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Is It Justifiable To Fight Fascism In Ukraine?

By N. Butyaev, A. Body, and R. Body of the Russian Communist Workers Party

The question of which wars should be considered just and unjust has long attracted the attention of the Marxists. This question was considered many times (both before and after the October Revolution) by Lenin. "History has repeatedly seen wars that, despite all the horrors, atrocities, disasters and torments that are inevitably associated with any war, were progressive, i.e., benefited the development of mankind, helping to destroy especially harmful and reactionary institutions, the most barbaric despotisms in Europe" (PSS, vol. 26, p. 311). "Marxism requires a historical analysis of each individual war in order to make out whether this war can be considered progressive, serving the interests of democracy or the proletariat, in this sense legal, just, etc. ... For a Marxist, it is important why this war is being waged" (PSS, vol. 30, pp. 77-85). "Socialists, without ceasing to be socialists, cannot be against any war" (PSS, vol. 30, p. 131). "There are wars, just and unjust, progressive and reactionary, wars of advanced classes and wars of backward classes, wars that serve to consolidate class oppression, and wars that serve to overthrow it" (PSS, vol. 38, p. 337).

Stalin, developing the thoughts of Lenin, wrote: "War is of two kinds:

a) a just, non-conquest, liberation war, aimed at either protecting the people from external attack and attempts to enslave them, or liberating the people

from the slavery of capitalism, or, finally, liberating the colonies and dependent countries from the yoke of imperialists, and

b) an unjust, predatory war aimed at capturing and enslaving foreign countries, foreign peoples. ("History of the CPSU(b). A short course", p. 161).

Of course, this is only a small part of the statements of Lenin and Stalin on this topic. Already in the "Brezhnev" times, an attempt was made to reduce everything to the following definition: "Lenin, the Bolsheviks rejected the division of wars according to their nature into offensive and defensive ... The whole point is which class wages war, what policy the war continues, what political goal is pursued by the ruling class in this war. From this point of view, revolutionary Marxists distinguish between just and unjust wars. Wars of the oppressed class against the oppressor, ... wars of national liberation, wars of peoples against the threat of national enslavement, wars of the victorious proletariat in defense of socialism, against imperialist states — Marxists recognize such wars as just" (BN Ponomarev and others,")

There are two parts to this definition: 1) the method of determining which war is just; 2) a list of which particular wars should be considered fair. It is obvious that for us the method of analysis should be the main and unchanged one.

As for the list, it, like any similar list, is not final and assumes a change in accordance with the current situation.

* * *

What Is Fascism?

The definition of fascism was given, as you know, by Georgy Dimitrov: “Fascism is an open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic, most militant circles of financial capital” (*that is, the largest bourgeoisie—author*).

The first conclusion from this is obvious: fascism is one of the forms of capitalism. Fascism leaves the means of production, transport, finance, banks, land, etc. in the hands of a handful of oligarchs and provides these people with the maximum possible profit. All the fairly numerous varieties of bourgeois democracy and fascism are just different forms of capitalism. It all depends on the specific situation, which the oligarchs, by the way, are able to assess very well. In some cases, it is beneficial for them to mask their absolute power with such institutions as general elections, the existence of opposition parties, freedom of speech, press, assembly, etc. In others, it is more profitable to switch to open terror against political opponents (primarily against the working class and other working people), to shut up even the most “soft” critics, to crush any semblance of resistance, openly throw dissenters into prison and even kill. The choice of forms and methods always and everywhere depends on a single

consideration: what in a given situation will bring the oligarchs the greatest profit.

Moreover, in order for fascism to form in its standard version, many factors must develop, the foundations of which will be the financial, military and ideological crisis of the regime, and the pillars of the new order will be the security forces and lumpen in the person of ardent Black Hundreds / Brownshirts / Freikorites (underline as necessary) and ideologists of an idealistic orientation.

One of the forms of fascism is Nazism, that is, the desire to achieve its goals by providing advantages to one nation or group of nations, by humiliating, depriving and even destroying another nation (other nations). Again, this is just one of the forms of capitalism, which does not affect the essence of the phenomenon. Therefore, for us, by and large, it doesn't matter with whom we are dealing: with Italian fascists, with German National Socialists, with Ukrainian Bandera or some other human scum. A war with any of them is a just war.

But, taking the position of bourgeois democracy, the oligarchs are forced, at least outwardly, to observe some of its norms: to allow the activities of opposition parties, to allow certain public, including workers', organizations, to allow criticism of the authorities on television, on the Internet and in other media, and other “bourgeois-democratic toys”. They are forced to establish some lower level of social support for the population. With various varieties of fascism, all the

norms of bourgeois democracy are rejected even outwardly. Therefore, bourgeois democracy, willy-nilly, provides the communists with much more opportunities to spread their ideas, to propagate their teachings, than any kind of fascism. Yes, we are well aware that all this is within certain, very narrow limits. We understand: as soon as it becomes profitable for the oligarchs, all external signs of democracy will be discarded, and all “toys” will be locked in a chest. This is exactly what has happened over the past few years in the United States and Western Europe. But still, as long as we are unable to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and workers' democracy, we must support even the weak bourgeois democracy against any variety of fascism.

Let us recall that back in 1917, between the February and October revolutions, the Bolsheviks said: bourgeois democracy is more progressive than any institutions of the autocracy, but even higher democracy is the Republic of Soviets, that is, socialist democracy. Proceeding from the same considerations, the Bolsheviks supported the political buffoon Kerensky against Kornilov. The same can be said about fascism: socialist democracy is many times more progressive than bourgeois democracy, but bourgeois democracy is many times more progressive than fascism.

Everything written here has long been well known. But it seems that some communists began to forget about it, while others simply got lost in the three pines.

* * *

Experience Of The 2nd World War

The role of the US and UK. These two countries—our allies in World War II—were waging a war that did not fall under any of the above points (especially the United States; regarding England, one can still talk about the threat of national enslavement). Soviet historians assessed the Second World War as at first “unfair on the part of all its main participants.” Over time, the nature of the war for England and France began to change: it turned into a fair one. The reasons for this were the defeat, the threat to national security, cooperation with the victims of fascism, the broad participation of the masses. As far as we know, no explanations were given regarding the United States, but the US war against Germany was unequivocally assessed as fair. And this assessment is correct! But Soviet historians, as has repeatedly happened, stopped at this very vague characterization and could not rise to the point of needing to supplement the “classical” definition, based on the practically, objectively prevailing reality. And the reality is this: **any war against any kind of fascism must be recognized as a just war.** Even if this war is waged by a bourgeois-democratic state against an openly fascist one. Yes, we understand that such a war will necessarily be a battle between imperialist predators for spheres of influence and the division of profits. And yet the war of bourgeois democracy against fascism is a just war.

Dissolution of the Comintern. The conclusion about the justice of the war of bourgeois democracy against fascism was made (not in words, but in deeds) as early as 1943. When discussing the resolution on the dissolution of the Comintern at a meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks on May 21, 1943, Stalin said on the contrary, “have the task of **supporting their governments in every possible way** (*highlighted by us—ed.*) for the speedy defeat of the enemy”.¹ That is, it was directly said that in the war against fascism, the communists of the bourgeois-democratic countries must support their governments. This conclusion is not and could not be in the works of Lenin written during the First World War or immediately after it: such a phenomenon as fascism had not yet arisen at that time, and it was impossible to assess the justice or injustice of the war against fascism. Stalin’s words quoted above are a truly creative development of Leninism in an entirely new historical situation.

* * *

Experience Of Other Conflicts

Consider the recent events in Syria as an example. It is unlikely that the Assad regime itself can arouse sympathy among the progressive part of the population. But when the religious fascists of ISIS threatened to replace

him, the choice of two evils became obvious. However, it is also obvious that Assad (and the Russian troops supporting him!) will not bring “freedom, equality and brotherhood” to the people after the victory.

You can consider the example of armed conflicts in Chechnya in the 90s and the beginning of the “zero” years. It seems that all adequate people have not the warmest feelings for the Yeltsin regime and his faithful successor Putin, but the question is: which regime is worse? With a truncated bourgeois democracy, a la the Russian Federation, or under the medieval regime of Dudayev?

* * *

Assessment Of What Is Happening In Ukraine

After the coup of 2013-14, an openly terrorist regime was established in Ukraine. Its main features: the ban on all opposition parties, the impossibility of any open criticism or expression of disagreement, for “dissenters” and “suspicious”—prisons, torture and even murder. The facts have become abundantly known of late. As a result of constant shelling, many residents of the DPR and LPR were killed. Russians and Russian-speakers are openly persecuted, the Russian language and Russian education are banned, and calls are openly heard for the murder of Russians (“Muscovites - to Gilyaks”!

¹ Dimitrov, Georgi, *Diary of Georgi Dimitrov (1941-1945)*; Kuchkovo Pole: Moscow, 2020, p. 381.

etc.). Hitler's accomplices in the Second World War—Bandera, Shukhevych and their “armies” are glorified and declared national heroes. Nazi symbols are openly displayed and encouraged. All this and much more makes it possible to unequivocally characterize the regime established in Ukraine as fascist, specifically as Nazi. A feature of the Ukrainian regime is the absolute helplessness of the central government. First, this power operates under the full control of the United States and cannot take any independent action. Secondly, this government has no real power (pardon the tautology) over formations like “Azov”, which are pursuing a gangster policy, regardless of anyone and nothing. The current Ukrainian government has no independent policy (either internal or external) and is incapable of making any strategic decisions.

Russia today is a bourgeois democracy. For some (perhaps even for many) this statement will come as a shock, but it is true. Yes, this bourgeois democracy is moving towards fascism, but it is still bourgeois democracy. There are opposition newspapers and websites on the Internet. The Yeltsin Center stinks with might and main. For expressing disagreement (at least at the everyday level), they are not yet imprisoned, if one does not move from words to deeds. An obvious example is the RCRP. The Communist Party is not banned, meetings and Plenums of the Central Committee are held, the party press is published, websites operate, and open criticism of the authorities and Putin personally is being conducted. There are no significant repressive measures in response. In Ukraine, the communist party is

banned, the expression of communist views is a criminal offense and threatens with dismissal, investigation, prison, torture by the SBU, beatings and even murders by “radical patriots”. It would be nice to look at the West as well. In recent years, such a struggle for political correctness and tolerance, have unfolded there— BLM and others—that believe both freedom of speech and other democratic “toys” that the United States and Europe were so proud of were destroyed. This is very funny, but it seems that the phrase from Lenin's April theses becomes fair (at least in part!): “Russia is now the freest country in the world.”

The war that has unfolded in Ukraine is a new war for the redivision of the world, like the wars at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. This is a war of imperialist predators for changing spheres of influence and, ultimately, for the profits of the oligarchs of different countries. Russia is waging this war, of course, not with Ukraine, but with the United States and other NATO countries. But if Russia fights directly (and loses people!), then the West, as it has happened many times, is waging war by proxy, hoping to weaken Russia as much as possible (whose military victory few doubt) and make her easy prey. In this war of imperialist predators for *greater* profits and for the first right to exploit workers of different nationalities, the communists cannot support anyone!

But at the same time, this is a war of a bourgeois-democratic state against an openly Nazi state, that is, a just war. The Russian leadership proclaimed its goal the denazification of Ukraine, that

is, the destruction of the Nazi government and all Nazi organizations, the prosecution of Nazi criminals, the establishment of bourgeois-democratic freedoms in the country, the destruction of all restrictions on the use of the Russian language, etc. Having won, the Russian leadership will be forced to fulfill at least part of the promises, and this will improve the situation of the workers and other working people of Ukraine. And the communists are obliged to support the actions of the Russian government aimed at achieving these goals. We should also take a positive attitude towards the desire to protect all Russian citizens from missiles aimed at them, which can be installed in the east of Ukraine. We are also obliged to draw a clear line between the heroism of the Russian military and the actions of the government, aimed primarily at protecting the interests of Russian oligarchs.

* * *

So, What Should Russian Communists Do Now?

To begin with, let's repeat. You need to understand that Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action. Therefore, blind copying of the views of previous generations, and even more so an attempt to turn them into "Holy Scripture" is a disastrous dead end path. And of course, it is necessary to develop the labor movement, strengthen the stamina and unity of the core, and establish contacts with the workers of other countries in order to

create a full-fledged opportunity to influence the situation.

Now to concrete actions. First, to support any actions of the Russian government aimed at destroying the Nazi regime in Ukraine. Secondly, to oppose any measures aimed at intensifying the exploitation of Russian and Ukrainian workers. To expose the true background of the actions of the Russian oligarchic authorities: the true purpose of these actions is to increase the profits of the oligarchs. Third, prepare for harsh criticism of many of the government's actions in the ongoing war. One of the directions of such criticism is clear even now: the full exposure of the Putin-Medvedev slander against the Bolsheviks and Lenin, explaining to people on the basis of factual material the real picture of historical events. Other directions, apparently, will become clear later, when the results of the war are finally determined and the facts become known, hidden now for wartime reasons. And, of course, we must be prepared for the fact that we will have to act in much tougher and more difficult conditions than now.

There is another consideration. We must not allow ourselves to be drawn into any actions and speeches under the abstract slogan "Down with Putin!". We are not fighting against Putin, but against capitalism. And if tomorrow Putin suddenly begins to destroy private ownership of the means of production and replace it with public property, if he starts building an appropriate state structure (that is, the dictatorship of the proletariat), we will support him with all our strength.

Another thing, of course, is that he will never do so, and therefore we can make such statements without the slightest risk. But seriously, any slogan like “down with so-and-so!” should be opposed to the question: “For whom?” The position “let’s throw it off, and then we’ll figure it out” cannot suit us. We have already seen what this leads to: both in the USSR in 1990-91, and during the Ukrainian Maidan in 2013-14. We must have a clear idea of who, and most importantly, what program they are offering us instead of the same Putin, and by what means this program will be implemented. Only then can one decide who—Putin or his conditional opponent—will be worse for the working class (that’s right!), and act accordingly. Unfortunately, the objective reality is that today only ultra-liberal personalities like Navalny, Ksenia Sobchak, etc. can be an alternative to Putin. The left circles, including the communists, sadly, cannot put forward such an alternative now. And the coming to power of right-wing liberals would mean a sharp deterioration in the position of workers: the collapse of the economy, the elimination of many jobs, the destruction of the remnants of the social sphere, the fall of workers under the double oppression of Russian and foreign oligarchs. It will be the same fascization of the country, only at a much faster pace. This cannot be allowed.

* * *

What Is The Result?

And the last, purely theoretical consideration, which has already been implicitly formulated in this article. It seems that the part of Marxist theory that deals with just and unjust wars needs to be supplemented in accordance with the realities of today. This addition should be officially recorded in the relevant party documents. As of today, the list of just wars should look like this:

- A) wars of the oppressed class against the oppressor,
- B) wars of national liberation,
- C) wars of peoples against the threat of national enslavement,
- D) wars of the victorious proletariat in defense of socialism, against the imperialist states,
- E) wars against fascism and Nazism, including the wars of bourgeois-democratic states against fascism and Nazism.



