Building the New U.S. Communist Party

This is the third in a series on building the new U.S. Communist Party—Ed.

The “Communist League” (CL) is a main representative of the degenerate and sectarian trend which exists within the U.S. communist movement today. CL has, since its incorporation in 1985, held a consistent and consolidated line that party-building must be separated from building mass movements.

And even though CL was formed at a time marked by the revolutionary storms of the black liberation movement, CL remained isolated from this movement, too, not only because of CL’s building the Party line, but because the actual character of the Black people’s struggle doesn’t conform to CL’s notion that the essence of the “Negro National Colonial Question” lies in the fight of the white and black members of the “Black Nation” of the deep South for independence.

Similarly, CL’s line that the heart of the industrial proletariat is a social base for fascism in this country has not led to it stick deep roots in the workers’ movement. So, too, CL’s general conception of CL’s right wing view, this also represents a pincushion on the part of CL to give itself the appearance of more “mass appeal” and suckor people into its swamps.

In the past the IL has not carried out direct polemics with CL. This was for several reasons. One has to do with the development of the communist movement in the nearest past. Even the best of friends are not always close to each other in this period. But most of the communist forces that have developed this period has been so closely entwined in the cause of the movement of the workers, oppressed nationalities, students and others. But they did not do so as a group with the same views. Some of them at times came forward when the public interest in the cause of the movement was not so keen.

One of these groups first came together on the basis of consolidating its beginning, understanding and accepting of the Party line. Mao Tsetung Thought to apply to the U.S. and then went out to put this into practice, placing the task of party-building in this framework.

During that period, when it was widely recognized that the main task was to be

in linking communian with the mass movement, groups like U.S. which were also separated from the “building the Party” in isolation from the mass movement have brought about the close and revolutionary work with the masses of the movement. They try to give people a false impression of the struggle that the process of plugging into the mass movement was “opportunism” and only a diversion from the task of studying theory diverted from practice as the road to the Party. They are trying to sway people to build a fake mass movement, but the truth is that the Party has now started building “the Party” and putting the real workers in the mass movement.

One of the two articles’ special section on CL deals with this line on the international situation and in its attack on the Chinese Communist Party as can be clearly seen in its “International Situation” article appearing in the May People’s Tribune.

The third article, starting below, analyzes the general line of CL especially on the questions of party building, the national question, the workers movement and the movement from the labour movement, and the ideological and philosophical roots of CL’s counter-revolutionary line.

Recently the “Communist League” (CL) announced that May Day this year will be “the last May Day of the new Communist League.” (People’s Tribune—PT—May 17, 1974, p. 1) Unfortunately for the masses of the people and the revolutionary movement. The line of the party has itself been isolated and even repressed, although the isolation is impossible to achieve even the most rudimentary knowledge...be a pupil before you become a teacher.” (Mao Tsetung)

CL’s one-sided outlook leads it to go even further, preaching that until it has got its “Party” together, mass struggle is not necessary. Because of this, it provokes the bourgeoisie to step up fascist assaults on the leaders—and therefore completely helpless—masses.

Obvious Conclusion

Since there is no Party in the U.S. yet. “It is obvious,” according to CL, “that the state will welcome another Watts or Detroit under the existing conditions, because it will provide them with all the excuse necessary to expand or even complete the drive for fascism.” (PT, March 17, 1974, p. 12) This line led CL to the position of “abstaining” from a mass demonstration in the Bay Area recently against “Operation Zebra.” Instead of joining with and backing the masses in fighting back at fascist repression, CL stood on the sidelines wagging its finger and whimpering that nothing can be done until there is a class struggle against fascism, led by a working class party.” (From leaflet by CL, “Why and When Flee Cairo,” Laborers Local 261—see Revolution, June 1975, and Red Page 6)

With this kind of approach, the Party’s aim is to create cannot possibly be a real vanguard, and its line cannot possibly reflect the reality of class struggle or serve to advance that struggle toward the revolutionary goal.

According to CL, the Party must be built “on the basis of the fact that the Negro question, a colonial national question is the key to the Socialist revolution in the U.S. N.A.” (United States of North America—Ed.) (“Negro National Colonial Question,” the Communist League, p.106) This statement of CL’s line, along with the fact that the national question is a central question for proletarian revolution in the U.S., makes it especially important to take up CL’s line.

In Red Pages 6, we have dealt at length with the positions of EWC, PRWGO and others which are fundamentally the same as CL’s line on this question. Here we will go into those aspects of CL’s position that distinguish it as an even more thoroughly anti-Marxist line.

Clon National Question

CL’s position is laid out fully in its document, “Negro National Colonial Obituary.” At the beginning, CL warns that this document “cannot be read as most of the inaccurate, immature and shallow movement documents. This statement is meant to be strong and a reaffirmation of the position of the Communist International and the position of V.I. Lenin and J.V. Stalin, the greatest of all thinkers on the question of the national question...” (p. 11, emphasis added—note Mao Tsetung is not included)

The main arguments of this document point by point and see how they represent an attack on the Communist International (CI), a deviation from the MarxistLeninist method, and an opportunistic distortion of present day reality.

The first is on the nature of slavery in the U.S. CL claims that the most that can be said of the U.S. is that it is an “internationalization of exploitations,” that the products of southern slave system were “drained into the whirlpool of an international market dominated by the capitalist mode of production.” (see p. 7, CI. continued on next page)
Continued from preceding page) Further, in the old slave South, slaves were hired out to work on railroads, etc. Therefore, says CL, slavery itself was really capitalism and in this understanding lies "the secret of the genesis of the Negro National question." (p. 8)

Well, this is a secret that was kept from Marx (and from Lenin, too). In Marx's writings on slavery in the U.S., you can find references to the "capitalist outlook" of the slaveowners (and Engels refers to their "bourgeois nature"). Still, as CL itself states—then discounts (p. 11)—Marx clearly characterized the Civil War as a "struggle between two social systems, between the system of slavery and the system of free labor. The struggle has broken out because the two systems can no longer live peacefully side by side on the North American continent." (From *The Civil War in the United States*, letters and articles by Marx and Engels, p. 81)

CL's "analysis" of slavery in the U.S. leads it to directly oppose Marxist political economy and class analysis. CL writes, "Capitalism is the commodity producing society where human labor itself appears on the market as a commodity. Simply because this labor is sold at all once does not change the character of the exploitation of that labor." (p. 8) CL follows this with a neat and accurate explanation of the wage system, supposed to show that where production is characterized by commodity production and the creation of surplus value, the terms of production are not the same. CL is wrong here from start to finish. First, "By capitalism is meant that stage of the development of commodity production at which not only the products of human labor, but human labor power itself becomes a commodity." (Lenin, "On the So-Called Market Question," *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 93, emphasis added)

But for capitalist economic relations to exist, the worker "must be the untrammeled owner of his capability for labour, i.e., of his person. The continuation of this relation demands that the owner of the labour-power must buy labour-power from the worker, a process which the worker must enter into the commodity production process, "their origin is obliterated. They exist henceforth only as forms of production, i.e., as monetary capital, are embodied in it. However, it still remains true that to replace them they must be reproduced, and to this extent the capitalist mode of production is conditional on modes of production lying outside of its own stage of development."

In other words, the fact that the exchange of labour of the slave states entered into capitalist production in England after it had been sold on the world market did not make the method of producing the cotton-satinist in itself. It was slave production—for the (capitalist-dominated) world market. This marked it as different from the earliest forms of slavery—and meant the exploitation of the slaves was even more ruthless—but it did not mark it as capitalism.

