where we work, live or go to school or we will be reduced to perpetual outsiders.

Thus, the main way revisionism appears in our party is to the degree we do not implement our line on base-building. It is to the degree our sectarianism separates us from the workers. The kernel of our line is reliance on the workers. But how can we rely on them if we have little or no base among them. While we have made important strides these past two years, many people are still lagging by the wayside.

During the last two years we made an important breakthrough in the battle against revisionism. We brought socialist ideas to masses of workers, and we involved ourselves with thousands. We smashed the revisionist concept that socialism wasn't the order of the day, and that raising socialist ideas would separate us from the workers. To the degree we have done this we have drawn closer—much closer. Workers, by the thousands, are interested in our party and socialism. However, most workers are not ready to launch a socialist revolution now. They are ready to fight like hell on many immediate grievances. To abstain from these fights would be to reduce socialism to an abstraction. There would be no way to win people to the need for socialist revolution, and to show how the fight for reforms by itself can never solve workers' problems.

All struggles would be separated into two. There would be those "unimportant" struggles for jobs, wages, against war and racism, etc. that workers are involved in daily; and those actions for socialism our party is involved in. In other words, to abstain from workers' struggles would be tantamount to saying that the party doesn't care about conditions. As a matter of fact the party would preserve and update the Trotskyite notion of the "worse the better." In other words, why should we fight for reforms, because if we succeed we will only be creating illusions about the system. Instead we should relate the fight for reforms to the fight for social-



ism, and in these fights unmercifully expose all the fakes in the mass movement who would deliver the movement to the bosses.

If we are sectarian or without ties to people we can spout our line all we want. We will get no place. We will dry up and disappear. Too many people still have a "me-too" outlook, that is, a capitalist outlook. They hide their anti-working class feelings or their fear of the workers behind "correct" slogans. A holier-than-thou attitude sometimes prevails. Secondary matters become primary in the absence of a base. Many people still view Marxism-Leninism as their property. They are unwilling to bring it to workers, learn from them and enrich Marxism-Leninism. We cannot tolerate isolated members. We cannot tolerate members who hang onto their base like money. The purpose of a political base is to bring more workers into leadership in the fight against the bosses. New people won to the party should be developed so they can build a base. The party can grow in a climate which is more than favorable. In most cases when we rely on the masses or our base to give leadership the class struggle progresses. Most of our subjective weaknesses like fear and individualism can be corrected within the frame-work of base-building. Our party wants to be involved and leading events. But *we want to involve millions in the Marxist-Leninist process.* Only the workers have the power and understanding to win and secure state power. History has taught us the bitter lesson that a party can grow, can lead struggles, and even hold power temporarily. But it will lose out if millions upon millions of workers aren't imbued with socialist consciousness, and take part in the political planning and direction of the party. This concept is not antagonistic to leadership, to a party, or to winning power. The more people who are involved in leadership and party building the better. We reject socialism by deceit, by inches, by an elite, etc. We reject reliance on the ruling class—any section of it. We rely only on workers all over the world. The working class is one international class with the need to crush each section of the international bourgeoisie until the entire ruling class is finished. This is not a bookkeeper's approach. It is an approach which demands the unity of all workers at the highest level. It calls upon all workers to be won to Marxism-Leninism.

## SUMMARY

Undoubtedly, our ideas will be attacked as heresy. We will be called everything from Trotskyists to who-knows-what. However, we have the ability to act on our mass line. We aren't going to contemplate our navels. Carrying out our line in practice is the decisive way to prove its validity. Every time we move our asses one tiny bit to bring our line to workers, they receive it enthusiastically. Our confidence in our ideas and our ability to make progress are closely tied to continued basebuilding for the party in the working class. Our party won't grow if it doesn't initiate struggles, if it doesn't stand in the forefront of all struggles, and if it doesn't build united fronts with those who are prepared to join with us on specific issues or sets of issues.

If we don't serve the people, we are useless or harmful to them.

Therefore, in the coming period, we must carry out the following tasks:

1. Root out all ideas that lead to alliances with the ruling class. Reject alliances that lead to ideological concessions now and economic concessions later. They can only turn us into a revisionist organization.

2. Steel ourselves and our friends to recognize and avoid nationalist traps. This can best be accomplished by fighting racism.

3. Make sure that the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism are *always* put forward in all party agitation.

4. Wipe out all vestiges of cultism. They have held us back in the past. Intensify the struggle against individualism in ourselves. As a start, the NC has approved the idea of suppressing the glorification of individual images that may arise in the party. Every member of the party must be able to present the party line. We do not believe in relying on the verbal or political dexterity of a few "experts."

5. Intensify our mass work. Struggle on issues. Build the united front as a left-center coalition. Win people to the party. Build the unemployment movement.

6. Improve and expand our international work. Build international unity.

We have every reason to believe that by discussing, applying, and enriching this line, our party will deepen its ties to workers in this country and internationally. We have a world to learn—and a world to win.