Poster is in Ukrainian language with one short section in German. The Red Front (Roter Frontkämpferbund or, Rot Front) was founded in Germany by Willy Leow and Ernst Thälmann. Those two men are likely pictured on the poster wearing the khaki-colored paramilitary uniforms. Leow fled to the Soviet Union in the 1930s and was subsequently arrested and executed during the Great Purge. Thälmann remained in Germany to lead the Communist Party. Arrested in 1933 by the Nazi government and sent to Buchenwald

concentration camp, he died there in 1944. [Seen on flag] Long live the victorious arriving proletariat revolution.



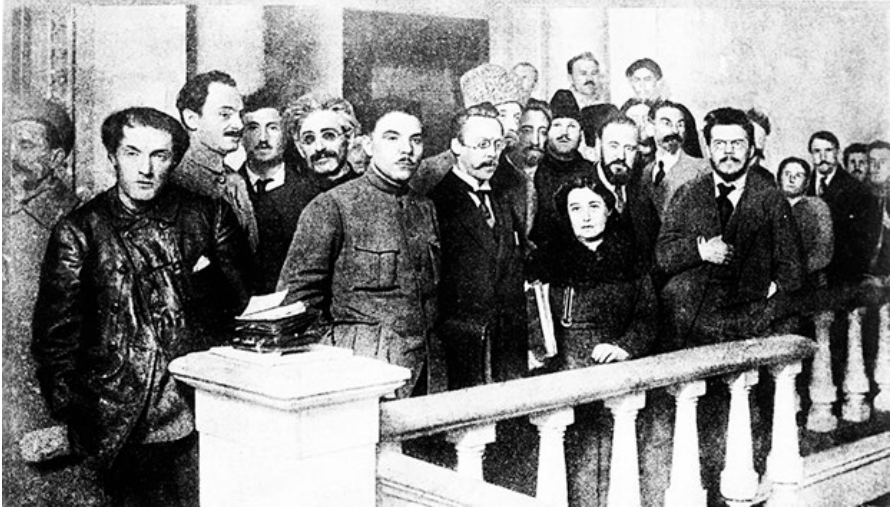
Komsomol members Kyiv Ukrainian SSR 1920-1921.



July 27, 1944, the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front liberated the city of Lvov from the Nazi invaders



Bolshevik commissars in Ukraine (1919)



Leaders of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine in 1918.



Ukrainian Communist Party meeting (date unknown)



Red army moved into then Poland in 1939 under the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and occupied areas of Ukraine and Belarus that had been seized by Poland.





Commemorative 1939 poster of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact saying "To extend a helping hand to the fraternal peoples of Western Ukraine and Western Belarus is our sacred duty!"

Pages from Our Past

A collection of articles pertinent to the struggle today

Preface to Chapter 12: The Crisis of the Black Panthers from Strategy for a Black Agenda

By Jake Fund

The Strategy for a Black Agenda, written by Henry Winston, former National Chair of the CPUSA, carries the work of Lenin's *Left Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder*.² Lenin states in his work that the opportunistic ideology of such leaders of the Second International like Kautsky, "very clearly reveals their entire thinking and their entire range of ideas, or, rather, the full extent of their stupidity, pedantry, baseness and betrayal of working-class interests—and that, moreover, under the guise of "defending" the idea of "world revolution".² "In this tradition, Winston pulls from Lenin, Martin Luther King, Jr., Du Bois, and Frederik Douglas to show successful struggles for black liberation have been about fighting against monopolists that have exploited blacks in Africa and America. He

points out the ideologies that go against this anti-monopolist strategy, especially those that espouse a "Pan-African" or "neo-Pan African" ideologies that only objectively strengthen the position of the monopolists' strategies. The "super-revolutionaries" that Winston mentions that support such a pernicious ideology that overall misconstrue the concepts that were brought up by Marx, Lenin, and Du Bois do not adhere to the tradition of Lenin's construction of self-determination and remove the class struggle and replaces it with a pseudo-Marxist, Maoist ideology that focuses on white chauvinists against third world countries.

Winston critiques a few of the writers in support of "Pan-Africanism." Roy Innis, Winston mentions, speaks of "Black Capitalism" that looks at Africa for the blacks as Israel is for Jewish people under a chauvinistic Zionist ideology.³ What is evident from these "Pan-African" ideologies is that they point to Maoism and the Chinese opportunistic formation that pushed away from Soviet solidarity and the Leninist strategy of "national self-determination."⁴

² Lenin, V.I., *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder*; New Outlook Publishers: New York, 2022, p. 3.

³ Winston, Henry, *Strategy for a Black Agenda: A Critique of New Theories of*

Liberation in the United States and Africa; International Publishers: New York, 1973, P. 25.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 116-117.

While it is out of scope to look at the Sino-Soviet Split, the aftermath of it isn't. Winston quotes Gus Hall, "The Maoist policy of driving wedges into the ranks of the socialist countries and the movements for national liberation, the efforts at disrupting the unity within the world Communist movement is a historic service to world imperialism."⁵ Winston astutely points with Hall's quote what the consequences for the years to come after the Sino-Soviet split.

The Neo-Pan-Africans like Huey Newton and the Black panthers, align with the Maoist anti-Soviet ideology that pigeonholes the Soviets into the "white chauvinists" of the Western Imperialist powers.⁶ The alignment only served to objectively help monopoly capital and imperial power as blacks in both America and Africa continued to be immiserated under it. Winston will exemplify how the tactics of Newton's "Neo-Pan-Africanism," and its Maoist ideology that is given in the chapter from *A Strategy for A Black Agenda* below but furthering into *Strategy for a Black Agenda* we see that Newton's strategy did nothing more than allow a front for the imperial apparatus and the FBI to dismantle the Black Panther movement all together. Winston critically compares two strategies, one based in mass organization built on "anti-monopolists" lines to Newton's

strategy of armed insurrections forming on "guerilla tactics," which was also espoused by another Black Panther, Eldridge Cleaver. In his analysis, Winston brings the non-violent, mass organizational movement that forced the acquittal of Angela Davis lead by the CPUSA and its apparatus of non-violent, mass organizational movements that forced monopolists to concede something that the American racist judicial system rarely does.⁷

This chapter was carefully selected to codify why it is imperative that we do not "lean" towards sectarian "super-revolutionary" tendencies like Newton's ideology that removed the historical materialist analysis of self-determination that Lenin rightfully identified. The end result of the unfortunate consequences of pushing a strategy that "leans" towards imperialist and monopolist formations show that the communist movement must look at left wing radical ideology as objectively antagonist to their success. Winston expresses that what the strategy for black liberation should organize on is not "super-revolutionary" Maoists formations that lead to the objective strengthening of imperialist structures like the police state but only on "anti-monopolist" and class lines regardless of skin color. This is under the heritage that points to such revolutionary thinkers and activists like King, Douglas, Du Bois,

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

and Lenin and not to “ignore the context” of these revolutionary thinkers like others that with a “most extraordinary” privilege which “lack of understanding of how the socialist [Soviet – ed.] countries have altered the prospect for class and national liberation within the prison of imperialism.”⁸ This is exemplified in the contemporary New Left formations that only wreck any movement that will lead to a worker lead state.

* * *

The Crisis of the Black Panther Party

By Henry Winston

What are the causes of the crisis of the Black Panther Party in the U.S.? How could an organization which portrayed itself as the revolutionary vanguard become so quickly isolated from the people? Why were the hopes of so many militant and courageous Black youths who were attracted to the party turned into frustration and even tragedy? No answer to these questions can be given without taking into account the attacks and frameups launched by the class enemy against the party. Yet even these brutal and murderous attacks, conducted both from within and outside the organization, cannot

alone explain the crisis of the Black Panther Party.

Huey P. Newton, writing in the Black Panther of April 17, 1971, attempts to provide an explanation for this crisis, which led to the party’s split into factions, one headed by himself, the other by Eldridge Cleaver.

In his April 17 article, Newton states: “Under the influence of Eldridge Cleaver the party gave the community no alternative for dealing with us, except by picking up the gun . . . Therefore, the Black Panther Party defected from the community long before Eldridge Cleaver defected from the party.”

In saying this, Newton appears at first glance to have taken a step toward understanding and correcting past mistakes—to have begun the process of disentangling the Black Panther Party from Cleaver’s catastrophic influence. However, in this article as a whole, Newton, instead of providing answers, creates still more questions and doubts as to the past, present and future course of the Black Panther Party.

That the uneasiness created by this article is well-founded is confirmed by Newton’s subsequent writings and speeches, and particularly by his May 29 article in the Black Panther. Here he announces that the party is ready to open, in San Francisco, a shoe factory and one to make

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

clothing and golf bags—the first of many factories to be operated by the Black Panthers in ghettos across the nation.

That these are enterprises of “Black capitalism,” Newton does not deny. In fact, he states: “I am doing an article now called ‘To Reanalyze Black Capitalism’. . . . I think this is the kind of thing we’re involved in and we’ll judge how successful we are by whether we can take the community with us.”

It will undoubtedly appear to some that there is a head-on contradiction between Newton’s “new” direction and his previous “revolutionary” period. The opposite is true. There is no contradiction between his previous ultra-Leftist role and his present position. In essence, both positions represent accommodations to the status quo—even though the earlier one was more effectively camouflaged with the rhetoric of revolution. The link between both positions is the fact that neither “Black capitalism” nor ultra-revolutionary rhetoric offers the people the path of struggle. That is why the new form of opportunism (like the old form, still pursued by Eldridge Cleaver) presents no perspective for the Black liberation movement.

Hard Reality

According to Newton, the Black Panther Party had its origin as a

response to what he interprets as the people’s rejection of non-violent action. When the Black Panthers first picked up the gun, he states in the April 17 article, “we are acting (in 1966) at a time when the people had given up on the philosophy of non-violent direct action and were to deal with sterner stuff. We wanted them to see the virtues of disciplined and organized armed self-defense, rather than spontaneous and disorganized outbreaks and riots.”

In this estimate of what was needed as the next step in the Black liberation struggle can be found the source of the Panthers’ subsequent difficulties. By offering the alternative of armed self-defense, the Panthers presented the upsurging Black urban youth with a false choice diverting them from mass unity and struggle.

As Congressman Ronald Dellums recently stated, “The average Black person, if you go back to that experience in the ghetto, doesn’t wake up in the morning oriented to the bullet or the bomb. He’s oriented to hope, and that’s when you can move him. It is time now to translate Black is Beautiful into hard political reality.”

In 1966 that “hard reality” called, as it does today, for more militant forms of organized and disciplined mass struggle. The people, including the youth, in their fight to create a movement to end poverty and racism, will respond to such an alternative to the blind alley of spontaneity or the equally hopeless concept of “picking up the gun.”

It is clear that the people want to challenge the oppressor on the grounds they choose, not on those chosen by their enemy. They want to engage the class enemy where he is most vulnerable—and this ruling class, the most massively armed oppressor in history, is the most vulnerable of all oppressors when the oppressed and exploited move in solidarity into the arena of mass struggle. The guns of the racist monopolists will be of no avail when the Blacks together with all the oppressed and exploited exercise their strength through self-organization and unity. That is why the people do not relate to the idea, whether advanced by Mao Tse-tung or Eldridge Cleaver or Huey Newton, that the power to change things comes out of the barrel of a gun.

Strategy—Defensive or Offensive?

When Newton advocated guns and a defensive Strategy as the solution for Black people, he was wrong on both counts. Not only did the people refuse to relate to the gun, but they also rejected the concept of a defensive strategy. Black people have been warding off attacks for 400 years. They want and need an offensive strategy to build a great popular movement to end racist oppression.

In his concept of self-defense, Newton endeavored to respond to the oppression of his people. However, this concept excluded the masses of the people from their own liberation struggle. It involved the

idea of an elite few acting for the masses—in fact, supplanting them.

Thus, even before Cleaver joined the Black Panther Party, Newton had substituted elitism for mass struggle. Cleaver's influence brought the elitist concept to new levels of anarchistic, adventurist confusion and provocation—but his ideology was nevertheless inherent in the original concepts on which the Black Panther Party was founded.

At one point, however, it did appear, even if briefly, that the Black Panthers might be turning away from these original concepts, that they might supplant Mao's Little Red Book and Cleaver's anarchism with Marx and Lenin. This was in the summer of 1969 when the Black Panther Party called for studying the historic report on the united front by Dimitrov, the Bulgarian Communist leader who transformed himself from the accused into the accuser while standing trial in a Nazi court. But instead of linking theory with practice, the actions taken by the Black Panther Party turned the concept of the united front into a sectarian caricature of the Marxist-Leninist principles on which it is based. Its policies and actions continued to be inconsistent with the interests of the class struggle and the Black liberation movement. It becomes increasingly clear that the Black Panther Party had only adopted some of the phraseology of Marxism-Leninism, but not the ideology.

Against this background, internal strife in the Black Panther Party

deteriorated into factionalism, and—with neither faction guided by scientific theory—into an inevitable split. Newton expelled Cleaver and a group of [his] supporters. Although there are now two groups, both unfortunately hold similar anti-Marxist views on the most basic principles of class and national liberation.

“There Go My People”

It is worth recalling that in the same period when the Black Panthers came on the scene, others were also seeking new directions, notably Martin Luther King.

During the Montgomery bus strike in 1955, King had said, “There go my people. I must catch up with them.” More than a decade later and at a new turning point, King was still motivated by these sentiments. Unlike the Panthers, he did not misread the mood of the people in this new phase, often called the “post-civil rights period.”

It had become apparent to King that an offensive strategy of new dimensions had to be built. The new situation required the continued and even expanded participation of Church and middle-strata forces, including students and professionals, Black and white, that had predominated in 1954-66. But King saw that the basis for regaining the offensive was class strength moving in coalition with the middle class forces. He now directed all his efforts toward involving the working

class in a higher level of struggle with the Black Liberation movement—and with the poor and oppressed.

The Communist party welcomed this historic revolution in Dr. King’s leadership, and wholeheartedly supported his efforts to bring about a new strategy and a new alignment of forces. The Communist party saw this as a profoundly important development, even though Dr. King had not yet demonstrated a full understanding that an offensive strategy to end class exploitation, racist oppression and war demands not only the *strength* of the working class, but also the *leadership* of the working class—Black, Brown, Yellow, Red and white—guided by the science of socialism. It was clearly evident, however, that long before he was assassinated, King had already begun to move toward an anti-imperialist position.

King was also keenly aware of the dangers that faced the movement. For instance, in his historic address—just two months before his death—at the *Freedomways* memorial meeting for Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, King warned that racism and imperialism could not be fought with anti-Communism. In addition, his words about DuBois carried an all-important message for today’s radical youth:

“Above all he did not content himself with hurling invectives for emotional relief and then to retire into smug passive satisfaction. History had taught him it is not enough for people to be angry. The supreme task is to organize and unite people so

that their anger becomes a transforming force.”⁹

The ruling class did everything in its power to divert and defeat the new direction taken by King. The capitalist mass media went all out to promote the activity and the ideology of those Black and white radicals for whom King was “too non-violent” and the Communist Party “too conservative.”