Since it should seem obvious that slavery is not capitalism and not capitalism, what does CL hope to accomplish with this attempt at denying reality? Their objective is to refute the analysis that took place after the Civil War and Reconstruction, the exploitation (the economic relation) Black people were forced into was pre-capitalist—feudal—relations, and not capitalist relations. This is the only way CL can make the disconnection of the "Negro Question" in the U.S. fit its dogmatic and Trotskyite analysis that everywhere in the world, the national question has been the same since the world era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, when, according to CL, "the colonial question is transformed into the national-colonial question with the proletarian revolution the next step on the historical agenda." (CL, May 1914, p. 10—see other article for more on this)

To put this over, CL pretends that it was only revolutionists who held that "the struggle for democracy in the South is based on the destruction of lingering FEUDAL RELATIONS, not feudal social, but feudal economic relations." (p. 21, CL document) In RP 6 we show how the struggle of Black people in the South as well as the North, is no longer essentially a struggle against feudal survivals, but there is no doubt that this was a central part of that struggle until after WW2. And CL knew that it was the CL, whose position CL claims to "refurbish," which stated in 1930 that Black people were then mainly "peasants and agricultural laborers in a state of semi-serfdom," suffering "pre-feudal forms of exploitation of the negro peasantry" mainly in the "feudal system of share ownership." (CL Resolution of 1930, which CL reprints in its documents—the quotes above are found on pp. 109. 113. 114. of the CL document)

The Opposite of the Truth

Further, CL knows or should know that Lenin wrote in 1915 that it was the "very opposite of the truth" to say that the U.S. had never known feudal relations and was free from feudal survivals. "The economic survivals of slavery are not in any way distinguishable from those of feudalism," Lenin wrote, "and in the former slave-owning South of the U.S.A. these survivals are still very powerful." ("New Data on Capitalism in Agriculture," *Lenin, Works*, Vol. 22, 1922, p. 142)

And Lenin was very clear that Black tenant farmers in the South were "not even tenants in the European capitalistic, modern-capitalist sense of the word. They are chiefly semi-feudal—or which is the same thing in economic terms—semi-slave share-croppers." (Same article, p. 25, emphasis Lenin's).

The next main point CL's statement that "Since the end of the Civil War, the South as a region has had a semi-colonial status and the appellation of the Black Belt has been that of direct colonial oppression." (p. 81, CL document) The South is a whole, since the Civil War, an area, compared to other more backward region than the rest of the country and has been used as a low-wage reserve by the monopoly capitalists on the continent of the world especially.

This has been rooted in the history of oppression of the Black nation in the "Black Belt." But the "Black Belt" has not developed as a "colony" of the U.S. The aim of the Confederacy in the Civil War was not to permanently secede, but to bring the entire country under its control. This is why Marx wrote in 1861 that "The South is neither a territory strictly detached from the North geographically, nor a moral unity. It is not a country at all, but a battle-slogan." (Lenin and the Civil War, p. 72)

The defeat of the Confederacy did not represent the seizing of a colony, an annexation against the will of the masters there, but the carrying forward of the bourgeoisie-democratic revolution. The Black people of the South, who have always been fought to keep the South "annexed" to the Union, as the concrete form of struggling to overthrow the slave system.

With the consolidation of the rule of Northern capital over the South, and the development of capitalism toward monopoly capitalism in the U.S., Reconstruction was reversed, Black people were robbed of land and political rights, forced back onto the plantations in semi-serf (or semi-slave) conditions and subjected to the Black Codes. It was this that wielded Black people, at that time overwhelmingly concentrated in the "Black Belt," into a modern nation.

As Lenin put it in 1917, the Black people "should be classed as an oppressed nation," or the equality won in the Civil War of 1861-1865 and guaranteed by the Constitution of the republic was in many respects increasingly curtailed in the chief Negro areas (the South) in connection with the transition from the paeonian pre-monopoly capitalist of 1865 to...
The reactionary, monopoly-capitalist (imperialism) of the new era. ("Statistics and Sociology," Lenin, Work, No. 22, 1917, p. 756.)

In analyzing this situation in 1930, the Comintern noted "semi-colonial features of the oppression of the Black Belt," and stressed that it would be wrong to make a fundamental distinction between the oppression of colonies and that of other oppressed na-
tions. But what is it to say that "it is not correct to consider the Negro zone of the South as a colony of the United States,...the Black Belt is not in itself, economically or politically such a uni-
ted whole as to warrant its being called a special colo-
yony of the United States." (Reprinted in CL's docu-
ment, p. 113)

CL is forced to note that there are "obvious and sharp
differences" between its position and that of the Comintern. It tries to pass this off by saying that the "truths of yesterdays are not entirely appli-
cable today." (see p. 104)

Nobody can accuse CL of dogmatically clinging to yesterday's analysis! But the problem is that CL says that capitalist relations have all along domina-
ted in the "Black Belt," and that it has been a colony since right after the Civil War. Both of these positions were directly refuted by the Comintern Resolutions.

So the differences are not due to the fact that con-
tentions have changed sharply—which they have—but that CL's line is wrong on the whole history and development of the question.

Changes in the South

The further, that changes have occurred since 1930 are all in the direction of making the "Black Belt" more and more with the trend of the U.S. mak-
ing it even less like a "colony." In 1930 the Comin-
tern noted that while the "Black Belt" was not a colony, "it is economically and politically, such an integral part of the whole United States as any other part of the country." (See CL document, p. 113)

While there are still regional differences—the South is still relatively more backward, more rural, and poor-
er in the South, essentially the case that in the 1930s was

Agriculture has been mechanized and converted into modern capitalist farming, and at the same time has been diversified away from overwhelming depend-
ence on "cash" crops like cotton, tobacco, peanuts, etc., into diversified food products that predominate in many Southern states.

Industry, too, has been diversified with the growth of transportation and electrical equipment industries, even though "traditional" Southern industries like textiles still occupy a major place. Further, incomes relative to those in the country, while still lagging significantly behind, have risen sharply above the level of the 1930s, and in some metropolitan areas (Atlanta, Rich-
tond, Houston, Greensboro/ Winston-Salem and others) per capita income now reaches the nation-
al average.

In summary, of course, does not change the fact that in the South as a whole, wages are still only about 4/5 the na-
tional average and unionization is very low. In areas with a high rural population—such as the Carolinas, and the Mississippi-Kansas area—are there large num-
bers of rural "underemployed," more than in the rest of the country—and a number of compan-
ies have seized on this to locate plants in the rural ar-
as of these states and in other rural areas of the South.

On the other hand, there is a tendency toward the development of more capital-intensive industry in the Super-
delta states, especially cotton mills and related indus-
tries, and higher wages. This is not replacing but growing up alongside the low-wage industries like textiles, but it has the effect that, increasingly, Blacks have moved heavily into these low-wage categories—along with many whites, of course, while the more skilled categories are overwhelmingly white, just as in the whole country. This trend, including increased auto-
mobility (even in industries like textiles) is leading to the situation where the white workers will rise for a section of more skilled workers, unemployment (which in the urban areas is lower in the South than in the North, at least) will grow, especially among the unskilled, and the pattern in the South will become even more clearly like the rest of the country. Already, in 1970, more families, including families in the South (not to mention that of whites in the North) were higher than that for Blacks in the North.

Changes in the Black Belt

The caste-like oppression of Black people in the industrial working class—their concentration in the lowest-paying dirtiest jobs and their double rate of unemployment—and not the starvating-system,
or even the general backwardness of the rural South—is what today marks the main economic basis of oppre-
sion of Black people, in the South as well as the North.

The point is that the "Black Belt" as it existed in the past—as an area characterized by the concentra-
tion of Black people in rural areas in pre-capitalist forms of exploitation and political domination (Black Codes, etc.)—no longer really exists as such today, des-
pite remaining concentrations of rural poor Blacks and the general pattern of discrimination in areas like the Mississippi Delta and South Carolina, especially.

"The Black Belt" area is even less a "united whole" than 1930.

Richmond, Virginia, for example, is actually be-
ing an extension, economically, of the area run-
ning from Boston down into the Baltimore-Wash-
ington, D.C. area. In the deep South, there are two major centers of trade and transportation—Atlanta and Dallas—and they are more inter-connected with areas outside the South than with each other. All

Southern states are linked by rail and modern high-
ways to North and West. This was not nearly so true, especially in the case of highway trucking, before WW2, and many of them trade as much or more with states outside the South as with other Southern states (except their immediate neighbors).

Further, there has been some change in the pat-
tern of trade, away from the traditional picture of Southern states as exporters of raw materials (from mining and agriculture) and importers of finished industrial goods. This pattern has not been changed altogether, and as we said, parts of the South still

"low-wage, backward" "runaway" preserves for capital central to the South today, much more than in 1930, is certainly not the case that the South is a "protectorate" and the "Black Belt" as a "colony."

These changes are also reflected in the population of the "Black Belt" area. CL claims that in the "ge-

teral territory which makes up the Negro nation, a majority of the population is made up of Negro men, and women" (i.e., Black people), and "in the terri-
torial core of the Negro nation—that is, the Black Belt, there is obvious social strata outweighing Negro majority." (p. 99, CL Document)

Facts Are Stubborn Things

As the CL is fond of quoting Engels, however, "Facts are stubborn things," and the facts show that in the general area that the CL defines as the "Negro Nation," the majority of the population is colored white, and in the area of the "Black Belt" there is no continuous area of Black majority, but there is a clear white majority.

In 1950, for example, in the South there were only 29 counties where Black people made up a majority in communities over 1,000. In 1970, there were only 212 counties where Black majority (all in and around the "Black Belt"), and in 1970 only 36 of these counties were just over one million (95% of the total).

Further, taking even the Southern states with the highest concentration of Black population (in which the "Black Belt" is centered), there are about 310 counties with 30% or more Black majority (including those with a Black minority). In just those counties above, the Black population is only 41.5% (about 4.2 million as against a total of 10.1 million) of these states are Virginia, South and North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana; if you extend the area to include parts of Arkansas, Texas, Tennessee and Florida, and again take only the coun-
ties 30% or more Black, the percentage is approxi-
mately the same (50% of the population).

And these counties are in no way contiguous (con-
inuously connected). They are surrounded by and interspersed with areas of white monopoly capitalism (up to 70% more including those with a Black majority). In just these counties above, the Black population is only 41.5% (about 4.2 million as against a total of 10.1 million)

These states are Virginia, South and North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana; if you extend the area to include parts of Arkansas, Texas, Tennessee, and Florida, and parts of Virginia and Maryland connecting with Delaware and the Baltimore-Washington-D.C. area, the black percentage is about 5%. (In fact, even lower, all these figures based on 1970 census.)

CL tries to hedge itself against the facts with the ridiculous notion that the white area in Black "colony, the "Black Belt" form a "single nationality" (the whites who form a great numerical majority in fact are a "national minority" of the whites of the CL's fanciful world). Since CL insists on the strictest adherence to Stalin's definition of a nation, and since this means as historically constituted, a clearly as a nation in common language, common territory, common economic life and a common psychological makeup manifested in a common culture, CL tries this mind-bender as the basis for "common back-
ground," "the black and Anglo-American were sisters (Anglo-Americans were generally ranked rather than chattel slaves—CL in the earliest days of the plantation system. (CL Document, p. 101)

This makes a mockery of history and the concept of the "Negro nation." It is a mixture of Leninism! Indentured slaves, or servants, were em-
ployed in both the North and the South, but this was fundamentally different than chattel slavery (indentured slavery was for a set term) and it was done away with long before the Civil War. Further, after the Civil War and Reconstruction, when the Afro-American nation was welded together, masses of Blacks were hired to plant the plantations, while whites were not (i.e., 1910, 2/3 of the areas with a Black population were Black), and whites were not subjected to the in-
nominal Black "slavery.

This is certainly not to deny that there is a strong material basis of unity between white and Black working people, both in the South and throughout the country. But this is a question of the historical unity of workers of different nations—also having some common regional bonds—and not the unity of a common language and national identity.

Getting the Heart Out of Black Liberation

CL's ridiculous contradictions come down to getting the heart out of the Black liberation struggle, while at the same time divorcing it from the overall class struggle in the country, by demanding separation—inde-
dependently, across "Negro " and across "Black.

CL is not satisfied with merely demanding the right of self-determination for this "Negro Nation," CL at-
tacks the "old slogan of Self-Determination" as just a typical liberal democracy. (See CL publication, "MarxistABC of the Democratic Party: The Communist League," p. 12) In fact, as CL knows, this slogan
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was not any "old" slogan, but represented the line of the Cominterns, which said that because of the "national liberation struggle"—the fact that Black people were concentrated there as a majority in large areas, forced into virtual slavery on the plantation system and subjected to a form of rule marked by "semi-colonial features"—therefore the main slogan must be "the right of self-determination of the Negro people" which became "Black people—RUI" in the "Black Belt." [See CL's Document, p. 134]

In the historical development of Black people in the U.S. is a national question and not just a "racial" question. Today, because of this, and because Black people have not only a struggle as a people under capitalism, it is still essential to uphold their struggle as a national struggle, and to uphold as a right to self-determination and not as a "right of the Negro" or "white guilt" covered in empty phrases about class unity, wrapped in pseudo-scientific ritual, and glorified as a holy crusade against what is called "the white man." CL's line on the national question is counter-revolution in disguise.

Reactionary CL Position on Workers Movement

CL's reactionary line on the national question carries over into its position on the workers' movement. CL's position on the workers' movement is to divide the working class into different working classes—the proletariat of the Anglo-American nation (whites and "Negro minority") and the "black minority." ("Negro" and the "white national minority"). But much more decisive in CL's attempt to split and attack the working class movement is its attack on the "Anglo-American" workers (they mean mainly whites, but also some Black workers), and especially those organized in unions, who are the skilled workers of the trade unions.

Out of one side of its mouth CL denies that it represses those workers as reactionary. It even attacks the approach of the "left Reformist," the "national" workers, as "reactionary" because it seeks to organize the "Anglo-American" workers (they mean mainly whites, but also some Black workers), and especially those organized in unions, who are the skilled workers of the trade unions.

CL and the others all developed out of a thing called the "Provisional Organizing Committee" (POC), which took off the CP in the late 50s in order to "reconstitute" a "Black Leninist" faction in the U.S. POC was a cesspool of sectarianism, which in its distortion even threw off one bit of slime after another. One of its basic principles was that the "Anglo-American" (white) workers were basically reactionary and even went as far as to claim that the leadership of the "black minority." (p. 15) CL holds the same line as the "contemporary" old timers.

Let's examine a few examples to make this absolutely clear. First, they were among the first of a CL mem-

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茲 a countervailing line which was not CL and are out to push a countervailing line in March 1972, CL comments on the recently signed contract between the United Mine Workers and the west coast longshoremen's union (ILWU): "The increased benefits, higher wages, guaranteed annual income, repre-

sents an attempt by the capitalists to buy off the long-

shore workers...the major aspect of the strike seek-

tome is reactionary in that it is a decisive step in the for-

mation of a fascist labor front...it is essential that revolutionaries fight to turn major strikes like the longshore strike from primarily reactionary to pri-

arily revolutionary. This can only be done by sup-

porting the national liberation struggles against im-

perialism and by building a revolutionary communist party to overthrow the capitalists. We urge all hon-

orable and progressive elements of the longshore union to wage a resolute struggle against the fascist labor lead-

ers, lest they be unwittingly, tools of the ruling classes drive for fascism." (PT, March, 1972, p. 9)

Factual Distortions

This whole article is full of factual distortions. The contract set back the longshoremen. The guaranteed annual income, for example, was a shuck. The fight over container jurisdiction that CL also refers to was not, as CL makes out, a question of the ILWU vs. non-

union workers, but between the ILWU and the Team-

sters. The fact that the ILWU gave in on this did not mean that the dock workers "agreed to allow the con-

tainers to be unpacked by non-union labor." (PT, ibid) Finally, CL neglects to mention that the federal government forced the longshoremen back to work during the strike and Congress threatened anti-strike legis-

lation against all transportation workers during this strike.

Instead of seeing strikes like this as important bat-

tles in the class struggle, which can be built on and linked with broader revolutionary struggle, and in-

stead of showing how the tracheous role of men like Harry Bridges (head of the ILWU) actually sells out the longshoremen as well as the whole class, CL pictures the settlement between the ILWU and management as a gain for the dock workers at the ex-

pense of the whole U.S. and international proletariat. And CL poses workers' strikes and struggles for day to day needs against support of national liberation struggles, and the task of building a Party.

In September 1971, after contracts were signed in steel and railroad, under the conditions of the newly-

imposed wage-price freeze, the "white" steel workers who are currently being organized to de-

segregate "foreign steel" and are pushing the capital-

ists line of "cynical" "Free American." [CL's] calls these contracts the "wanton buying of a social base among the workers.