While Newton, Cleaver and Hilliard waved the Little Red Book and talked of picking up the gun, they were joined in these activities by middle-class white radicals who also came forward with interpretations of Marxism. All of this created diversions and confusion on the campuses, in the ghettos and in the peace movement.

The Image-Makers and “Revolution”

As part of the ruling class efforts to divert the radicalization process, the mass media have popularized the caricature of Marxism-Leninism, appearing in the writings of Mao, Trotsky, Marcuse, Debray, Cleaver, Newton, Tom Hayden, Stokely Carmichael, Rennie Davis and others. At the same time, they have promoted a “revolutionary” image for many of the new radicals.

These Black and white radicals, including Cleaver and Newton, dismissed what they called “orthodox” Marxism. Taking a different direction from King, they disdained the working class and glorified the super-“revolutionary” tactics of confrontation by an anarchistic elite. In this way, ultra-“revolutionaries” helped create an atmosphere in which the racist monopolists could falsely portray violence as coming from the Left—and cover up the fact that they themselves are the source of it.

The pseudo-militancy of Newton, Cleaver and Hilliard made their own party and its supporters particularly vulnerable to nation-wide genocidal assaults and frameups. And this, their super-revolutionism made the movements for Black liberation and against war and poverty more vulnerable to mounting repressive attacks.

It is apparent that neither Newton nor Cleaver have ever based their tactics on the working class and its revolutionary Science, Marxism-Leninism. At the present moment, while Cleaver’s opportunism continues along an ultra-Leftist course and Newton’s has taken a Right opportunist form (although he attempts to maintain a Leftist image), both base their policies on the lumpenproletariat.

In order to give some semblance of credibility to the “revolutionary” role

⁹ King, Martin Luther, Jr., “Honoring Dr. Du Bois”, Freedomways Memorial Meeting, February 23, 1968.

they assign the lumpen elements, Newton and Cleaver would have us believe that the Black unemployed, those on welfare, and high school dropouts are all part of the lumpenproletariat. This is an insult to Black men, women and youth. People are not lumpen simply because they are denied jobs, and when Newton and Cleaver make such claims they sound like Black Moynihans.

Today, in the citadel of imperialism in the era of its decline, there is a massive increase in the army of the unemployed. Alongside this, the number of lumpen elements also increases. However, these groups *do not merge*: each has its distinct characteristics. As Marx wrote in *The Class Struggles in France*, the lumpenproletariat “forms a mass sharply differentiated from the industrial proletariat.”

Specifically, the lumpen elements are those so demoralized by the system that they are not only jobless, but that to them a job is unthinkable. It is their declassed parasitical status and outlook that sharply distinguish them from the great mass of the unemployed, who are searching for and demanding jobs and the opportunity for a decent life. That is why, in addition to making the distinction that Marx emphasized, it is now even more necessary than in Marx’s time to clearly distinguish between the lumpenproletariat and the great mass of unemployed, which

includes so many youth (particularly Black and Brown) who have never been regularly employed. The following statistics from the sixties foreshadow the vastly greater number of youth who will be forced into this position in the seventies:

“It is reported that there are now 50 percent fewer unskilled and semi-skilled jobs than there are high school dropouts. Almost one-third of the 26 million young people entering the labor market in the sixties will be dropouts. But the percentage of the Negro dropouts nationally is 57 percent, and in New York City, among Negroes 25 years of age or over it is 68 percent. They are without a future.”¹⁰

However, it is quite evident that the ruling class is not counting on the prediction that the unemployed will passively accept the idea that “they are without a future.” Today, the monopolists fear the fact that the struggles of the unemployed, together with the rank-and-file struggles within the unions, will lay the basis for a new upsurge of the working class and the Black liberation movement. The monopolists sense that these struggles will eclipse those of the thirties.

One of the ways in which the ruling class is trying to short-circuit the struggle for jobs and against war and racism is through its barbaric promotion of drugs—in the armed

¹⁰ Ferman, Louis A., Kornbluh, Joyce L., *Poverty in America*; University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, 1968, p.622.

forces (particularly in Vietnam), in the ghettos, among the workers, and among the youth on and off the campuses.

The lumpenproletariat, as Engels noted, includes “elements of all classes.” This is particularly evident today as large numbers of students, demoralized by drugs, turn away from struggle and become part of the lumpen sector for the first time in history.

Together with its mass promotion of drugs, the ruling class is promoting anti-working class ideology on a mass scale in new ways. This is why the media have popularized the writings of such individuals as Regis Debray and Herbert Marcuse, whose views have greatly influenced Cleaver, Newton, Hayden, Hoffman, Rubin and other radicals who foster the idea that workers have “a stake in the system.” From this starting point Cleaver and Newton have developed the concept that the lumpen sectors, who will resort to anything but work, and not the working class, comprise the vanguard of revolution.

Objective Laws of Development

Those who point to the lumpenproletariat as the revolutionary vanguard disregard the objective laws of historical development. In pre-capitalist societies, poverty and oppression were even greater than under capitalism. But oppression in itself,

no matter how great, does not create the basis for the struggle to abolish oppression.

Because of the specific nature of exploitation under capitalism, the working class, which collectively operates the mass production process of the privately owned monopolies, is transformed into the gravedigger of the system. That is why Marx and Engels wrote in *The Communist Manifesto*: “Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class.”

No fundamental change—or even a challenge to the monopolists—can occur without the working class. And today the proportion of Black workers in basic industries such as steel, coal, auto, transport and others is transforming the prospects for the class struggle and Black liberation.

The degree of exploitation of Black workers is clearly much greater than that of white workers. Nevertheless, the collective form of exploitation in the decisive mass production industries is suffered by *all* workers. This creates the objective basis for solidarity, for their unity and leadership in the struggle against the monopolist ruling class.

At the same time, history has assigned a doubly significant role to Black workers—as the leaders and backbone of the Black liberation movement, and as a decisive component of the working class leadership of the anti-imperialist struggle as a whole.

It is the monopolists' fear of Black, white, Brown, Yellow, Red and working class unity, which in turn can form the basis for still broader people's unity, that is behind racism and anti-Communism, the main ideological weapons of the ruling class.

Leninism, the Marxism of the imperialist epoch, is *the* ideological weapon of the working class. It is the scientific guide that enables the working class to combine its struggle with national liberation movements against imperialism.

No other theory has served to free a single working class, a single people, from imperialism anywhere in the world. Beginning with the October revolution, only those guided by Marxism-Leninism have been able to free themselves from class and national oppression and take the road of socialist construction.

“On the Side of the Oppressor”

Cleaver and Newton have tried to use the writings of Frantz Fanon, whose vantage point was the Algerian and other African liberation movements, to justify their anti-Leninist theory of the role of the lumpenproletariat. They have attempted to apply Fanon's ideas to the U.S., although these ideas in

some respects lack Marxist clarity even within the African context for which they were intended. On top of this, Cleaver and Newton have inflated Fanon's positive views on the lumpenproletariat, while completely ignoring his serious reservations about this group.

“Colonialism will also find in the lumpenproletariat a considerable space for maneuvering,” Fanon wrote in *The Wretched of the Earth*. There is a danger, he warned, that “the lumpenproletariat will throw itself into battle and will take part in the conflict—but this time on the side of the oppressor” He then stated:

“In Algeria it is the lumpenproletariat which furnished the Harkis and the Messalists; in Angola it supplied the road openers who now precede the Portuguese armed columns; in the Congo, we find once more the lumpenproletariat in regional manifestations in Katai and Katanga, while at Leopoldville, the Congo enemies made use of it to organize spontaneous mass meetings against Lumumba.¹¹

For ways in which the ruling class can manipulate the lumpen elements, we need only refer to the Panthers' own experience with George Sams, who was used to frame Bobby Seale, Ericka Huggins and others. And we should remember

¹¹ Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth*, First Evergreen Black Cat Edition; Grove Press: New York, 1966, p. 109.

that a white lumpen individual was used to assassinate Martin Luther King, while black ones were recruited to murder Malcolm X. And we should also recall the German monopolists' manipulation of Van der Lubbe to frame Georgi Dimitrov as part of their drive to launch a genocidal war for world domination.

The Cleaver-Newton theory of the lumpenproletariat as vanguard would mean objective surrender to the ruling class because only the working class can lead the fight against poverty and exploitation. And not only does this theory fail to offer an offensive strategy for liberation; without working-class leadership of the struggle, the lumpen victims themselves will not be provided with even their own barest needs.

It is ironic that, while some Panthers glorify the lumpenproletariat, at least one Panther leader takes pride in his working-class background and skills. In his book *Seize the Time*, Bobby Seale states that his father was a master carpenter, and that he himself is a carpenter, a draftsman and "a top-flight sheet-metal mechanic."

We fervently hope that Bobby Seale will vindicate his well-founded pride by using his outstanding ability to help chart a working-class path of struggle for millions of Black youth, in contrast to the course Newton and Cleaver adopted while Seale was in prison.

Incredible Thrust Backward

Between mid-April and the end of May 1971, Huey P. Newton became increasingly frank in describing his new course. What he only hinted at in the April 17 Black Panther, he made astoundingly clear in the May 29 issue, when he described what he calls a "survival program," i.e., survival through "Black capitalism."

Announcing that the Panthers will now operate factories in ghettos, he went on to say: "We will have no overhead because our collective—we'll exploit our collective by making them work free. We'll do this not just to justify ourselves, like philanthropists, to save someone from going without shoes, even though this is part of the cause of our problems. People make the revolution; we will give the process a forward thrust. If we suffer from genocide, We won't be around to change things. So, in this way our survival program is very practical."

Far from being either "practical" or a "forward thrust," this is an incredibly reactionary thrust *backward*. By comparison with Newton's "survival program," Booker T. Washington's philosophy sounds positively revolutionary!

Newton, however, tries to justify his retreat into the past with the following explanation: "We can jump too far ahead and say that the system

absolutely cannot give us anything, which is not true, the system can correct itself to a certain extent. What we are interested in is for it to correct itself as much as it can do and after that if it doesn't do everything that the people think is necessary then we'll think about reorganizing things."

Well, this is a pretty late date to advise the oppressed and exploited to call off their struggles and wait to see if "the system can correct itself"! Why should the people surrender to still more racism and oppression in order to learn what they already know—that the system "can correct itself" only through wars, increased racism, poverty and exploitation.

While in the past Newton did indeed jump ahead of the people's needs, he has now leaped far behind them. He misread the mood of the people and mistook their real needs when he talked of "picking up the gun" from 1966 through early 1971. Now he is again misreading their mood and ignoring their real needs, when in effect he tells them to surrender to racist oppression and accept a "survival" concept based on his anti-working class theories and glorification, in the same breath, of the lumpenproletariat and of capitalism.

Newton offers the people mini-enclaves of Black capitalism in the form of ghetto sweatshops across the country. But what Black people want is an *end* to the ghettos. During slavery, the underground railroad

established way stations to meet the basic survival needs of Blacks escaping from the South. In context, a defensive "survival" strategy cannot possibly serve the people, for whom way stations cannot provide an escape. The vast scope of Black Americans' needs today can be met only by an offensive strategy.

Black Americans have a first and equal claim on the total economy of the country—which they helped build with 400 years of slave and near-slave labor—for billions for jobs, housing, medical care, education, etc. They want the total economy turned around to meet the people's needs, instead of operating for the wars and the profits of a handful of corporate monopolists.

When in 1968 Martin Luther King warned radicals that super-militancy often ends in accommodation, he seems to have prophesied Huey P. Newton's latest move. After "hurling" super-revolutionary rhetoric for six years, it appears that Newton will now "retire into small passive satisfaction" while Black people are given the prospect of working in the ghetto under racist sweatshop conditions.

In *Seize the Time*, Bobby Seale attacked Ron Karenga for operating "little jive businesses" in the Black community. "Ron Karenga," wrote Seale, "had no intention before and has no intention now of working in opposition to the power structure to change the system for the needs of

Black America.” (Random House, New York, 1970, p. 273.)

We truly hope that Seale will recall these words because they aptly describe Newton’s “survival program.” No matter how Newton may later attempt to portray his new enterprises—as collectives, cooperatives, etc.—he cannot disguise the fact that they offer Black people no hope.

Accommodation—or Struggle

Neither Newton’s nor Cleaver’s concept of a “survival program” is in the interests of the people. While Cleaver expresses the ultra-Leftist face of opportunism—“urban guerilla warfare now”—Newton’s opportunism takes a different form.

Describing his “survival program,” Newton says: “We serve [the people’s] needs so they can survive oppression. Then, when they are ready to pick up the gun, serious things will happen.” (Black Panther, April 1971) In other words, Newton would have us believe that accommodation today will lead to revolution tomorrow!

Both the “survival program” Newton-style (“wait until the masses are ready to pick up the gun”) and the “survival program” Cleaver-style (“pick up the gun now!”) objectively amount to the same thing—desertion of the people’s struggles.

The cause of liberation cannot be served by a negative idea—“survival” pending a future day when “serious things will happen.” What is needed is a *struggle* program for the immediate interests of the people and for their ultimate liberation from capitalist, racist oppression.

Marx and Engels taught that the salvation of the exploited requires an ever-expanding unity in struggle even so much as to retard the downward spiral of exploitation and oppression. This concept is even more acutely relevant today. By contrast the idea of a “survival program” evokes passivity and demoralizes the people. To justify his “survival” concept, which would divert the Black liberation movement from an offensive anti-monopoly strategy, Huey P. Newton has developed a classless approach to capitalist democracy. It is amazing to read his description of democracy in the May 29 issue of the Black Panther. This is the way he puts it: “Democracy in America (bourgeois democracy) means nothing more than the domination of the majority over the minority.”

It is indeed strange to find one who regards himself as a dialectical materialist speaking of bourgeois democracy as “the domination of the majority over the minority.” In the sphere of social science, dialectical materialism relates not to struggle in general but to the struggle of classes.

Because he does not relate dialectics to the class struggle, Newton fails to

explain that his is a society in which state monopoly capitalism rules; that there is a class of exploiters exercising state power to defend its class interests; that there is national oppression maintained by this class.

In the same article, Newton also states that the majority has “decreed” that the minority “fight and die in wars.” He dares make this claim at a time when even the polls show that considerably more than 70 percent of the people want immediate withdrawal of troops from Vietnam.

It is certainly not the majority but the ruling-class minority that has “decreed” the imperialist aggression in Indochina and in the Middle East, and which threatens thermonuclear war against peaceful states and peoples, and first of all against the socialist camp, which supports anti-imperialist liberation struggles throughout the world. In the 1930’s the threat of war came from Nazi Germany; today it comes from the U.S. monopolists—and Newton would have us believe that the majority has “decreed” it!

But not only do the polls show that there is an anti-war majority. They also show that within this anti-war majority there is another majority—one with the potential to bring to an end to the war in Indochina and, moreover, to imperialism itself.

This majority within the majority is made up of the overwhelming percentage of white workers and the still greater percentage of Black

Americans who oppose the war. For the first time in U.S. history, the people, though not effectively organized, are in motion against the genocidal aggression of U.S. imperialism.