CL bases itself on the unscientific analysis, which Marxists have long rejected, that the most oppressed equals the most revolutionary, that "the most ad-

vanced" are the "most exploited and oppressed. They have the least to lose, the class most conscious-

ness" (PO, Oct, 1971, p. 11) To try to put over this anti-Marxist line, CL often cites Lenin, where he says that communists must "go down lower and deeper, to the real masses." ("Imperialism and the Split in Socialism," Lenin, Works, Vol. 29, p. 53.

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But Lenin meant to dig down beneath the corrupt trade union officials and the rest of the labor aristocracy to the mass of the workers, who are the social base for revolution. CL means to dig down beneath the "opportunist" and "chauvinist" industrial proletariat, which CL regards as a social base for fascism!

Lenin Saw It Differently!

The same volume of Lenin's where the article cited above is found also contains his "Lecture on the October Revolution," where he pointed out that the metal workers in Russia were "the best paid, the most class conscious and best educated proletarians." The textile workers, who in 1905 were 250,000 and a half times more numerous than the metal workers, "are the most backward and the worst paid."

Lenin's point, of course, was that not the best paid equals the most revolutionary, either, that in their struggles, economic as well as political struggles, and that even those workers who are not directly involved in the struggles, the metal workers developed a high degree of class consciousness. Lenin summed it up this way, "Only struggle educes the exploiting class. Only struggle discloses to the magnitude of its own power, widens its horizon, enhances its abilities, clarifies its mind, forges its will." (Lenin, Works, Vol. 23, p. 241

Combined with struggle, of course, must be the conscious leadership of communists, pointing to the general and the specific of the class. And this is why Lenin follows the statements above with the emphasis that "It was necessary for the vanguard of the workers not to regard struggle as a struggle in the interests of a thin upper stratum—a conception the reformers all too easily install—but for the proletariat is come forward as the real vanguard of the majority of the exploited and draw that major- ity into the struggle." (Lenin, The article, p. 242)

(In Vol. 23, there is an editor's note saying that they crossed out some of these statements were crossed out, but the editors put them back in. And, in ad- dition, Lenin makes the same point throughout the article.)

Here Lenin has laid out the correct and genuinely revolutionary basis for the working class movement, as opposed to the kind of counter-revolutionary line CL is peddling. Preaching that the basic industrial proletariat, "the united front against fascism," is the only line to take and in itself, and some other industries make higher wages than steel, workers, so they must be included too] only exposes those responsible for CL's line as fascist dogs themselves.

CL on Fascism

Finally, let's note how CL re-writes history to put over its line that the proletariat is the social base for fascism. In "To the Communist Party," according to CL, "fascism had its base in uniting the German proletariat against the proletariat of other nations." (PT, April 1974, p. 12) From this you wouldn't know that the fascists in Germany received very little support in the elections from the industrial workers, that in fact the German workers were heroically fighting against the fascists, and that to consolidate fascist rule the German bourgeoisie had to crush the workers' movement. That is why the main concern of many communist parties apparently not wanting too low for CL then trying to find a way to stop fascism--"united front against fascism," as a means of justifying "compromise" with the concerns of the "backward masses"—like the concern for a decent life—and a way of confusing the united front against imperialism strategy for proletarian revolution.

We cannot hire a lengthy analysis of the United Front strategy, but right here in the line of the Comintern in 1935 or its application in various countries (we will deal with the question of fascism in a future article in Revolutionary Letters). But it can be pointed out that this line was developed to try to deal with conditions which fixed the revolutionary proletariat on the offensive and this line is intended to lay this basis, under their conditions, for finding what Lenin called the "famous at the Caucasus, and the line is "workers against the Masses in the Krayansky, and speak of the "workers general and admirals and their coalition partners among the ultra-Rightists, the Re- publican leaders and Wall Street as forces indepen- dent of the White House. We should like to ask:

Do the leaders of the CPUSA still accept the Marxist- Leninist position that "if you are a national rights leader in the U.S. state apparatus is the tool of monopoly capitalism for class rule?" And if so, how can there be a president independent of the White House...." (See "Workers of All Countries Unite, Oppose Our Common Enemy," Peking 1963, p. 360).

So Lenin, of course, the decline and crisis of of U.S. imperialism has grown, and contradictions with- in the ruling class, as well as repression against the people, has intensified. But it is absolutely incorrect to act as though the immediate choice is "fascism or "at CL has been screaming.

To label every case of ruling class corruption and every act of repression as the sure sign of impending fascism is not only to spread distrust, but more than that to cover up the nature of bourgeois class rule, to conceal the fact that bourgeois democracy is a form of dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat, and is always marked by violent repression against the people.

In our fight to fight all repression and educate the masses about the nature of fascism and its rela- tion to bourgeois democracy, if we fail to do that we risk being able to mobilize the masses to present fascism when it really is imminent. But if we over- estimate the development of the crisis and exaggerate the present tendencies towards fascism on the one hand and revolution on the other, we are bound to make errors both "left" and "right" in form, but al- ways right in essence, always opposed to building the protracted struggle of the millions of oppressed and exploited for revolution and socialism.

As we said before, CL needs to present this as a situation marked by "pre-revolutionary deterioration of working conditions" ("Proletariat." Spring 1974, p. 28). They need to picture it as one where the alter- native is fascism or revolution, and therefore the correct strategy is the united front against fascism. They have to do this to find a way to justify the need to "participate in the objective struggle of the working class in order to unite it into the class struggle, the united front against capitalism, especially at this time, when it is essential that communists throw themselves into the struggle against fascism." (Prole- tariat," Spring 1974, p. 54.) But as we have seen, CL's line for the masses—as opposed to their "left" line for the "advanced"—is extremely and extremely rightist.

What all this shows is that CL has no faith in the masses and doesn't really believe that they can win to a revolutionary line, on the basis of linking communism with the spontaneous mass struggle and practice the mass line, but that they must first be suckered into a rightist line under the cover of build- ing a "united front against fascism," and then some- how they can be made to leave a leap from reformism to communism. This shows that at one and the same time, CL puts forth "dogma for a handful, rightism for the masses," and all around acts as an aid to the bourgeoisie and its revisionist agents, by in fact separating communists from the masses.

CL Separate Theory from Practice

The philosophical roots of CL's bourgeois line lie in its separation from practice. This is seen in the way CL describes its own development, and as we said at the beginning, in the way it has gone about "bolstering the Party," particularly...

CL has all along said that party-building is the cen- tral task, or "strategies." Why? Because the proletariat
has no vanguard and must have one. If by this, CL merely meant that building the Party is a strategic task and that all genuine communists must work to bring the new Party into existence at the earliest possible time, and if CL linked this task with building and learning from the mass movement, then our difference with them on this question would be minimal. The difference in formulations of central task in the past would have been just that—different formulations of the same basic objective.

But true to its whole outlook, CL has insisted that party-building must be carried out in isolation from the mass movement. And given that this has generally characterized those groups that put forward the "party-building line" over the past period (indeed, before it was forced from "ultra-leftism" way over to the right), the differences are fundamental between them and the RU and others who believe the central task has only now become party-building, and that while the creation of the Party must always be a key objective, it was first necessary, in order to create the conditions for establishing the Party, to begin the process of linking communism with the mass movement, especially in the working class. CL gives away its opportunism on this question with the statement that out of struggles against the RU line, the CL's "line began to emerge. The basic question of building the mass movement or building a core of communist cadre was set." ("Dialectics of Development of the Communist League," p. 13, emphasis added) Apparently it never even occurred to CL that it is not a question of "either/or," but a question of building cadre in the course of building the mass struggle. In fact, Marxists know that this is the only way to build a Party. CL clearly opposes the Marxist stand and makes a principle out of the separation of theory and practice.

According to the "oldest and foremost Leninists Unite!" which is the basis on which CL and like-minded people are moving toward the formation of the Party, "In this crucial period of party-building, education is our main task." CL tries to justify this with distortions of development of the revolutionary movement in Russia, especially in its earliest stages. While, from the start, Lenin put forward that the class conscious proletariat must build its own Party and refuse to enter into any broad "democratic" party with petty bourgeois utopians and bourgeois democrats, Lenin insisted at the same time (the early 1890s) that the Marxist circles, even before they had formed a Party, must make "the transition to mass agitation among the workers and the union of Marxism with the working-class movement." (History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, p. 15)

In one of his first major works, while stressing the importance of theoretical work at that time (1894), Lenin made a point of saying that "It is thus emphasizing the necessity, importance and immensity of the role of the Social Democrats, I by no means want to say that this work should take precedence over PRACTICAL WORK." ("Note..."