How then can Huey Newton, who apparently considers himself a revolutionary, speak of democracy in the U.S. as the rule of a majority (white masses) over the minority (Black masses)? How can he deny and cover up the rule of a tiny minority of monopolists who fan racial strife between Black and white, Black and Chicano, Black and Puerto Rican, Black and Indian, and of course between whites and all who are Black, Brown, Red or Yellow?

So-called revolutionary rhetoric cannot hide this monstrous error which omits the class nature of society, which denies capitalism as the source of racism, and the monopolists’ use of racism, along with anti-Communism, to exploit and oppress the masses. Such rhetoric is a disservice to all those, irrespective of color, who are fighting for peace, democracy and the well-being of the people.

Huey P. Newton engages in demagoguery when he claims that there is a struggle between a majority of whites and a minority of Blacks. He lumps the white monopolists (a minority) with the white working class majority (and sections of the middle strata).

He fails to identify the monopolists (a white minority), and he does this in a way unbecoming to a revolutionary—by lumping the exploited majority of white workers with the oppressing minority of white monopolists. Revolutionaries must understand that this is the traditional method of accommodating to the imperialist enemy of change.

“The Building of the Machine”

In the June 5 *Black Panther*, Huey P. Newton reveals the full nature of his projected Black capitalist course. “In the past,” writes Newton, “the Black Panther party took a counter-revolutionary position with our blanket condemnation of Black capitalism.” Now, however, Newton sees a revolutionary role for Black capitalism.

He outlines a program in which Black Panther clothing and shoe factories and medical programs will be assisted by “contributions” from Black capitalists. In exchange, the Panthers will call upon the community to patronize the businesses of these Black capitalists.

“Black capitalists,” states Newton, will have “the potential to contribute to the building of the *machine* which will serve the true interests of the people and end all oppression.” (Emphasis added—H.W.) One can get an idea of the kind of “machine”

Newton intends to build from the following admission: In the past, he writes, “we received money for our survival programs from the big, white capitalists.”

Perhaps this admission also casts light on some of the reasons why Newton complained, in his April 17 article, that “our hook-up with white radicals did not give us access to the white community because they did not guide the white community.” It now becomes clear that he prefers instead to have “access” to white capitalists—whom he identifies not as the exploiters of Black and white workers, but as the “guides” of the “white community.”

Newton cannot, however, camouflage the fact that his “access” to white corporate capital means that he is continuing to serve the monopolists at the expense of Black Americans and all working people. One need not hesitate to predict that his new form of accommodation to the white capitalist “guides” will be exposed far more rapidly than his previous super-revolutionary services to the same forces.

Black people are in a unique position of more than 200 years of chattel slavery, operated by the slave-owner partners of emergent capitalism, they have had over 100 years of capitalist exploitation, racism, war and poverty.

And now Newton echoes the monopolists responsible for the oppression and exploitation of Black

people who are saying that the problems of the system will be solved if only a few more Black people become capitalists. The capitalists who say this are, of course, the same ones who have set up every type of barrier against those Blacks who have tried to establish small businesses over the years.

And it is particularly ironic that the “invitation” to Black people to become capitalists should come from the very same corporate monopolists who have already destroyed most of the nation’s small businesses. Those that still remain, whether white- or Black-owned, can operate only under the conditions of monopoly domination.

Not only have the mass production industries come under the control of corporate monopoly. Through their control of the banks, chains, franchising operations, insurance and real estate companies, etc., these same monopolists dominate all sectors of the economy, including that in the Black community.

Now, in an effort to recruit a sector of Blacks to support the ruling class against their own people, the monopolists have offered a tiny minority the illusion of Black capitalism. This is another variation of the tokenism rejected by the Black masses.

Yet we must keep in mind that the Black bourgeoisie is oppressed by the same monopolists who exploit and oppress the Black people as a whole.

It is within this context that Communists—who are opposed to capitalist exploitation, whether by white- or Black-owned business—support the anti-monopolist demands of Black capitalists.

Access to the handful of giant corporations and banks which control the nation’s economy promotes the myth of “Black capitalism” as a crude attempt to convince Black people that anyone can still “make it” in the U.S. The monopolists do this in order to divert the Black liberation movement from its true course. At a time when one-third of the workers in the great mass production industries are Black, the future of the liberation movement lies in united struggle with all the oppressed and exploited against the common enemy, the monopolists.

In outlining the Panthers’ Black capitalist course, Newton states that the party’s new programs “satisfy the deep needs of the community but they are not solutions to our problems. That is why we call them survival programs, meaning survival revolution.” He then goes on to develop his concept of the revolutionary role of Black capitalists:

“We now see the Black capitalist as having a similar relationship to the Black community as the national bourgeoisie have to the people in national wars of decolonization. In wars of decolonization the national bourgeoisie supports the freedom struggles of the people because they

recognize that it is in their own selfish interest. Then when the foreign exploiter has been kicked out, the national bourgeoisie takes his place and continues the exploitation. However, the national bourgeoisie is a weaker group, even though they are exploiters. Therefore, the people are in a better position to wipe the national bourgeoisie away after they have assisted the people in wiping out the foreign exploiters.”¹²

With this brazen misappropriation and misuse of Marxist terminology, Newton tries to put a revolutionary stamp on his scheme to build a machine that will serve the “foreign” U.S. monopolists at the expense of the marginal Black capitalists and all Black people—including the most victimized of capitalism’s victims, the lumpenproletariat.

In accordance with Newton’s theory of the revolutionary role of the lumpen elements, the lumpen victims will be rewarded with free handouts from the party. In return, they will form a machine that, to understate the matter, can serve no good purpose in the Black liberation movement.

At the same time, Newton proposes that all strata of Black Americans remain within the ghetto enclaves “pending” revolution. He is asking that they give up the only struggle that can benefit all Black Americans,

including the middle classes: a united struggle with all exploited and oppressed people to win the only “territory” upon which Black people can gain their liberation in the United States—that is, the entire country and its economy.

In the former colonies of Africa and other countries, it was the foreign settler who lived in enclaves within the oppressed peoples’ lands. In the U.S., the white corporate oppressors have forced Black people into the enclaves where Newton suggests they remain until the revolution in which the Black minority frees itself by fighting the white majority. This is the blind alley into which Newton urges Black people. But Black Americans can be liberated only through a joint struggle with all the oppressed and exploited against the white corporate minority.

In Asia, Africa and Latin America, the anti-imperialist phase of the revolutionary process opens the way to the transition to socialism. In the United States, the revolutionary process demands the building of a great anti-monopoly movement led by contingents of Black, white, Brown, Red and Yellow workers to break monopolist control of the government. It is the only path offering a perspective for the Black liberation movement, though some “revolutionaries” refuse to recognize this.

¹² Newton, Huey P., Article in *The Black Panther*, June 5, 1971.

Some look for short cuts (“instant” revolution), while others devise “survival” programs pending the day when revolution comes magically into being. In actuality, both concepts are anti-revolutionary diversions from the centrality of the anti-monopoly strategy at this stage of the revolutionary process.

The Future Determines Its Own Tactics

To help preserve his “revolutionary” image while introducing his Black capitalist “survival program,” Newton makes use of the “when they are ready to pick up the gun” concept. But, shorn of its rhetoric, this is the equivalent of saying, “Since the masses are not yet ready to pick up the gun, we will table the question of picking up the gun until the masses are ready to put it on the agenda.” This is simply another way of creating passivity and compounding frustration.

The “when they are ready to pick up the gun” idea has also been expressed by others on the Left. Even some avowed Marxists have reflected views that represent an accommodation to, rather than a struggle against, this concept. But such views are in contradiction to the program of the Communist Party, to the Marxist-Leninist principles on which the party is based.

In his April 17 article, Newton stated that Cleaver’s concept of “instant” revolution was a “fantasy.” But the idea of “picking up the gun when the masses are ready” is no less a fantasy. Tomorrow’s tactics cannot be determined today. Future struggles, although they will be influenced by the outcome of today’s, will, depending on the concrete conditions that exist then, determine the tactics that go on tomorrow’s agenda.

Focusing on the gun in the future leads to frustration in the present. It carries the implication that any method short of the gun is inadequate or futile, amounting to no more than a holding operation until the real thing happens—merely a question of firing blanks until at long last reaching the point of “picking up the gun.”

This same idea is also expressed in a slightly different form by other individuals on the Left. According to one such view, “the possibilities of peaceful Struggle have not yet been exhausted.” This formulation implies that while armed struggle is not “yet” on the agenda, a revolutionary strategy must be based on the assumption that it will inevitably be placed there.

This view operates on the fatalistic notion that no matter what changes occur in the relationship of forces on a national and world scale, the working class and its allies will inevitably exhaust their capacity to prevent the ruling class from

imposing armed struggle on the revolutionary process. This view, like its variants, differs from Cleaver's concepts of armed struggle only in emphasis and timing, since it presupposes the inevitability of armed struggle as the only form of revolution, of transition to liberation and socialism.

Against such erroneous views, Lenin wrote:

“Marxism demands an attentive attitude to the *mass* struggle in progress, which, as the movement develops, as the class consciousness of the masses grows, as economic and political crises become more acute, continually gives rise to new and more varied forms of defense and attack . . .

“In the second place, Marxism demands an absolutely *historical* examination of the question of the forms of struggle. To treat this question apart from the concrete historical situation betrays a failure to understand the rudiments of dialectical materialism. At different stages of economic evolution, depending on differences in political, national, cultural, living and other conditions, different forms of struggle come to the fore and become the principal forms of struggle; and in connection with this, the

secondary, auxiliary forms of struggle undergo change in turn.”¹³

Marx, Engels and Lenin fought against ideas that foreclosed the possibility of varying forms of revolutionary struggle in the transition to socialism. They rejected both the Right opportunist illusion that the transition would inevitably be peaceful, and the “Left” opportunism that proclaimed armed struggle as the only path to socialism for every country.

Today's Right opportunists also predict that armed struggle will not be necessary, while the “Left” opportunists predict that it will be inevitable. Marxism-Leninism opposes both the *will* and the *won't* of these two faces of opportunism, both of which tend to disarm the mass struggle.

While opposing “Left” concepts of the inevitability of armed struggle, Communist strategy simultaneously opposes Right opportunist illusions that transition to socialism is possible without the sharpest class struggles combined with the struggles of all the oppressed to curb and defeat the power of racist monopoly.

As Lenin wrote, “To attempt to answer yes or no to the question whether any particular means of struggle should be used, without

¹³ Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works*, Vol. 11; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1972, pp. 213-214.

making a detailed examination of the concrete situation of the given movement at the given stage of its development, means completely to abandon the Marxist position.”¹⁴

The “Most Extraordinary Privilege”

“Super-revolutionaries” are quick to shout “revisionist” at those who are guided by Lenin’s views regarding different paths to socialism.

By contrast, Le Duan, Ho Chi Minh’s close comrade and successor, who has been at the center of more than 30 years of armed struggle against imperialism, emphasizes that “Lenin, like Marx, was much concerned about the possibility of peacefully seizing power by the working class.”

Even before the October revolution, states Le Duan, Lenin believed that “Communists should do everything to strive for [peaceful transition] as long as a real possibility existed, even though the chances are one in a hundred.”

Specifically, after state power had been transferred to the bourgeoisie by the February 1917 revolution, Lenin saw the possibility of a peaceful transfer of power to the working class. “Lenin,” says Le Duan,

“proposed the tactics of the peaceful development of the revolution. When conditions changed, after July, and there was no longer the peaceful possibility, Lenin changed tactics and prepared for armed revolution.”

Now that the October Revolution has led to a world system of socialist countries headed by the Soviet Union, forming the primary contradiction to imperialism, the possibilities for differing forms of revolutionary transition to socialism are increasing. This also means that forms of revolutionary transition that were rare in Lenin’s time may become more frequent in the present epoch.

At the heart of the ultra-Leftists’ errors is a lack of understanding of how the socialist countries have altered the prospects for class and national liberation within the prison of imperialism. They maintain, for example, that the Cuban experience represents the only valid type of transition to socialism. As Fidel Castro points out, these ultra-Leftists are a part of a “whole series of negators of Lenin [who] have emerged since the October Revolution.” Amplifying this view, Castro states:

Today, there are, as we know, theoretical super-revolutionaries, super-Leftists, veritable “supermen” if you will, who can destroy imperialism in a jiffy with their tongues. There are many super-

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

revolutionaries lacking all notions of reality about the problems and difficulties of a revolution. They are prompted by sentiments carefully fostered by imperialism and are full of fierce hatred. It is as if they refused to forgive the Soviet Union its existence, and this from “Left-wing” positions. They would like a Soviet Union according to their strange model, according to their ridiculous ideals. Yet a country is primarily a reality, one made up of numerous other realities.

The exponents of these trends forget the incredible initial difficulties of the revolutionary process in the Soviet Union, the incredible problems arising from the blockade, isolation and fascist aggression. They pretend not to know anything about all this and regard the existence of the Soviet Union as almost a crime, and this from “Left-wing” which is an act of absolute dishonesty.

They forget the problems of Cuba, of Vietnam, of the Arab world. They forget that wherever imperialism is striking its blows it comes up against a country which sends the people the arms they need to defend themselves. We recall Playa Giron these days. We well remember the anti-aircraft artillery, the tanks and guns and mortars and other weapons that enabled us to smash the mercenaries.

This means that the existence of the Soviet state is objectively one of the most extraordinary privileges of the

revolutionary movement. (*Granma*, May 3, 1970.)

Shortly after the October revolution, Lincoln Steffens, the U.S. journalist, visited the Soviet Union and said, “I have seen the future and it works.” And now, as Castro has shown, this revolution not only “works” for the Soviet people, it works for all oppressed humanity. It is the single most important force in the world working in support of liberation everywhere—a “most extraordinary privilege” constantly creating “extraordinary” changes in the revolutionary process on a world scale. It creates new opportunities for class and national liberation struggles that cannot be contained within the preconceived molds of pseudo-theorists, or by the desperate repressions of neo-colonialist imperialism.

While the pseudo-theorists cling to the single idea of “picking up the gun,” the Chilean Popular Unity coalition, with a solid working-class base led by the Communist Party, pursues an opposite tactic—aimed *not* at “picking up the gun,” but at *preventing* the internal oligarchy and its imperialist patrons from doing so. This tactic combines maximum internal strength with anti-imperialist unity on a world scale.

If, however, the oligarchy together with U.S. imperialism should at some point resort to “picking up the gun,” the advantage would nevertheless remain with those who

have adapted Leninist tactics which apply to each stage of the struggle.

The imperialists have always been the first to pick up the gun—including in Vietnam. If they repeat this pattern in Chile, victory—as in Vietnam—will nevertheless belong to those who recognize that power comes not out of the barrel of a gun but out of the unity of the masses in struggle against the imperialism which picks up the gun.

Those who fail to see through this strategy of the ruling class, and instead indulge in “super-revolutionary” rhetoric, obstruct rather than build the movement to free Angela Davis and all political prisoners.