The practical work of propaganda and agitation must always take precedence, because firstly theoretical work only supplies answers to the problems raised by practical work...." Such a presentation of the task guards Social-Democracy against the defects from which socialist groups so often suffer, namely, dogmatism and sectarianism." ("What the 'Friends of the People' Are," Lenin, Works, Vol. 1, pp. 297-98, emphasis added) To Lenin, practical work, including propaganda and agitation, meant building the mass struggle and linking communism with it. His whole method is a direct refutation of CL's consistent separation of theory from practice.

CL's whole rotten stand is laid out in all its glory in its analysis of the "Dialectics of the Development of the Communist League." On every level, this document, like all of CL's trash, is a distortion from the beginning to end. First off, it contains at least 15 factual distortions on the history of the development of the U.S. communist movement. The following two are typical and telling. First, in order to picture William Z. Foster as a completely unprincipled opportunist, CL says that after Jay Lovestone (a revisionist) was expelled from the Party, then "Foster turned on his chief henchman, Cannon, (who was a Trotkyste) and expelled him and his followers from the Party." (p. 9, parentheses CL's) But, in fact, Cannon was expelled before Lovestone. Second, and even more revealing, CL claims that its "parent group," POC, split the Party in 1958, after the 17th Convention of the Party which "came out fully for revisionism." (p. 11) This Convention did come out fully for revisionism, but it was held in 1958, after present leaders of CL and others had split and formed the POC. CL is trying to cover itself here, but the fact is that, from the beginning, in the very way they split the Party—leaving before the struggle against revisionism was carried through as long as possible, and turning their backs on honest but confused people within the Party—the leaders of CL, like Trotsky started out on the basis of sectarianism.

Idealist World Outlook

But more than these factual distortions, this whole document is based on the idealism that characterizes CL's world outlook (assertion of the supremacy of ideas over material reality and of theory over practice). The document starts out describing what it says is Marx's "famous statement on dialectics."—"Wherein does the movement of pure reason consist? In posing itself, opposing itself, composing itself; in formulating itself as thesis, anti-thesis, synthesis, or yet again, in affirming itself, negating itself, and negating its nega-
tion." (Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy) CL goes on throughout the document to base itself on this method of dialectics. These are dialectics alright, but they are Hegelian dialectics, the idealist dialectics of German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, not Marxist dialectics.

In fact, in the passage CL quotes from Marx, he is making fun of the "movement of pure reason," the idealists' notion of how history developed. This is clear from the way Marx introduces the section in question, with the statement that "M. Proudhon (whom Marx is directly answering—Ed.) most cer-
tainly deserves the title of 'the need for filching Hegelian phrases at them.'" (See pp. 104-109, Inst. Pub-
lishers Ed., The Poverty of Philosophy).

It is even clearer when he states just after that, "the moment we cease to pursue the his-
torical movement of production relations, of which categories merely represent the logical deduction, we no-

In fact, we want to see in these categories no more than ideas, spontaneous thoughts, independent of real re-
lations, we are forced to attribute the origin of these thoughts to the movement of pure reason." (p. 108)

Marxism certainly learned from Hegel's development of the dialectical method, but not as such, for as Engels said, it was necessary to stand Hegel's dialectics on its feet since it stood things on their head (regarded ideas as the origin of the material world). Or as Engels explained it, "Hegel was not simply put back. On the contrary one started out from his revolu-
tionary side...from the dialectical method. But in its Hegelian form this method was unusable." (Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy," Marx and Engels, Selected Works, Vol. 3, p. 361, emphasis added)

Why was it unusable in its Hegelian form, what was the essence of Hegel's philosophy? To Hegel, the Idea, or the Absolute Concept, existed from eternity, be-

The message to the reader is clear: the experience of the revolution is a favorable condition, the effect of the revolution is a favorable condition for the revolution, the revolution is a necessary condition for an idealist revolution.

Instead, we get a presentation of one negation after another, all unfolding toward the realization of the idea—the formation of CL etc. "Has the advantage of inheriting all that is 'vital' in the history of the Communist movement." (p. 14) And of course, CL itself—like the idea in the mind of man—must be forced to find its highest expression in CL's working out of its system of ideas—its "Party"—which "will be able to supply history with the subjective factors that will allow for the outbreak of a real movement in this coun-
try." (p. 14) Hegelian idealism to the bone, and to the end.

While Hegel is perhaps the most famous modern exponent of idealism, the "father" of idealism in western civilization is really Plato (who said, for example, that all horses in the real world are only an approximation of the abstract idea of 'horses', existing prior to and independent of horses in the
or the Socialialistists, portrays U.S. Imperialism on the Rise

From beginning to end, the recent "International Report" of the "Communist League" (see CL's People's Tribune—PT—May 1974) is an attack on the line of the Chinese Communist Party. Of course, like most sects, CL has its own symbols and ritualistic trappings, and further CL has not yet worked up the guts, or does not yet consider it opportune, to attack China openly and publicly, so it is necessary to decipher this report to fully expose its real stand.

The CL report starts out by opposing the Marxist method of class analysis to "subjective and shallow, historical, populist conceptions at the struggle between the rich and the poor, between the big and the small, between the advanced and the backward, etc." (PT—May 1974, p. 1). This is an attack on the line of the Chinese Communist Party, and of course on Marxism, in several ways.

First, it reduces every contradiction to the class contradiction. Marxism actually holds that all political struggles in class society have their origin in class contradictions and are finally resolved through the resolution of the class contradiction that gave rise to them—in other words, in the final analysis, they are a matter of class struggle. But within that general framework, different contradictions have a life and dialectic of their own and cannot be reduced simply to the class struggle.

For example, the national question is, in final analysis, a class question, but the national struggle cannot be reduced at any given time to simply the class struggle between the workers and the capitalists—without liquidating the national question itself.

That is why Mao Tsetung, while stating that "In the final analysis, national struggle is a matter of class struggle," also writes that "Qualitatively different contradictions can only be resolved by qualitatively different methods. For instance, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is resolved by the method of socialist revolution; the contradiction between the great masses of people and the feudal system is resolved by the method of democratic revolution; the contradiction between the colonized and imperialism is resolved by the method of national revolutionary war..." (On Contradiction, emphasis added).

Trotskyite Stand

Today, on a world scale, the fundamental contradiction—the contradiction underlyling all struggles—is the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. But in the process of development of any fundamental contradiction, there are also other contradictions which arise and exert an influence on the process, and there are necessarily stages of development of the fundamental contradiction. To ignore the stages of development and the particularity of different contradictions, and instead to treat everything simply as a matter of the fundamental class contradiction—this is the stand of the Trotskyists, and CL's stand is ridgidly through and through with a Trotskyite approach.

For example, in the quote above CL is actually attacking the line that a major aspect of the struggle in the world today is between the poor countries of the Third World and the medium-size capitalist and imperialism countries on the one hand, and the two imperialism superpowers on the other. In other words, CL is taking over the line of building a united front against the two superpowers. In doing so, CL not only applies the Trotskyite methods, but also takes over the voice of the Soviet social imperialists, who try to pose as the "friend" of the oppressed peoples and countries and cover up their policy.

For example, last year when a conference of non-aligned countries was held in Algeria, the Soviet attacked China for "setting the rich countries against the poor," and advocated the "rich and poor countries' conception in the non-aligned movement." The Soviet social imperialists repeated this same attack at the recent meeting of the UN held to consider the demands of the Third World countries for more equal economic relations.

CL parrots this same attack, adding that there is no such thing as the Third World, and that anyone who supports the Third World countries in their struggle against superpower domination is actually aiding counter-revolution. We think it is clear, and CL has admitted, that CL is definitely not the Chinese Communist Party that is counter-revolutionary.

The fact that the Trotskyite stand leads to a fact as a cover for the revisionist is not surprising, and in fact conforms with the history and essence of Trotskyism. For most of its "core"—the "anti-imperialist left"—right in form their essence has always been rightist, has always been in objective unity with the revisionists against the Marx-Leninists.