* * *

On Inner Party Struggle

By Liu Shao Chi

From the very day of its inception, our Party has struggled not only against the enemies outside the Party but also against all kinds of hostile and non-proletarian influences inside the Party. These two kinds of struggle are different, but both are necessary and have a common class substance. If our Party did not carry on the latter type of struggle, if it did not struggle constantly within the Party against all undesirable tendencies, if it did not constantly purge the Party of every type of non-

proletarian ideology and overcome both “left” and Right opportunism, then such non-proletarian ideology and such “Left” and Right opportunism might gain ground in the Party and influence or even dominate our Party. This would make it impossible for the Party to consolidate and develop itself or to preserve its independence. This would endanger the Party and lead to its degeneration. Such non-proletarian ideology and “Left” or Right opportunism can corrupt our Party, or certain sections of it, and can even transform the character of our Party or sections of it into that of a non-proletarian organization. For example, it was in this manner that the Social Democratic parties in Europe were corrupted by bourgeois ideology and transformed into political parties of a bourgeois type, thus becoming the main social pillars of the bourgeoisie.

Therefore, such inner-Party struggle is absolutely necessary and cannot be avoided. Any idea of trying to avoid inner-Party struggle, or of refraining from criticizing others’ mistakes so that they will not criticize one’s own errors, is totally wrong.

Inner-Party struggles consist principally of ideological struggles. Their content is made up of the divergencies and antagonisms arising in matters of ideology and principle. The divergencies and antagonisms among our comrades on matters of ideology and principle can develop into political splits

within the Party, and, under certain circumstances, even to inevitable organizational splits; but, in character and content, such divergencies and antagonisms are basically ideological struggles.

Consequently, any inner-Party struggle not involving divergencies in matters of ideology and principle and any conflict among Party members not based on divergencies in matters of principle is a type of unprincipled struggle, a struggle without content. This kind of struggle without principle or content is utterly unnecessary within the Party. It is detrimental and not beneficial to the Party. Every Party member should strictly avoid such struggles.

Inner-Party struggle is absolutely indispensable to protecting the purity and independence of the Party, to guaranteeing that the Party's activities constantly proceed along lines which represent the highest interests of the proletariat, and to preserving the Party's basic proletarian character. With this object in view, inner-Party struggles must be conducted from two sides, or on two fronts. This is because the enemy's ideology influences the Party from two directions, attacking the Party from both the Right and the "Left." This is expressed in the Party by Right or "Left" opportunism.

Therefore, our inner-Party struggle must be directed simultaneously against both Right opportunism and "Left" opportunism, against these

two aspects so that our Party can preserve its definite proletarian character. If we fail to do this, if we merely carry on a one-sided struggle, or if we slacken our vigilance and our struggle against either side, then the enemy not only can but assuredly will attack our Party from that very side which we have neglected. In that case, it will be impossible to preserve the Party's purity and independence or to consolidate the Party. It is, therefore, in the course of ceaseless inner-Party struggle on two fronts that our Party consolidates and develops itself.

Comrade Stalin said: "The question here is that contradictions can be overcome only by means of struggle for this or that principle, for defining the goal of this or that struggle, for choosing this or that method of struggle that may lead to the goal. We can and we must come to agreement with those within the Party who differ with us on questions of current policy, on questions of a purely practical character. But if these questions involve differences over principle, then no agreement, no 'middle' line can save the cause. There is and there can be no 'middle' line on questions of principle. The work of the Party must be based either on these or those principles. The 'middle' line on questions of principle is a 'line' that muddles one's head, a 'line' that covers up differences, a 'line' of ideological degeneration of the Party, a 'line' of ideological death of the Party. It is not our policy to pursue such a

‘middle’ line. It is the policy of a party that is declining and degenerating from day to day. Such a policy cannot but transform the party into an empty bureaucratic organ, standing isolated from the working people and becoming a puppet unable to do anything. Such a road cannot be our road.”

He added: “Our Party has been strengthened on the basis of overcoming the contradictions within the Party.” This explains the essential nature of inner-Party struggle.

[...] The special conditions and circumstances prevailing at the time when our Chinese Party was founded gave rise to two kinds of influences. One was favorable, enabling us from the very start to build a Communist Party of the Leninist type. Subjectively, we strictly adhered to the principles laid down by Lenin. From the very outset, our Party has carried out strict self-criticism and inner-Party struggle. This accounted for the rapid progress of our Party and served as a motive force to spur our Party forward.

But the other influence frequently led our comrades to another extreme, to another kind of mistake—the mistake of carrying inner-Party struggles too far, of struggling too intensely without any restraints whatsoever. This resulted in another deviation, a “Left” deviation.

Many comrades had a mechanical and erroneous understanding of Lenin’s principles and turned them into absolute dogmas. They believed that the Party’s highly centralized organization negates inner-Party democracy, that the need for inner-Party struggle negates peace within the Party; that the political leadership of the Party—the highest form of class organization of the proletariat—in other mass organizations of the proletariat negates the independence of trade unions and other organizations of the workers and toiling masses; and that unified, iron discipline means the obliteration of the individual personality, initiative and creativeness of Party members.

Many comrades memorized the principles of Lenin as if they were dead things. While they considered inner-Party struggle to be necessary and regarded liberalism and conciliationism as useless, still they applied these principles mechanically and dogmatically. They thought that inner-Party struggles should and must be uncompromisingly carried on regardless of the time, circumstances and issues involved, and that the more bitterly such struggles were conducted, the better. These comrades thought that the more vehement and sharp the form of inner-party struggle and criticism, the better. They felt that the sharper the controversies between Party comrades, the better. If this was not the case, then they thought that

errors of liberalism and conciliationism were being committed.

In order to prove that they themselves were free from liberal or conciliatory tendencies, that they were “100 percent Bolsheviks,” they carried on unprincipled struggles within the Party, irrespective of the actual conditions of time and place. Thus, these people became “rowdies” without any standpoint in inner-Party struggles, “struggle specialists” with no regard for principle, or “brawl experts” given to fighting. They conducted struggle for the sake of struggle. This is disgraceful within the ranks of the proletariat. And of course, it does not prove that they were “100 percent Bolsheviks.” On the contrary, it only serves to prove that they had insulted Bolshevism and utilized the name and appearance of Bolsheviks to practice opportunism inside the Party.

Many comrades did not understand that our inner-Party struggle is a struggle over principle, a struggle for this or that principle, for defining the goal of this or that struggle, for choosing this or that method of struggle that may lead to the goal.

These comrades did not understand that on questions of current policy, on questions of a purely practical character we can and must come to agreement with those within the Party who differ with us. They did not know or understand that on issues involving principle, on questions of defining the goal of our

struggles and of choosing the methods of struggle needed to reach such goal they should wage an uncompromising struggle against those in the Party who hold divergent opinions; but on questions of current policy, on questions of a purely practical character, they should come to agreement with those within the Party who hold divergent opinions instead of carrying on an irreconcilable struggle against them, so long as such questions do not involve any difference over principle.

This is precisely the traditional style of work in the Party of Lenin and Stalin, which, however, many of our comrades have not yet acquired. They conducted uncompromising struggles over issues on which they should have come to agreement. As a result, there was not a single issue they would not fight over, there was never a time when they would not fight and there was not a single person against whom they would not fight. They struggled against all who differed with them, enforcing absolute conformity. They made no concessions on anything and would not compromise under any circumstances. They regarded anything contrary as antagonistic and believed that opposition is everything. This constituted their absolutism.

These comrades do not preserve or achieve unity within the Party by overcoming differences over principle and ideology within the Party and by correcting certain

incorrect tendencies and phenomena. On the contrary, they attempt to preserve or achieve unity within the Party by simple organizational means or by high-handed measures, by a policy of attack, by a system of punishment in dealing with Party members. As a result, they bring about various erroneous and excessive inner-Party struggles. Therefore, instead of carefully and considerately persuading comrades on the basis of principle and ideology, they suppress and bully comrades by resorting to simple organizational means, hostile methods, and even administrative measures. They draw at random organizational conclusions about comrades and mete out organizational measures to discipline comrades. Moreover, they ruthlessly discipline comrades inside the Party from the bourgeois viewpoint of equality before the law—that is, they mete out the heaviest discipline as provided in the Party Constitution without taking into consideration what kind of Party members the offenders are and whether or not the offenders have admitted or corrected their mistakes. In this way the system of disciplinary measures inside the Party is introduced. They often employ the means of conducting struggles in order to start and push forward work. They purposely look for “targets of struggle” (comrades inside the Party) and conduct the struggle against them as representatives of opportunism.

They sacrifice and attack this one comrade or these few comrades, “killing the rooster to frighten the dog” as the Chinese saying goes, in order to make other Party cadres work hard and fulfill the task. They deliberately collect information about the shortcomings and mistakes of the target of struggle and jot down mechanically and piecemeal his not too appropriate words and deeds. Then they view in isolation such shortcomings and mistakes and his not too appropriate words and deeds and regard all these as representing the whole make-up of the comrade. They magnify the individual shortcomings and mistakes of this comrade and develop these into a system of opportunism, create an extremely unfavorable impression about this comrade among comrades in the Party and incite their hatred for opportunism in struggling against this comrade. Then, “everybody can inflict blows on a dead tiger.” The psychology of revenge on the part of some persons begins to gain ground and they expose all the shortcomings and mistakes of this comrade and arbitrarily raise these shortcomings and mistakes to the level of principle. They even fabricate some story and on the basis of subjective suspicion and completely groundless rumors, accuse the comrade of various crimes. They will not stop until they drive him into mental confusion. With this done, they are still reluctant to allow the comrade who has been attacked to make any

defense. If he makes any defense they would accuse him of deliberately defending his mistakes or of admitting mistakes with reservations. Then they would deal him further blows. They do not allow the comrade being attacked to reserve his opinions on condition of submission to the Party organization and do not allow him to appeal to the superiors but insist upon his admitting his mistakes on the spot. In case the comrade being attacked has admitted all his mistakes, then they do not bother whether the problem pertaining to principle or ideology has been solved or not. So, it occurred inside the Party that in the course of the struggle certain comrades admitted more mistakes than they had committed. In order to avoid attacks, they thought that they had better accept all the accusations. Although they admitted all the mistakes, as a matter of fact they still did not know what it was all about. This proves that such methods of struggle cannot cultivate the firmness of a communist in sticking to the truth.

* * *

Crisis Of Petty-Bourgeois Radicalism

By Gus Hall

As the molecules in steel becomes agitated it results in a red hot metal. Through this process the steel

becomes tempered and purified. As the metal heats up bubbles appear on the surface, and in short order many of them disappear.

Social and political movements in a sense develop in similar ways. When the social molecules become agitated it results in mass upheavals, the waves of radicalization. Class contradictions and relations sharpen up. This propels the revolutionary process. It results in new levels of mass class and socialists consciousness. There is a speedy growth of movements and organizations. They also become tempered and purified in the struggle. Such is the path of revolutionary development.

A Product Of Frustration

But such moments also give birth to momentary political “bubbles.” As in steel, many of them also come and go. Some are serious movements that reflect momentary issues. They disappear when the issues are resolved. But others turn into petty-bourgeois radical expressions — petty-bourgeois reflections of the issues and the problems of the moment.

Such movements are especially a phenomenon in periods when great numbers—new waves—of people move into action. Like all sectors, the petty-bourgeois strata tend to reflect their class position when they react

to the issues of the class struggle. They develop moments of great militancy. At such moments they are a source of inspiration and militancy to other sectors, including the working class. But they tend to go for short-term tactics. When this does not result in victories, for some the militancy, the enthusiasm, turns into petty-bourgeois radicalism. It is necessary to make a sharp distinction between the healthy militancy and determination expressed by non-working class sectors and the concepts of petty-bourgeois radicalism. Petty-bourgeois radicalism is a by-product of a sense of frustration.

When concepts based on unreality are bounced back by reality it results in frustration.

A secondary cause for the frustration is the occurrence of opportunist, passive tendencies and problems in the ranks of other sectors, including the working class.

The concepts, the ideas, motivating petty-bourgeois radicalism are not necessarily wrong in the abstract. Those who follow wrong concepts, in most cases, are dedicated and sincere individuals. The concepts are wrong when they do not reflect the specific reality of the moment. Therefore, the more determined such individuals are, the more damaging they can be. Good intentions and even good ideas are not enough. One of the key ingredients in a revolutionary struggle is people in mass. People do not respond to commands or to

exhortations. They do not respond to ideas—even good ideas—if they do not see their self-interests involved in these ideas.

The inner laws of capitalism, the laws of exploitation, the inherent drive for profit, the contradiction between the social nature of production and the private appropriation of its products are all factors that force the victims in mass more and more to see their self-interests related to the more basic and revolutionary ideas. Policies and tactics, to be successful, must be related to this objective process. A revolutionary force must take full advantage of each new situation presented by this process. Only then can it become a revolutionary force propelling events. Tactics must be synchronized to each stage of this development.

The very essence of capitalism is class exploitation. It is exploitation of people, again in mass. The essence of any struggle is the class struggle. The central moving force is the exploited class—the working class.

Concepts of struggle not based on the above reality will sooner or later come into conflict with it. The advocates of petty-bourgeois radicalism try to bypass this reality. They believe they can avoid the necessary and unavoidable consistent and sustained work, the work of organizing, educating, mobilizing and leading people in mass, of leading people on the level of their understanding, of their own self-interest, and in this sense

reflecting the objective processes leading to a revolutionary struggle against capitalism. For this they seek to substitute radical rhetoric with general slogans, or advanced actions that have no relationship to struggles to which the masses do respond. Thus, when the concepts based on unreality meet the reality of class struggle they bounce back. If such tactics are further pursued they become an obstacle to struggle. They become a destructive and divisive force. Organized groups which pursue such policies not only tend to move away from the working class, but they reject mass concepts of struggle altogether.

The relationships between the objective processes and the tactics of struggle are not simple. It is an intricate process. The lines are not clean-cut and even that which is negative, in the long run, can have momentary positive influences. It is not always easy to draw the line between passivity that is motivated by opportunistic considerations and a judgment that is based on a correct, necessary tactical consideration. And it is not easy always to see the line between a militancy that is necessary to propel the struggle to new heights, or a necessary advanced position or action by a more limited force, and ill-advised actions that alienate and separate the advanced force from its mass base.

Petty-bourgeois radicalism as a concept is now in a serious crisis. Masses have moved to new levels of

political consciousness and to higher forms of struggle [sic]. Generally, petty-bourgeois radical concepts go into a crisis when working-class concepts of struggle are on the ascendancy.

An Old Problem

Petty-bourgeois radicalism is not a new phenomenon. It has emerged as a problem throughout the history of the world revolutionary movement. Petty-bourgeois radicalism has had a historic run in the recent period. The wave has touched most of the non-socialist world.

A special brand of petty-bourgeois radicalism made deep inroads and influenced the policies of the leading cadre of the Communist Party of China. Throughout its history the Maoist influence has been a petty-bourgeois radical influence. In its basic essence the Cultural Revolution was propelled by a mass petty-bourgeois radical sweep. This is a special brand of petty-bourgeois radicalism because it takes place in a country that is building socialism. It is a special brand because the leading core of the leadership used it as an instrument in the struggle to stay in power. It is a special brand because in China it was woven into a pattern with bourgeois nationalism. Mao's policies have always been and are today based on mobilizing the non-working class sections. It was the

destruction of the organizations and politics based on the working class that were the main objectives of the Cultural Revolution.

The Debray theories of revolution were an extension of these petty-bourgeois radical concepts. All variations of petty-bourgeois radicalism come into conflict with the class approach to struggle. They reject the class struggle as the vehicle for social progress. They reflect the individualism, the lack of class identification of petty-bourgeois elements generally. They reject policies and tactics that are based on mobilizing the working class—the one class history has designated as a basic contingent in the struggle for social progress. In fact, petty-bourgeois radicalism rejects the role of the one revolutionary class in society.

Thus, the very premise of petty-bourgeois radicalism is that it is impossible to win the working class in the struggle against capitalism. From this it follows that mass concepts of struggle are not possible, necessary, or realistic. This leads to actions based on small elite groups—or to individual action. Because this concept is not concerned with winning over masses, it promotes and condones actions that alienate masses. There is an inner logic to this path. Specific actions are taken because there is a lack of confidence in mass—in class—actions. These ill-considered actions result in widening the gap between the petty-

bourgeois radical movements and the masses. This widening gap then becomes “proof” that you cannot win masses and therefore the line of conduct of these movements is justified. Each step leads to a further isolation. This is the inner logic of petty-bourgeois radicalism.

This has been the path of world Trotskyism, the classical movement of petty-bourgeois radicalism. It had its genesis with Trotsky’s rejection of the working class as a basic revolutionary force. He also substituted radical-sounding rhetoric for the class struggle. Trotskyism has remained a worldwide petty-bourgeois radical current. It remains a negative, a divisive, and a disruptive current. Because of its basically incorrect position it is not surprising that in the very center of its work has been the attack, the slander, against a country where the working class is in power—the Soviet Union.

When the working class either takes other paths of struggle or when it does not move because of the influences of opportunism, petty-bourgeois radicalism becomes a more serious problem. This also has its inner logic which results in such radicalism becoming an obstacle to mobilizing and moving the working class.

Crisis And Decline

As in the US, the world wave of petty-bourgeois radicalism is now also in a crisis and in the declining phase of the present cycle. It is a world crisis of petty-bourgeois radicalism. Its policies have come up against the realities of the class struggle. Masses have gained new experiences in the fires of the class struggle. They are now rejecting petty-bourgeois concepts as divisive and impractical.

The problems in the struggle against these concepts arise because they seem radical and revolutionary. For many who are influenced by such ideas honestly believe they are the most revolutionary. But when such policies fail—when they do not result in revolutionary victories, those who honestly believe in them face a dilemma. They can go one of three ways. Some give up the struggle. They use many excuses, but in essence they accept the status quo. They move into positions of opportunism. Others, in frustration, move into isolation by accepting the path of anarchism. This path destroys cadre as a meaningful revolutionary force. But most, however, draw the correct conclusions. They move into struggles and movements based on mass concepts. They draw the necessary conclusions that one's revolutionariness can be measured only in the framework of moving masses into struggle.

It is impossible to struggle against the incorrect concepts of petty-bourgeois radicalism without a consistent and sharp struggle against the forever present influences of Right opportunism. The pressures towards Right opportunism are the most consistent in any capitalist country. They remain the chief danger to the revolutionary movement in the broad mass organizations of the people and the working class. It is impossible to conduct a successful fight against petty-bourgeois radicalism unless there is a consistent, successful fight against the influences of Right opportunism.

Like all political currents, petty-bourgeois radicalism finds expression in the form of specific groups. But like all political currents, it also has influences in most people's and working-class organizations.

In this past period in the United States, we have witnessed the appearances of numerous petty-bourgeois radical sects. They are all now, to one degree or another, feeling the effects of the crisis of petty-bourgeois radicalism. These groups include the curious varieties of Trotskyism. They include the groups that emerged as a result of the continuous splits of the original forces in the Students for a Democratic Society. They include those that emerged because of the disintegration and the splitting of the Progressive Labor group.

In rejecting petty-bourgeois radicalism we do not need to reject or ignore the positive contributions many of these groups have made. We need not condemn individuals when we reject the concepts of petty-bourgeois radicalism.

Even in their best moments they view their work with the working class as that of missionaries. They all tend to be anti-Communist and even more specifically, anti-Soviet. On these basic class matters they join hands with the Right opportunists. This factor exposes the more basic opportunistic side of petty-bourgeois radicalism. Everyone knows it is easier to be a radical and even a “revolutionary” as long as you are anti-Communist. The enemy is never too disturbed by the most radical speeches of anyone who remains ideologically tied to capitalism by means of anti-Communism. In this sense petty-bourgeois radicalism does a very special favor to capitalism because it covers its anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism with “Left” radical phrases.

For a number of years Mao Tse-Tung gave the world’s petty-bourgeois radical groups a lift. These groups turned to Mao because his thought is the most rounded form of petty-bourgeois radicalism. That it also has its anti-working class and rabidly anti-Soviet features, of course, is no surprise.

But the most important factor of petty-bourgeois radicalism today, including its Maoist features, is that

it is in crisis and in the declining phase of its cycle the world over as well as in the United States. The easy catch-all slogans have turned into empty rhetoric. Much of the motion has turned into “bubbles” that are now disappearing.

When the hothouse schemes of instant revolution meet reality they burst like balloons. When this happens petty-bourgeois radicalism blames its failures on the working class. In their frustration many of these sects turn to anarchism, which is only another form of petty-bourgeois radicalism. This is, in fact, one of the features of the present crisis of petty-bourgeois radicalism.

Petty-bourgeois radicalism as a concept rejects the basic class nature of society and the class struggle as a pivotal element in the fight for progress. It rejects the role of mass movements because it does not see its basic ingredient—the working class. A class approach to struggle is of necessity a mass approach. The petty-bourgeois radical rhetoric is a sanctuary for those who have given up the possibilities of leading masses, and in the first place the working-class masses, in struggle. It is a way of keeping a radical image when in fact one has retreated and given up the struggle.

The Story of SDS

The SDS had its birth in the ideological chambers of the Socialist

Party. Its present crisis can be clearly traced to the petty-bourgeois radical views that it inherited from the parent body. This is not to negate in any way or detract from the positive contributions of the tens of thousands of young people who have come into the struggle and into the Communist Party through the activities of the SDS. This organization went through many stages of development. It moved from its open anti-working class position to accepting the role of the workers. But even then it saw that role only in relation to the SDS being the “missionary” enlightening the people called “workers”. The SDS never did understand the role of masses as the key factor in struggle.

Because they did not understand the class struggle they tended to reject all concepts of unity, including a unified front of the forces opposing capitalism. This comes from the very nature of petty-bourgeois existence. These sectors do not see themselves as being exploited or oppressed as a class. They do not react to oppression as a class. Unity, a unified front are class-mass concepts. The SDS, even in its best days, rejected these concepts and tended to organize their own actions, asking others to “join them” or “support them.” When they could not have their way they very often boycotted many important mass actions against the U.S. aggression in Vietnam.

Under pressure they constantly slipped into anti-Communist

positions. Petty-bourgeois radicalism by its very nature—its class essence being, as it is, that of a group between two basic classes—cannot for long sustain a united organization. Its concept of “participatory democracy” was, in a way, a recognition of this fact. As the working-class upsurge has developed and the class concepts of the struggle have moved into the forefront, petty-bourgeois radicalism has also been evident in the policies of accepting racism. This has been justified by statements like, “We will fight for black-white unity when we have socialism.” For white Americans not to fight racism at all times is racism.

Most who took part in the SDS and the actions that it organized have drawn the correct conclusions. These forces have tended to reject the petty-bourgeois radical concepts. But some, as we know, have moved into channels of anarchism and individual actions. When one is convinced that mass struggles will not achieve results, anarchistic actions seem a realistic way out. Fictitious “communiqués from the underground” threatening violence are infantile. Acts of individual terror at a moment when mass actions and movements are possible and necessary, are actions in the service of reaction. They are damaging to the revolutionary movement. These “communiqués from the underground” and other threats of violence become the most convenient cover for acts of violence

by police provocateurs, by enemy agents. Police agents blow up buildings—but the blame is placed on the “Left radical movement.” The fictitious “communiqués from the underground” threatening violence become the canopies under which the enemy conspires to create new Reichstag fire situations.

Another of the petty-bourgeois radical groups now in crisis is the group called Progressive Labor. It got a start as a splinter from the New York City Communist Party. When the Supreme Court upheld the McCarran Act and said the Communist Party was ordered to register its members, finances and officers, a small group in the Party panicked. The Party overwhelmingly decided to stand up and fight. This splinter group was a part of those who fought for a policy of liquidating the Communist Party. They called for its dissolution.

When the Party rejected this they set up their own little group. But right from the beginning it was stamped with their opportunism. Their liquidationist, opportunistic tendency continued in their own organization. They tried to hide and bypass the anti-Communist barrage from the enemy behind a name that said nothing about socialism or communism. Opportunism has been their hallmark. Now life has caught up with their brand of petty-bourgeois radicalism. It has remained a sect becoming ever more

isolated—and now the sect has split asunder.

The basically opportunistic approach of Progressive Labor led it along the path of rabid anti-Sovietism. This is opportunism because it is a concession to the central ideological pillar of U.S. imperialism. This same opportunism has led Progressive Labor to compromise with the same struggle against racism under radical phrases and even in the name of the working class. It has followed a policy of accommodation and conciliation with racism. Because of its racist and white chauvinist practices the Black and Puerto Rican members have either been expelled or left the group.

The various Trotskyite sects continue as of old. They continue their splitting tactics in our mass movements, as is clearly shown in their latest efforts to set up a peace movement under their control. Momentarily some of these groups have made some gains. They are carefully covering up their real Trotskyite policies. But the Trotskyite sects are also in a crisis. They are also isolated. Their splitting tactics in all movements flow from their basic petty-bourgeois radical essence.

Working-class consciousness leads to concepts of class unity. It leads to rejecting tactics that lead to disunity. Petty-bourgeois radicalism does not see the concept of class or mass struggles. From this it follows that it does not

see the need for class unity. It reflects the individualism of its class nature.

Petty-bourgeois radicalism is a political trend. It is this political trend that is in a crisis. Militant currents, radical trends, and the revolutionary process—these are not in a crisis. They are features of the mass upheavals. Marxism-Leninism is not in a crisis. It is the growing, the most consistent revolutionary current. It is not in a crisis because it reflects and is changing reality. It is the revolutionary current.

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Present-Day Trotskyism [Ultra-leftism – Ed.]¹⁵

By Joseph Stalin

In carrying on a struggle against the Trotskyite agents, our Party comrades did not notice, they overlooked the fact, that present day Trotskyism is no longer what it was, let us say, seven or eight years ago; that Trotskyism and the Trotskyites have passed through a serious evolution in this period which has utterly changed the face of Trotskyism; that in view of this the struggle against Trotskyism and the method of struggle against it must also be utterly changed. Our Party comrades did not notice that Trotskyism has ceased to be a

political trend in the working class, that it has changed from the political trend in the working class which it was seven or eight years ago, into a frantic and unprincipled gang of wreckers, diversionists, spies and murderers acting on the instructions of the intelligence services of foreign states.

What is a political trend in the working class? A political trend in the working class is a group or a party which has its own definite political face, platform and program, which does not and cannot hide its views from the working class but, on the contrary, openly and honestly carries on propaganda for its views in full view of the working class, does not fear to show its political face to the working class, does not fear to demonstrate its real aims and tasks to the working class but, on the contrary, goes to the working class with open visor to convince it of the correctness of its views. In the past, seven or eight years ago, Trotskyism was one of such political trends in the working class, an anti-Leninist trend, it is true, and therefore profoundly mistaken, but nevertheless a political trend.

Can it be said that present-day Trotskyism, the 1936 Trotskyism, let us say, is a political trend in the working class? No, this cannot be said. Why? Because the present-day Trotskyites are afraid to show their real face to the working class, are afraid to disclose their real aims and

¹⁵ Chapter 3, *Mastering Bolshevism* on New Outlook Publishers

tasks to it, and carefully hide their political face from the working class, fearing that if the working class should learn of their real intentions it will curse them as an alien people and drive them from it. This in reality explains how it is that the chief method of Trotskyite work is now not open and honest propaganda of its views among the working class, but the masking of its views, servile and fawning praise for the views of its opponents, a false and pharisaical trampling of its own views in the dirt.

If you remember, Kamenev and Zinoviev at the trial in 1936 strenuously denied that they had any political platform. It was fully possible for them to develop their political platform at the trial. But they did not do so, declaring that they had no political platform. There can be no doubt that both of them were lying when they denied that they had a platform. Even the blind can now see that they had their political platform. But why did they deny the existence of any political platform?

Because they were afraid to disclose their real political face, they were afraid to demonstrate their real platform for the restoration of capitalism in the U.S.S.R., fearing that such a platform would arouse revulsion in the working class.

At the trial in 1937, Piatakov, Radek and Sokolnikov took a different line. They did not deny that the Trotskyites and Zinovievites had a political platform. They admitted that they had a definite political

platform, recognized and unfolded it in their testimony. But they unfolded it not to call on the working class, not to call on the people to support the Trotskyite platform, but in order to curse it and brand it as an anti-people's and anti-proletarian platform.

The restoration of capitalism, the liquidation of the collective farms and state farms, the restoration of the system of exploitation, an alliance with the fascist forces of Germany and Japan to bring war against the Soviet Union nearer, a struggle for war and against the policy of peace, the territorial dismemberment of the Soviet Union, giving the Ukraine to the Germans and the maritime provinces to the Japanese, the preparation of the military defeat of the Soviet Union if enemy slates should attack it, and, as a means of achieving these tasks, wrecking, diversion, individual terrorism against the leaders of the Soviet government, espionage for the benefit of the Japanese and German fascist forces -- such was the political platform of present day Trotskyism which was set forth by Piatakov, Radek and Sokolnikov.

Naturally the Trotskyites could not but hide such a platform from the people, from the working class. And they hid it not only from the working class but also from the Trotskyite rank and file, and not only from the Trotskyite rank and file but even from the leading group of the Trotskyites, consisting of a small handful of 30 or 40 people. When Radek and Piatakov asked Trotsky's

permission to call a small conference, 30 or 40 people, to inform them of the character of this platform, Trotsky forbade them, saying it was inexpedient to talk of the real nature of the platform even to a small group of Trotskyites as such an "operation" might cause a split.

"Political figures" hiding their views and their platform not only from the working class but also from the Trotskyite rank and file, and not only from the Trotskyite rank and file, but from the leading group or Trotskyites -- such is the face of present-day Trotskyism.

But it follows from this that present-day Trotskyism can no longer be called a political trend in the working class. Present-day Trotskyism is not a political trend in the working class but a gang without principle, without ideas, of wreckers, diversionists, intelligence service agents, spies, murderers, a gang of sworn enemies of the working class, working in the pay of the intelligence services or foreign states.