China and Albania

CL not only tries to set Marx against Mao Tsetung, but also to set the Albanian Party against the Chinese. Their "International Report" quotes at length from a statement by Albanian Party head Enver Hoxha, which excuses the attempts of the revisionist ruler Tito of Yugoslavia in "to make moreใช้ นมเพื่อคนอย่างน้อย..." and to forge alliances with the right-wing Mensheviks against the Bolsheviks. At other times, Trotskyism and Trotskyism have assumed an "anti-left" line—right in form their essence has always been rightist, has always been in objective unity with the revisionists against the Marx-Leninists.

CL neglects to say that Hoxha's speech was made in 1960, at a world conference of Communist and Workers Parties in Moscow. At that time, U.S. imperialism was regarded as the world's major enemy—the single superpower. While Soviet revisionism was consolidating bourgeois rule and carrying out the restoration of capitalism, it had not yet clearly and fully emerged as an imperialist superpower, contending for world hegemony with U.S. imperialism.

The Albanian Party, in repeating this speech, makes a point of saying that at that time, they were "not yet cognizant of Khrushchev's real intentions" and that "The whole document bears the seal of the time and circumstances under which it came into being."

Just before the passage CL plucked out of context, Hoxha makes the statements that "the great and inexhaustible strength of the socialist camp headed by the Soviet Union is the decisive factor in the triumph of peace in the world...the Soviet Union and the socialist camp have become the center and hope of the peoples of the world..." "...it is also natural for the peoples of the world to look to the life which they are waging against the executioners.

It is only the Soviet Union and the socialist camp that are their great, powerful and inexhaustible power."

Since then it has become clear that the Soviet Union is a major executioner of the people—one of the two imperialist superpowers. CL has abandoned imperialist rule over most of the countries of Eastern Europe and strives for imperialism domination everywhere in the world. In other words, CL has abandoned the boards of most of the old Communist Parties in the world to the camp of revisionism. Because of this, while certainly there are socialist countries in the world today, the socialist camp that existed for a while after WW2 no longer exists. Does the CL expect people to believe

Emner Hoxha, leader of the Albanian people. CL attempts, by means of Hoxha out of context, to drive a wedge between and separate the Chinese and Albanian parties and peoples. But these puerile efforts only expose CL's own opportunism.

Continued on next page
that, under today's conditions, Enver Hoaxha would still make the statements cited above?

Aiding Imperialism

When the socialist camp did exist, and when U.S. imperialism was the single main enemy, the Albanians, the Chinese and all genuine Communist parties exposed and denounced the efforts of traitors like Tito to isolate the newly independent states from the socialist camp and deliver them to the domination of U.S. imperialism, in the guise of creating a "third force." But today, when there are two superpowers, when such a socialist camp no longer exists, and when a major factor in world affairs is the increasing tendency of the Third World countries to struggle and to unite against superpower domination—-to take a stand against opposing this as a trick of the imperialists is to aid imperialism. To pull a quote from Enver Hoaxha once again, "Coexistence between Albania and China is the lowest kind of coun-
ter-revolutionary double-dealing." You can say as many things as you like about China's policy toward the Soviet social imperialists. Once again, CL's line is just a "left" cover for the revisionists.

But we go further as far as saying that "such terms as superpowers are perfectly acceptable to the USNA (United States of North America, CL's term for the U.S.-Ed.) rulers, particularly to the schmuck character of the most ruthless imperialism the world has ever known." (PT, May '74, p. 11) In other words, through such a policy, China and the Albanians are playing into the hands of imperialism by covering up its class nature.

In fact, many times, including at the recent U.N. sessions, both the Albanians and the Chinese have indeed confessed their full support for the struggle of the developing countries against superpower domination. This is not to dispute the revolutionary stand of the Albanians and Chinese and it is CL that aids the superpowers, especially the Soviet social imperialists. Once again, CL's line is just a "left" cover for the revisionists.

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Denial of Two-Stage Revolution

On what basis does CL deny the existence of the Third World? According to its May 1974 "International Report," the world today is such that "even in the most backward areas of Oceania, capitalist production and exchange are now deeply rooted and consequently, the colonial question is transformed into the national-colonial question, with the proletarian revolution the next step on the historical agenda." This is a direct denial of the need for two-stage revolution in the colonies of semi-colonial countries where the next immediate step on the historical agenda is not the proletarian-socialist but the bourgeois-democratic revolution. This is a new type of revolution, under the leadership of the proletariat. This new bourgeois-democratic revolution clears the way for the second stage, the socialist stage of revolution.

This is the theory of New Democratic Revolution, developed by Mao Tsetung, which led the 700 million Chinese people towards the socialist revolution and is guiding revolutionary struggles in many parts of the Third World today. And it is this theory that CL is attributing to Mao.

True, in its article on the Philippine struggle—the same article in which it repeated Lin Piao's formulation on the new era—CL talks about the need for two-stage revolution in the colonies of semi-colonialism. But it is true that even in the Philippines, these are the words quoted from Mao's article on New Democracy. But that only shows, yet one more time, that CL has no consistent line on imperialism except to oppose revolution. This is born out by the following: CL puts forward in opposing the concept of a "Third World": There is no possible 3-factor from the standpoint of theory and philosophy. Thesis: capitalist imperialism, anti-the: the proletariat and the ruling masses, synthesis: socialism. This is the motion of history." (PT, Sept. 1972, p. 7)

This is a correct description of the "motion of history" of the anti-imperialist struggle in capitalist and imperialist countries. However, CL is not just talking about these societies, but about the world struggle against imperialism, which has now created its anti-the—the colonies. CL writes in this article, while claiming to base itself on Mao's On Contradiction, which actually opposes the analysis that Mao provides in that work. Mao shows that in China and other colonial and semi-colonial countries, the character of the first stage of revolution is "the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic-revolutionary nature of the process which is semi-colonial and semi-feudal nature." (Mao, On Contradiction. "The Particularity of Contradiction"—words in parentheses Mao's) In other words, thesis: imperialism and feudalism, anti-thesis: the masses of people of several revolutionary classes, synthesis: New Democracy. Then the struggle for socialism is the next step on the historical agenda.

Trotskyist Streak

This is the "motion of history" in the colonies and semi-colonies. Once again, by distorting this, CL has revealed its complete refusal to base itself on the particularity of contradictions, and has exposed the Trotskyist streak that runs like a red thread throughout its whole outlook. And when CL says that the line that there is a Third World "sticks the CIA" (PT, Sept. 1972, p. 8), CL shows where it is really coming from, from whom it is really attacking, and whom it really serves! It is true that there have been important changes in the world situation since Mao wrote On New Democracy, in 1940. Particularly since WWII a number of states have emerged, especially in Asia and Africa, which are politically independent but are not under the rule of the working class or of an alliance of revolutionary classes, led by the working class.

CL says that some of these states are semi-colonial—for example, Tanzania and Zambia—which is a "transitional form which must either be carried forward towards socialism or slide into neo-colonialism." (PT, Jan. 1974, p. 12). But most of these states are according to CL only neo-colonies that are "absolutely subservient to the imperialists." (PT, May 1974, p. 10)

CL is wrong—subjective and one-sided—here on several counts. First off, in countries like Tanzania and Zambia, while it is true that eventually socialism must be achieved or full independence can't be won, it is not only a question of the possibility of "slipping into neo-colonialism." It is much more the case that the imperialists sooner or later seek to smash governments in these countries which continue to struggle for independence from imperialism—Ghana, Indone sia, and Cambodia are outstanding examples. But more importantly, CL is completely anti-Marxist in declaring that most countries in the Third World are "absolutely subservient to the imperialists." Marxism does not recognize absolutes except that nothing is absolute—all other "absolutes" are only relative. Everything is composed of contradictory aspects, and under certain conditions these contradictory aspects can transform themselves into their opposites. In other words, in examining anything, we must always ask—compared to what? For example, the imperialists of any given state are "absolutely" reactionary in relation to the masses of people, but they are also in contradiction with other imperialists. And at certain times their contradiction with other imperialists can become principal over their contradictions with the masses of people, and despite their "relative" revolutionary intentions, their objective role can, for that given time, become mainly an aid to the people's struggle, and only secondarily an obstacle. Such was the case during WWII with the U.S., British and French imperialists.