Such is the indisputable result of the evolution of Trotskyism in the past seven or eight years.

Such is the difference between Trotskyism in the past and Trotskyism at the present time.

The mistake of our Party comrades is that they did not notice this profound difference between Trotskyism in the past and Trotskyism at the present time. They did not notice that the

Trotskyites have long since ceased to be people devoted to an idea, that the Trotskyites have long since turned into highway robbers, capable of any foulness, capable of all that is disgusting, to the point of espionage and the outright betrayal of their country, if only they can harm the Soviet government and Soviet power. They did not notice this and were therefore unable to reconstruct themselves in time to wage battle against the Trotskyites in a new and more regular manner. This is why the abominable work of the Trotskyites of late years was a complete surprise for some of our Party comrades.

To proceed. Finally, our Party comrades did not notice that there is an important difference between the present-day wreckers and diversionists, on the one hand, among whom the Trotskyite agents of fascism play "an active part", and the wreckers and diversionists of the time of the Shakhty trial, on the other hand.

In the first place, the Shakhty and Industrial Party wreckers were people openly alien to us. They were in greater part former owners of factories, former managers for the old employers, former shareholders of old joint-stock companies, or simple bourgeois specialists who were openly hostile to us politically. None of our people had any doubt about the authenticity of the political face of these gentlemen. And the Shakhty wreckers themselves did not conceal their distaste for the Soviet system.

The same cannot be said of the present-day wreckers and diversionists, the Trotskyites. The present-day wreckers and diversionists, the Trotskyites, are mostly Party people with a Party card in their pocket, and consequently people who formally are not alien to us.

Whereas the old wreckers went against our people, the new wreckers on the contrary cringe to our people, laud them, lick their boots, in order to worm their way into their confidence. As you see, the difference is essential.

In the second place, the strength of the Shakhty and Industrial Party wreckers was that to a greater or lesser degree they possessed the necessary technical knowledge, while our people, not possessing such knowledge, were forced to learn from them. This circumstance gave a great advantage to the wreckers of the Shakhty period, made it possible for them to do their wrecking work free and unhindered, made it possible for them to deceive our people *technically*.

This is not so with the present-day wreckers, with the Trotskyites. The present-day wreckers have no technical superiority over our people. On the contrary, our people are better trained technically than the present-day wreckers, than the Trotskyites. During the time from the Shakhty period to our own days, tens of thousands of genuine, technically strong Bolshevik cadres have grown up among us. One could

mention thousands and tens of thousands of Bolshevik leading figures technically developed in comparison with whom all such people as Piatakov and Livshitz, Shestov and Boguslavsky, Muralov and Drobnis are empty windbags and mere tyros from the point of view of technical training. In this case, what does the strength of the present-day wreckers, the Trotskyites, consist of? Their strength lies in the Party card, in the possession of a Party card. This strength lies in the fact that the Party card gives them political trust and opens the doors of all our institutions and organizations to them.

Their advantage lies in the fact that holding a Party card and pretending to be friends of the Soviet power they tricked our people *politically*, misused their confidence, did their wrecking work furtively, and disclosed our secrets of state to the enemies of the Soviet Union. This "advantage" is a doubtful one in its political and moral values, but still, it is an "advantage". This "advantage", in reality, explains the fact that the Trotskyite [ultraleft – ed.] wreckers, as people with a Party card having access to all places in our institutions and organizations, were a real windfall for the intelligence services of foreign states.

The mistake of some of our Party comrades is that they did not notice, did not understand all this difference between the old and the new wreckers between the Shakhty wreckers and the Trotskyites, and not noticing this, they were unable to reconstruct themselves in time so as

to wage battle against the new wreckers in a new way.

National Reunification Across The Taiwan Strait — An Inevitable Trend

Put out by the Qiushi Journal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China

In 1972, Yu Kuang-chung, a celebrated poet in Taiwan, published his poem “Nostalgia”, in which he wrote about his agony and frustration in being separated from his family on the mainland for more than 20 years. “And now, nostalgia is a coastline, a shallow strait. I on this side, the mainland on the other”. His words touched the hearts of millions of nostalgic Chinese longing to return home. In 2011, when he was visiting his hometown of Quanzhou in Fujian Province, he added another line to his poem: “In the future, nostalgia will be a long bridge; you can come here, and I can go there.” With these simple words, he described the changes that had taken place across the Taiwan Strait with increased exchanges and communication between the two sides, and thus expressed his confidence and expectation for reunification.

While Taiwan and the mainland have been separated for 70 years, efforts to reduce tension and increase communication and cooperation have never ceased. Cross-Strait relations have witnessed one breakthrough after another over the years, from the open letters to Taiwan compatriots to the development of the “One Country, Two Systems” policy and the basic strategy for national reunification; from the

1992 Consensus to the first-ever historic meeting between leaders from the two sides; from total separation to direct two-way links in postal mail, transportation, and trade; and from the early years, when Taiwan was expelled from the UN, to efforts to defeat attempts at Taiwan independence.

As we now look upon cross-Strait relations from a new starting point, we can see an overwhelming and unstoppable historical trend for national reunification. In his speech at a conference commemorating the publication of the “Letter to Taiwan Compatriots” issued by the Standing Committee of the NPC 40 years ago, General Secretary Xi Jinping elaborated on China’s policies and positions in the new era for peaceful reunification, demonstrating political wisdom and historical responsibility for a solution to the question of Taiwan. Listening to his convincing words, we realize even more that national renewal and reunification represent a historical trend, a cause to fight for, and a goal that we all want to achieve.

Peaceful reunification depends on national rejuvenation. The fact that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait remain separated is a wound left over from history. It is said that “the Taiwan

question was created at a time when China was a weak and chaotic country, but it will end with the rejuvenation of the nation.” As the Chinese nation moves forward with its renewal, we will see a much stronger force for national reunification under more favorable economic, political, and cultural conditions. People in Taiwan will, of course, be a part of this great journey, joining hands with the people on the mainland in the drive to achieve their dream for national renewal.

Integrated development is a sure path to peaceful reunification. In times of great changes, the mainland and Taiwan must work together through thick and thin as we move forward with a shared future and intertwined interests. To realize national reunification, it is essential for people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait to have the same goals, which are in turn enabled by more communication and connectivity. As requested by General



Yu Kuang-chung (1928-2017)

Secretary Xi Jinping, connections with Taiwan should be improved to the greatest extent possible. In particular, as soon as possible, we need to ensure water, electricity, and gas supplies to Kinmen and Matsu from the coastal areas of Fujian and build bridges wherever possible so that people in Taiwan may benefit from development in the mainland. We must also make sure that Taiwanese residents and businesses in the mainland enjoy equal treatment and access to equal, inclusive, and convenient public services.

Countercurrents against peaceful reunification must be curbed. General Secretary Xi Jinping stated categorically that nothing can change the fact that people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait are Chinese with the same national identity, and nothing can stop the trend toward reunification of the Chinese nation. Taiwan independence goes against this unstoppable trend and will eventually be crushed by the wheels of history. Chinese must not fight against Chinese, and for this purpose we have made the greatest efforts for peaceful reunification with the utmost sincerity. However, we do not renounce the use of force, and we reserve the option of taking all necessary measures to prepare for possible interference by external forces and separatist activities by a handful of “Taiwan independence” separatists. Such measures would certainly not be targeted at the people of Taiwan.



PRC Residence Permit for Taiwan Resident

The residence permit for Taiwan residents is a permit available to Taiwan residents who come to work, study, live, and travel in the mainland, with protection provided for the legitimate rights and interests of Taiwan residents on the mainland. On August 6, 2018, the General Office of the State Council published the procedures for the application and issuance of residence permits for Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan Residents, and the permit system took effect on September 1, 2018.

The Association for Relations across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) is a public organization established in Beijing on December 16, 1991, for the purpose of promoting peaceful reunification. Entrusted by the mainland authorities, it handles communications with its counterpart in Taiwan on issues regarding cross-Strait exchanges and is authorized to conclude relevant

agreements. The Strait Exchange Foundation (SEF) was established in Taiwan on November 21, 1990. It is a non-governmental organization authorized by the Taiwanese authorities to handle cross-Strait affairs. Since the beginning of the 1990s, ARATS and SEF, under authorization from the authorities on both sides, have been holding talks and dialogues for the purpose of promoting economic, trade, scientific, technological, and cultural exchanges between the two sides. Pictured here are ARATS and SEF representatives signing official documents.

We may not be able to decide on what has happened in the past, but we can certainly seize the moment and choose our future. Seventy years have passed, and that is long enough to let bygones be bygones and leave bitterness, hate, and separation behind us. Looking to the future, we have every reason to believe that we can build the mutual trust that allays misgivings, that we can increase communication and clear up misunderstanding, and that we can let peace prevail over conflict. People on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, working together, will usher in a bright future for the country as we realize the reunification of the Chinese nation and achieve the goal of national rejuvenation.



The Association for Relations across the Taiwan Strait and the Strait Exchange Foundation

Where There's Smoke, There's Fire: Finance Capital's Looting And Wrecking Of The World Economy

By Robert Daly

Careening down narrow mountain roads, you are a passenger in a vehicle driven by a madman whose every move brings you closer to disaster. That's the West's economy and its stewards in a nutshell. Maybe collapse will be avoided by the time this article appears, but it's not guaranteed.

The US Federal Reserve (hereafter, "the Fed") has been increasing the money supply at a fantastic rate since the year 2000 to fund banks and investment houses to buy stocks, bonds and other financial assets and real estate for themselves and their wealthy clients under the Fed's outrageous "Wealth effect" policy.¹⁶ In October 2019 this game produced yet another crisis in the "Repo" financial market, like the one that brought down the economy in 2008. The Fed tried to bailout the Repo market but the market kept exploding (see Figure 1). Finally, in March 2020 the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) together with the lockdowns calmed markets as the Fed flooded the world with still more trillions, rapidly, in the biggest bank bailout ever. The flood of

money has brought inflation to the US and the rest of the Western world, measured in July 2022 as 8.3% in the USA,¹⁷ 10.9% in Germany,¹⁸ the sort of inflation normally restricted to developing countries. This inflation is the smoke from the raging fire of a severe economic crisis still in progress. Let's review the background.

The top curve of Figure 2 shows the fantastic growth in wealth of the households of the top 0.1% of USA millionaires and billionaires since the year 2000. This expansion in their wealth caused the crisis. Wolf Richter writes:

"What kind of outrageous gift they got from the Fed's money printing and interest rate repression...It was also the greatest economic injustice committed in recent US history over such a short period of time. These monetary policies are largely responsible for the worst inflation in 4 decades that is mauling the "Bottom 50%" of households

¹⁶ <https://wolfstreet.com/wealth-effect/>

¹⁷ Reported by Bureau of Labor Statistics.

¹⁸

<https://wolfstreet.com/2022/09/30/euroz>

[one-inflation-spikes-to-10-in-germany-10-9-without-energy-6-4-from-temporary-inflation-mid-2021-to-runaway-inflation/](https://wolfstreet.com/2022/09/30/euroz)

because they have so little, and spend all their money on necessities...”¹⁹

The top 0.1% rode the huge balloon in the US money supply from 4 trillion in 2000 to 22 trillion now (see Figure 3). Karl Marx warned in *Capital*:

“If the quantity of paper money represents twice the amount of gold available, then in practice £1 would be the money-name not of 1/4 of an ounce of gold, but of 1/8 of an ounce...The values previously expressed by the price of £1 would now be expressed by the price of £2.”²⁰

The reason for the doubling of the price is that there is twice as much money demanding the same quantity of use values, that is, useful goods or services that people are interested in purchasing. For as Marx says, “Use values...are the material bearers of exchange value,”²¹ or price. Between 2000 and 2022, the US money supply increased four and half times. Based on Marx’s reasoning, which is shared by many other economists, prices would be expected to increase 4 and a half times or 450% during such a period (2000–2022), all things being equal. But the consumer price index (CPI) increased only 75 percent from 169 in January 2000 to 296 in August 2022.²² The index didn’t even double. If somehow during such increase of the money supply additional use values

entered the market and became available, the inflation would be less, since there would be additional real goods to correspond to the increase in demand for goods in the form of the increase in the money supply. Did US industrial production increase during this period to produce the needed use values? Table I says No: It shows that industrial production declined in several core areas. No, sufficient use values did not enter the US market from internal production, but rather from abroad. Under the regime of imperialism, use value is brought into the US economy from abroad at very low cost and this use value supports the American currency and retards or prevents inflation. One clear mechanism for this moderation of inflation is the ‘importation’ of raw materials from developing sector economies, such as the oil that the US Army has looted from Syria during its ongoing occupation of the eastern part of the country, or the lithium that Elon Musk’s companies are removing from south America for electric car batteries. These free or cheap raw materials ‘imports’ reduce production costs for American companies and reduce prices, as follows: As Marx has shown,²³ the price of a manufactured article is broken down into the constant capital (C) and variable capital (V) that went into its production together with surplus value (S) or profit. Constant capital (C) is the cost of replacing raw materials and manufacturing plant and

¹⁹ <https://wolfstreet.com/2022/09/26/my-wealth-disparity-monitor-september-update-qt-rate-hikes-dropping-stocks-bonds-reduce-outrageous-us-wealth-disparity/>

²⁰ Marx, Karl, *Capital*, vol. 1; Penguin: London, 1976, Chapter on Money, section on “Coin and symbols of value,” p. 225.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

²² Bureau of Labor Statistics.

²³ Marx, *Op. Cit.*, p. 962.

equipment; variable capital (V) is the cost of sustaining and reproducing labor. Look at Marx's representation of the price of an ell of linen in Figure 4, example I. The price is 2 shillings. With imperialist raw materials imports from the developing sector, the constant capital component of the cost could be reduced from 80 Pounds, for example, to, say, 20 Pounds, and then the price of the ell of linen would be cut in half to 1 shilling. This constantly in-effect mechanism reduces price inflation in imperialist economies. Importing finished goods, e.g., clothing, from cheap labor markets also retards inflation, because then both constant capital and variable capital costs are lower. Americans should not worry about the 8% inflation that they are experiencing. Based on the expansion of the money supply, they should expect approximately 20% inflation per year since the year 2000.²⁴

Another peculiarity in the inflation data is that Germany's inflation exceeds that of the US: Germany is a highly industrialized country with a strong basic industry producing steel, machine tools, agricultural equipment and automobiles. Why is their publicly announced rate of inflation of 10.9% higher than that of the US? There are two primary reasons. First, Germany does not benefit from imperialist hegemony over the vast regions of the world from which the US extracts value. Second, the US also dominates Germany and forces it to buy its

expensive products, e.g., Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).

All this is very troubling, but why, out of the blue, have we got inflation now since Spring 2021? First, the money supply went through the roof in 2020. That's the last big jump in Figure 3. That's the effect of the CARES Act. The US had to do it because of the pandemic, right? Wrong. As Marx wrote in his Preface to *A Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy*, the reasons people give for doing something are ideological and usually not the reasons they actually do them, which are economic.