So, too, governments of all kinds in the world, even those that are "absolutely reactionary" in relation to the peoples of their countries, which are dependent on imperialists of one degree or another with imperialism, exactly because they are dependent. And especially in today's world, with U.S. imperialism dominating the world, with U.S. imperialism and Soviet social imperialism contending for hegemony, many governments, including even reactionary governments in the Third World, have taken advantage of that situation to push for more independence.

Of course, independence can only be achieved fully with the achievement of socialism (even this "absolute" independence is relative and depends on the advance to world socialism). As Mao Tsetung stated at the 1915 Teng Huai-ping pointed out in his UN speech, eco nomic independence and political independence are inseparable, fundamental and interrelated. But to recognize only what is fundamental and only what is true in the final analysis, and to ignore the stages of development of a process and the particularity of contradictions—this, again is Trotskyism. And this, again, is the stand of CL.

Case of Egypt

CL tries to negate the struggle of Third World countries for independence by declaring that "the only way for the bourgeoisie of the dependent countries to escape from colonialism is to cooperate with the imperialists and to preserve themselves is to rely on USNA imperialism and vice versa." CL cites Egypt as "proof of this." And further, it claims that "it is impossible to unite the various national interests against imperialism...the national interests can only be defended from the standpoint of maximum opposition against the effect of the other part of the proletariat the leading factor." (PT, May 1974, pp. 12, 11)

The fact is that Egypt has, of late, coming more into the orbit of U.S. imperialism, especially after killing Soviet military advisors, does not at all prove that the only alternative for the countries of the Third World is domination by either the U.S. or USSR. This is exactly what the two superpowers try to sell to the various Third World countries. The line is increasingly rejected— as the formation of various agreements among Third World countries to de monstrate a higher price for resources, the struggle for sea and fishing rights, the recent demands of the UN, and many other developments clearly demonstrate. In opposition to this line of the superpowers, and CL, the Chinese encourage the countries of the Third World to unite and strengthen their struggle against superpower domination, and to rely on their own efforts and their own peoples. In the final analysis, only the "maximum opposition against the effect of the proletariat the leading factor" can full independence be achieved in all countries. But short of that, and short of the achievement of the rule of the proletariat in these countries, even the bourgeois governments of the Third World, and even of the "Second World" (the lesser capitalist and imperialist countries) can unite to resist superpower domination.

It is the duty of the international proletariat to encourage, assist and support them in doing this, because this resistance is a blow against the present main enemies—the two superpowers. And if the proletariat carries out this policy correctly, it makes the conditions for revolution in all countries more favorable, CL poses as great upholders of proletarian inter nationalism, but in fact their 'stand is nothing but support for the greatest enemies of the people of the world in suppressing struggles for independence, liberation and revolution.

This is demonstrated once more in their May 1974 "International Report," and its direct attack on Teng Huai-ping's speech. Teng's speech lays the programmatic basis for the united front against the two superpowers. It is not a substitute for, nor in contradiction to the revolutionary struggles of the workers and oppressed nations, but is a line for uniting and advancing the worldwide struggles of various kinds against the two superpowers.

Question of Hegemony

CL makes a further attack on China in the form of saying that "It is absolutely proper and revolutionary for the working class and for the Communist Party to play the role of socialist to struggle for world hegemony." (PT, May 1974, p. 11) This is clearly said in opposition to the line of the 10th Congress of the Communist Party, and specifically to Mao Tsetung's statement, "never seek hegemony." (See Documents from 10th Congress, p. 390)

CL lectures that there are two kinds of hegemony—the reactionary hegemony of the imperialists and
Continued from preceding page

the “hegemony of the proletariat,” (PT, May 1974, p. 11), and China’s metaphor in the slightest way detracts from the struggle for the hegemony of the working class and bourgeois in its efforts to politically depoliticize the working class.” (PT, May 1974, p. 10)

This last statement comes right after CL’s attack on a line that says that there are three worlds in other words right after their attack on the international line of the Chinese Party. So put it together and it’s plain that CL is really saying that the Chinese are hurting the struggle for the hegemony of the proletariat and are aiding the bourgeoisie.

The Chinese Communist Party has immeasurably ailed the world proletariat in its struggle for ideological and political hegemony in the revolutionary movement. The Chinese Party’s struggle for this ideological and political hegemony in a principled way, insisting that all countries are equal and all Parties are equal, CL opposes this by saying, “After WW II when the imperialists openly planned to attack the Soviet Union, if it had not been for the socialist hege- mony of the vast peoples of the earth, the USSR would have been in an indefensible position.” (PT, May 1974, p. 11, emphasis added)

When you put it in this light with the other state- ment by CL it is obvious, once again, that CL treats US imperialism as the single imperialistsuperpower (whether they use the word or not), and that CL doesn’t deal with the USSR as a country that has already become a capitalist-imperialist superpower, that has already turned most of the countries of Eastern Europe, and a number of other countries, into its “economic vassals” and political dependencies, and that is definitely not a part of any “socialist camp.”

CL further attacks the Chinese line that there is no socialist camp by making the “analysis” that since the victory of the Russian revolution, “a contradiction will grow between the socialist and imperialist... It was the fact that it was outside the sphere of imperialism that made it possible to deny the existence of such a contradiction...”

In the context of the line that these two contradictions exist as the same and put forward the hegemony of the proletariat as the same thing as the chauvinism of a big power.

“External Contradiction”

CL further attacks the Chinese line on the basis of “what they examine and in what manner.”

No socialist country exist in the same world with the big power, that is to say, in the absence of necessity, establish diplomatic and trade relations with imperialist countries, and aren’t they at the same time faced with this contradiction from positivism of the imperialist attack? CL, we think, would answer yes to all these questions, but then what do they mean “external to imperialism” and “these two can be bound to exist until the death of imperialism”?

The logic of CL’s line here is that it is impossible for capitalists to be restored in all the socialist coun- trying at any given time, and that therefore there will always be socialist countries, and hence also a socialist camp on the international line of the CPI. One thing that the Soviet Party put forward in order to make the world revolution and restoring capitalism.

This is the line that “the contradiction between capitalism and socialism is the chief contradiction of our epoch,” because after WW II, a “world socialist system” (L)” and a “capitalist imperialism” was created, “Thanks to the achievements of the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries.” (“Letter of the Central Committee of the CPI to the Central Committee of the CPC, March 30, 1963, pp. 71, 69, in the pamphlet of the Communist Party of China on the General Line of the International Communist Move- ment.”)

Not Part of Av “Socialist Camp”

Just as CL says that the Soviet rulers are still only “opportunists” to restore capitalism in the USSR, they say that “with the offensive of imperialism and re- visionism after the death of Stalin”—they don’t say why after his death—opportunists are engaged in a “drive to make the Eastern European countries economic vassals to the USSR.” (“PT, Oct., 1972, p. 5, emphasis added)

When you put it this light with the other state- ment by CL it is obvious, once again, that CL treats U.S. imperialism as the single imperialist superpower (whether they use the word or not), and that CL doesn’t deal with the USSR as a country that has already become a capitalist-imperialist superpower, that has already turned most of the countries of Eastern Europe, and a number of other countries, into its “economic vassals” and political dependencies, and that is definitely not a part of any “socialist camp.”

CL’s line comes down to the old Trotskyite line with a new twist. Most of the Trots took the position at the time of WW II that the Soviet Union was a “de- generate workers’ state” and not socialist, but it should be “defended” in a war with the imperialist powers. And this was at the time when the Soviet Union was the only socialist state. Now, when the Soviet Union is not only no longer socialist, but is one of the two contender imperialist superpowers, CL puts out a line that logically leads to saying that in the event of war between the imperialist heads by the U.S. and the Soviet Union, the people should side still with the Soviet Union, because, while it run by “oppor- tunists” and international bullies, they have not yet fully restored capitalism. And CL attacks the line of the Chinese Party for not basing itself on class analysis and for delivering the people of the world up to their enemies!!