Marx wrote:

"It is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production...and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic – in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as one does not judge an individual by what he thinks about himself, so one cannot judge such a period of transformation by its consciousness, but, on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the conflict existing between the social forces of production and the relations of production."²⁵

²⁴ If the money supply increases 450% over 22 years (from 4 trillion to 22 trillion), then so do prices, which inflation would average to 20% per year.

²⁵ K. Marx, "Preface" to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 1859; translation from edition of Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977

The economic reason for the hyperinflationary CARES Act was the crisis in financial markets from Fall 2019 to March 2020, as shown in Figure 1. What especially aggravated the financial system was the government's response to the crisis in the Repurchase (Repo) Market in 2019. The Repo Market is where giant financial institutions borrow trillions of dollars from each other and from central banks every day, often just for overnight. The Repo Market was what brought down the economy in 2008. From 2010 to 2019 it was relatively calm: Banks and corporations traded Repos with no seeming problem. Then in Fall 2019 lenders began to distrust the collateral that their Repo borrowers were putting up to secure their loans. They refused to extend credit. The Fed stepped in as in 2008 and bought up the outstanding Repos that lenders refused to buy. Again, the Fed bailed out the investment banks that had gotten themselves into trouble as in 2008. The amount of Repos purchased by the Fed per day grew from zero on September 4, 2019, to 200 Billion in October and exploded to 450 Billion in March 2020. The government then had two responses: First, the lockdowns. Because they shut down the economy, they eliminated pressures on financial markets, and the Repo market began to settle down. Then the CARES Act provided the biggest bailout to NY banks in the history of the country—at first \$2 Trillion (including \$290 Billion in payments to taxpayers who had to hand it back to the banks again in Covid-19 Lockdown emergency

spending). In 2020 and 2021 the money supply increased by \$4.8 trillion. Inflation exploded in 2021 and jumped from 1.7% per year in February to 5% in May, and now up to 8%.²⁶ So, the cause of the inflation is the government's attempt to stabilize financial markets. Why did the Repo market get jittery? It all comes down to real value, or rather the absence of it in the US economy. In the last few years, the world economy's big actors outside the West—the BRICS countries, China, Russia, India, etc.—have been moving away from using the US dollar as their reserve currency, as the currency in which all international trade takes place.²⁷ The US has bullied the world with the hegemony of the dollar, and the world got tired of it. Now the world is trading in Rubles and other currencies. Instead of the Petrodollar, we have the Petroruble. The dominance of the dollar was the dollar's only support. With the decline of the Petrodollar comes the decline of the US economy, first signaled by the highest rate of inflation in over 40 years. The US is on the way down.

The Federal Reserve piggy bank has been pumping out money for its friends in investment banking like mad. They all got rich; we got inflation and economic crisis. This is the way it works, according to 18th century Irish political economist Richard Cantillon: The people who are closest to where the new money enters the economy—investment bankers—can benefit from the new money before prices rise. They buy new homes, land, gold, stocks and

²⁶ Bureau of Labor Statistics.

²⁷ On ruble-rupee trade, cf. <https://www.rt.com/business/562727->

[russia-india-trade-doubles/ and https://www.iasparliament.com/current-affairs/rupee-rouble-trade-arrangement](https://www.iasparliament.com/current-affairs/rupee-rouble-trade-arrangement)

other investments. But the people who are farthest away from where the new money enters the economy—that’s wage earners—suffer from the inflation it causes. Cantillon explains:

In general, an increase of hard money in a state will cause a corresponding increase in consumption and this will gradually produce increased prices...**Those who will suffer from these higher prices and increased consumption will be...all the workmen or fixed wage earners who support their families on a salary.** They all must diminish their expenditures in proportion to the new consumption [by the rich].²⁸

That’s the Cantillon effect. So, Wall Street grabs up all the value in the economy with the new money pumped out by its friends at the Federal Reserve. What’s left for us is the inflation they caused by expanding the money supply without expanding the real economy of manufacturing, construction, transportation and energy production. Look at the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports on inflation and you will see that wage earners suffer the highest rate of inflation in the country, a 9.1% annual rate in July 2020, while the average rate for everybody, bankers and wage workers included, was 8.5%. Under the Cantillon Effect wage earners suffer higher inflation than anyone else. This is one of the processes that drives inequality. The working poor suffer the

highest inflation. Figure 5 from a Bureau of Labor Statistics report shows price increases by social group since 2003. The top curve shows the highest inflation rate suffered by the lowest income quartile, the 25% of Americans with the lowest income share in the country. The bottom curve shows the lowest inflation enjoyed by the highest income quartile, the richest 25% of the population.²⁹ The average annual rates of inflation by social group are given in Table 2.

That brings us back to square 1, the economic injustice we referred to at the top. The growth in speculative investment that has been going on for decades, has driven up US “gross domestic product” (GDP) per capita from \$20,000 in 1968 to \$46,000 in 2014 in fixed 2005 dollars at a nearly constant rate of \$565 per year. That increase does not represent an increase in real goods and services but rather the paper wealth of the Wall Street millionaires averaged over the whole population, for US industrial production has collapsed. This same process has driven down the relative incomes of everyone else since 1968, for as Figure 6 shows, the ratio of the income share of the lower 80% to the income share of the highest quintile has fallen from 135% in 1968 to 95% in 2014. For more than 50 years, finance capital—the Federal Reserve banks, the big commercial banks, the investment banks—have been sucking wealth out of the US population and the world at a

²⁸ Richard Cantillon, *Essai sur la Nature du Commerce en Général, Paris, 1755*, Pt. 2, Ch. 6; translated as *An Essay on Economic Theory* by C. Saucier, published by Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2010.

²⁹ J. Klick and A. Stockburger, “Experimental CPI for lower and higher income households,” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Working Paper 537 March 8, 2021

fantastic rate. Like Cantillon, many 'conservatives' oppose the Fed's monetary and 'wealth' policies. These

conservatives represent industrial capital, not finance capital.

Repos on the Fed's Balance Sheet

Billion \$, week ending Wednesday

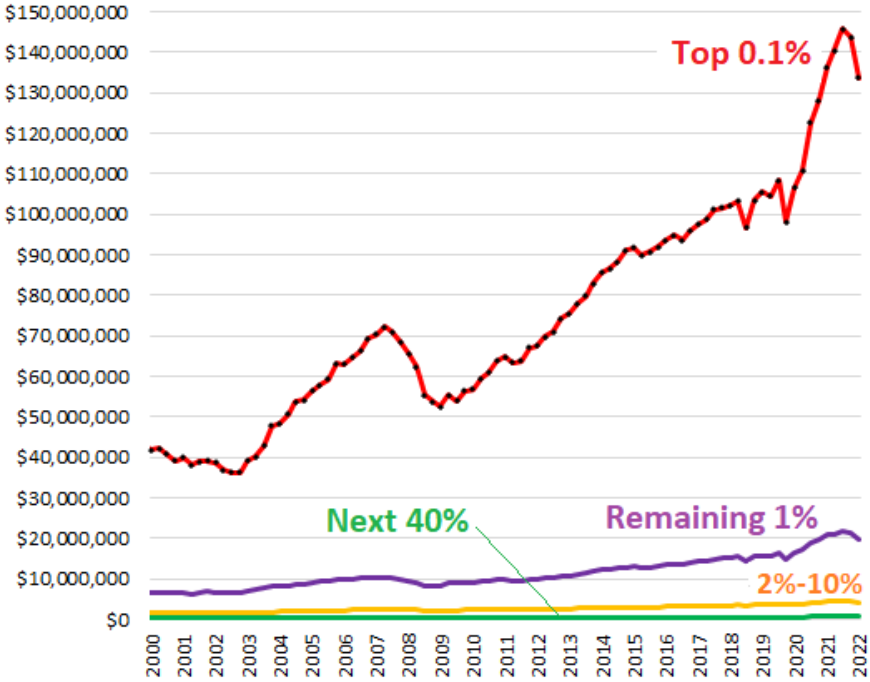


Source: Fed H.4.1. Balance Sheet

WOLFSTREET.com

Figure 1

Wealth Disparity Monitor: Household Wealth, in \$
Top 0.1%, Remaining 1%, 2%-10%, Next 40%
Bottom 50% have nearly no wealth, aren't visible here



Sources: Federal Reserve, Census Bureau

WOLFSTREET.com

Figure 2

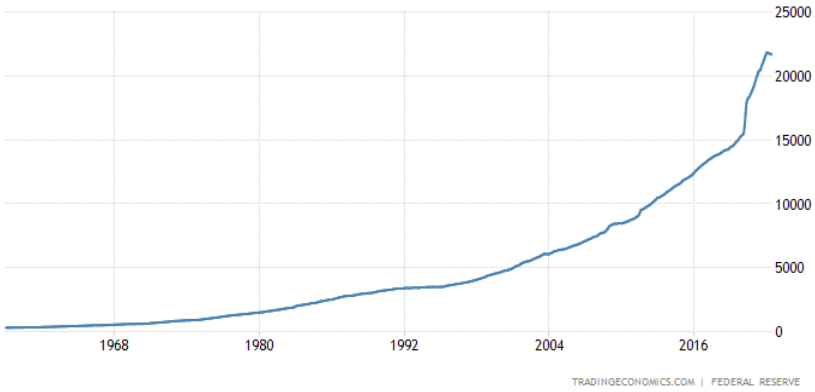


Figure 3 US Money supply in billions (M2)

	<i>c</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>s</i>	Value of total product	Rate of surplus-value	Sum of surplus-value	Ells	Price per ell	Amount of labour per ell	Surplus labour [per ell]	Rate of surplus labour
I	£80	£20	£20	£120	100%	£20	1200	2s.	8d.	4d.	4:4 = 100%
II	£96	£20	£28	£144	140%	£28	1440	2s.	8d.	4½d.	4½:3½ = 140%

7:5 = the number of hours increased from 5 to 7

Figure 4 from Marx's *Capital*, Vol. I, Penguin 1976 illustrating components of the price of an ell of linen.

Table I. US Industrial production has declined precipitously

- US Steel production has declined from 115 million metric tons in 1970 to 72 MMT in 2020
 - While Global steel production has tripled in same period of time, and
 - Russia & CIS are still producing as much steel as USSR did
- US Automobile production has declined from 5 million in 1977 to about 2 million in 2000
- US Large tractors sales declined from 44,000 annually in 2013 to 27,000 in 2015
- US Self-propelled Combine sales fell from 10,000 in 2013 to 5000 in 2015

Sources: visualcapitalist.com and others.

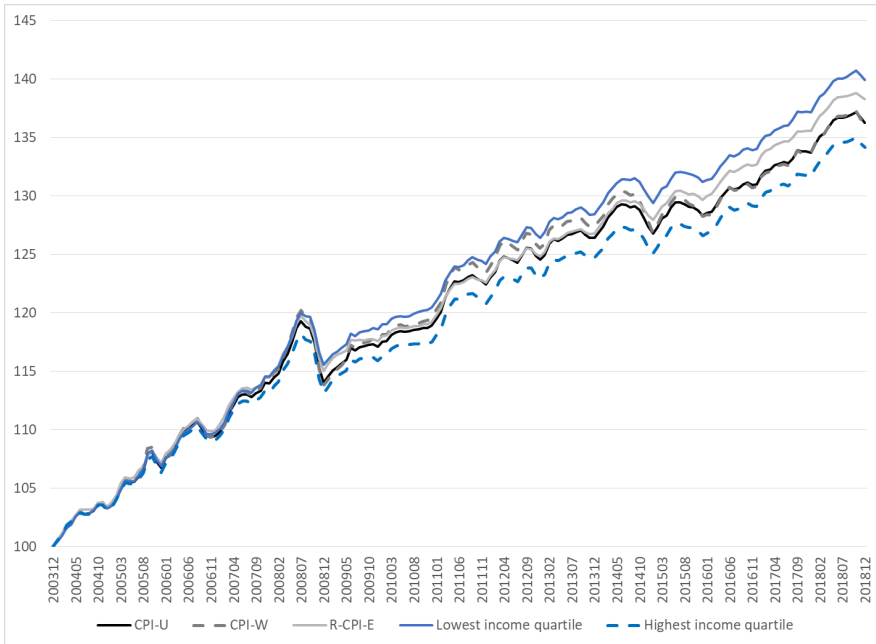


Figure 5 from Klick and Stockburger (op. cit.).

Table 2 Annualized inflation rates by social group by two statistical methods (cf. text and source). Source: Klick and Stockburger (op. cit.).

A. Laspeyres index annualized percent changes from December 2003 to December 2018

Urban	Elderly	Lowest	Highest
		Quartile	Quartile
2.07	2.17	2.25	1.97

B. Tornqvist index annualized percent changes: December 2003 – December 2018

1.84	1.91	2.14%	1.76%
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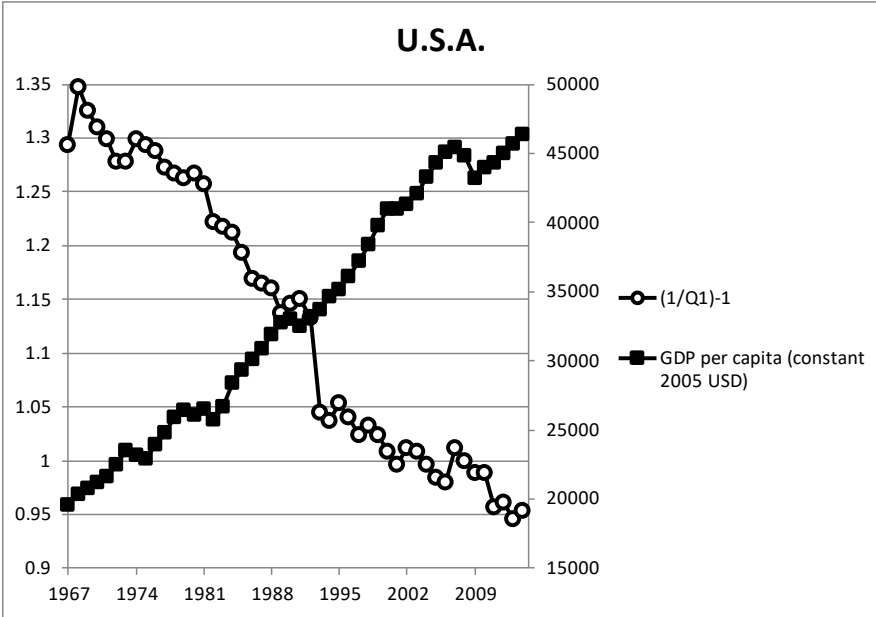


Figure 6 Descending plot (circles) shows ratio of income and consumption share of the four lower quintiles of the population to the highest quintile in percentages ($1/Q_1 - 1$), for the United States, 1967-2014, with scale on left y-axis. Ascending plot (squares) shows GDP per capita in constant 2005 dollars, for the **United States**, 1967-2014, with scale on right y-axis. Sources for raw data: U.S. Census Bureau, World Bank; figure first appeared in *Archiv für Rechts- und Sozialphilosophie*, 104:1 (2018); subsequently in *Aristotle's Critique of Political Economy with a contemporary application*. 2018. London: Routledge