Continuing with the line that the main contradic- tion is between the socialist and imperialist camps, CL revises history and Marxism-Leninism by saying “no matter what the contradictions are between the imperialism and the socialists, we must not isolate bloc. Their vital interests even in time of war compel them to unite against socialism. This accounts for the anti-Soviet attitude of some countries towards the USSR even while they jointly fought Hitler.” (PT, May 1974, p. 11, emphasis added.)

We don’t know if CL has forgotten that has conformed in its “ideal” reality, but in the real world, the imperialist formed not a bloc, but two blocs in WW II—the fascist Axis Bloc and the anti-fascist Bloc. From then on, the two were forced to line up with the Soviet Union against the fascist Axis. This was due to the basic laws of capital- ism, especially in its imperialist stage, in which, overall sense, means that contention and not collusion is the principle. Both socialism and imperialism are “inherently nothing more than a ‘truce in periods between wars’... Once the relation of forces is changed, what other solution of the contradiction can be found under capitalism than that of force?” (Lenin, Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, Collected Works, Vol. 22, pp. 296, 274, emphasis Lenin’s)

Using Contradictions

This does not mean that it is impossible for the imperialists to form a bloc against the socialist states, but it does mean that, by skillfully utilizing the con- tradictions among the imperialists, the socialist states and the people of the power can make it more difficult for them to form such a bloc, and under certain condi- tions can prevent them from doing so. Failing to rec- ognize this and failing to make use of every such con- tradiction is playing right into the hands of the imperial- ist butchers and aiding counter-revolution, just as CL does.

Typical of its Islamist world outlook, CL raises ized, or “attitudes,” above material reality. Of course, the “allied” imperialists were hostile to socialism and anti- Soviet in their attitude. But this did not enable them to avoid allying with the Soviet Union. In recent periods with the Black October and the Cuban Revolutionaries (BWC) and Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization (PRORIO),

we pointed out that they have consistently confused ideology with programme (see Red Papers 8). Here we see how CL does exactly the opposite of confusing the ideology of the imperialists, which is anti-commu- nist of course, with the practical actions—the pro- grammatic stand—of the “allied” imperialists.

Naturally, when the fascist Axis had been defeated, and conditions had changed, the “allied” imperialists turned on the Soviets—how, we are not sure—they were preparing to do this all during the war. But all that doesn’t change the fact that objectively, in the material world, the principle of action of the Allies dur- ing WW II, as opposed to their ideology, was unity with the Soviet Union against the fascist Axis. CL thinks that a significant role of the USSR is that it is more powerful than the action of material forces in the real world—and this idealism characterizes their line on building up a “Socialist Unity” and on every other question (more on this later).

CL distorts the character of WW II, treating it just like WW I—a war “fought on the continent of Europe” (what about Africa and Asia) “for the re- division of the colonial world.” (PT, May 1974, p. 11.) Imperialist re-division of the colonies is what started the war, but this is not what the main con- tent of that war ended up to be. CL’s “analysis” is nothing but chauvinism (denying the role of the Asian and African people) and a slander of the Soviet Union, the hundreds of millions of people in the colonies and the millions of colonizing capitalist countries who fought in WW II to defeat fascism and fascist aggression and to liberate the colonies from imperialism!

Slender of Stalin’s Role

CL claims not only to be the great standard bear- ers of Marxism-Leninism in general, but of Stalin’s work in particular. And by linking it to the revisionism of the CPUSA, “Those of us who have remained true to Leninism during the past 19 years, and Stubbs...” etc. carried out by Stalin’s dogged determination in the face of political reverses... our sole weapon was Stalin’s ideology.” (PT, March, 1974, p. 12.)

We think that therefore, instead of standing Stalin’s role during WW II, and instead of basing it- self on idealistic and metaphysical notions about an absolute character and oneness of imperialists bloc against socialism, CL should try to learn something from Stalin on the question.

In Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR, written shortly before his death, Stalin sums up the lessons of WW II, and insists that the victory of the Anglo-French-American bloc, far from joining with Hitler Germany, was compelled to enter into a coalition with the U.S.S.R. And he clearly saw how sig- nificantly the struggle of the capitalist countries for markets and their desire to crush their competitors provoked in practice the strengthening of contradic- tions between the capitalist camp and the socialist camp.” (pp. 27-28, International Publishers Edition)

What underlies all of this is that the question is its attack on the Chinese Party’s line that “strategi- cally the key point of their [superpowers] con- tention is Europe,” and that the Soviets are “making a feint to the east while attacking in the west.” (Chou En-lai’s speech, Documents of the 10th Congress, CPC, p. 24)

CL flies in the face of this. They have said for at least a year that “the struggle between the Soviet Union and China has allowed the USA to achieve temporary hegemony. This is now conditioning world affairs” (PT, May 1973, p. 2; see also May 1974, p. 12) And CL adds that “the seeming strength of the USSR imperialism is based on the deadly struggle between the opportunists of the USRR and Soviet China. That struggle is based in the struggle of the economic... Continued on next page
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Russian tourists to consolidate their position as the ruling class within the USSR. This is expressed as a struggle between Marxism-Leninism and Revisionism within the USSR. And so it is that the understanding of this struggle between Marxism-Leninism and Revisionism is key to understanding the world situation. (PT, May 1973, p. 12) Again, CL reduces everything to ideology—ideas and ignores (or distorts) the actual character of society, the actual material base, the relations of production.

Acting in this way as a cover for the Soviet social imperialists CL is bound to put forward an opportunistic line on imperialist contention in general and on superpower contention for Europe in particular. CL presents the only imperialist contention as that between the U.S. and the European (and Japanese) imperialists. CL shills the line for the united front against the two imperialist superpowers and reduces imperialist contention to contention for control of the colonies.

Kautsky Line

In this CL adopts the same line as Karl Kautsky, a Marxist-turned-revisionist who defined imperialism as simply the domination of backward agrarian countries by advanced industrial ones. Lenin exposed that “This definition is of no use at all because it underestimates, i.e. arbitrarily, singles out only the national question (although the latter is extremely important in itself as well as its relation to imperialism)....The characteristic feature of imperialism is precisely that it strives to annex not only agrarian territories, but even most highly industrialized regions.” (Lenin, Imperialism, Works, Vol. 22, pp. 368-69, emphasis in parentheses, Lenin’s)

In today’s world the imperialist camp is clearly dominated by the two superpowers—and their military superiority is even more decisive than their economic superiority over the other imperialists. In this situation, they not only contend for hegemony in the Third World, but for domination over the other, lesser imperialist countries centered in Europe—and this latter contention is the focal point of the two superpowers contention now. This is the basis for the unity of these two countries of the “Second World” in their resistance to superpower domination.

Once again, CL’s line is clearly an attempt to deflect attention and struggle away from the Soviet social imperialists, to set the proletariat as a whole against the superpower states and to sabotage the unity of all who can be united against the main enemies. In and of itself, of course, CL and its purvey efforts at counter-revolution amount to very little, but exactly because their line is only a variation of revisionist and Trotskyite lines which are still able to create considerable confusion, it is important to thoroughly expose this line and to draw a clear line of demarcation between revolution and counter-revolution.

Finally, on the question of contention vs. consolidation, it is important to point out that CL not only essentially leaves the USSR out of the picture, but presents a one-sided and overestimated view of U.S. imperialism’s strength, even vis-à-vis the European and Japanese imperialists. What does CL cite to prove this? Trade figures—all taken during the recent period, when the U.S. imperialists have experienced a recovery in their trade balance, following their trade deficit in 1971-72. CL then gives the U.S. imperialists credit for “the careful monitoring of inflation,” when even many spokesmen for U.S. imperialism acknowledge that inflation presents a persistent problem and danger for U.S. imperialism, internally and internationally.

The demulsations of the dollar, for example, which finally brought an improvement in the U.S. trade position, also increase the problem of inflation, and represent a weakening of the financial position of U.S. imperialism internationally. As the Albanians pointed out, “The devaluation of the dollar is clearly accompanied by grave consequences in the field of financial relations, and is not willingly undertaken.” (Albania Today, Nov.-Dec. 1973, p. 36)

Further, trade is not the decisive factor in the era of imperialism. The export of capital, foreign investment, loans, etc. is the decisive factor, and the position of U.S. imperialism has been hurt by the developments which forced the devaluations in the first place, and by the act of devaluating itself.

The Arab Oil Embargo

CL plays the same game around the Arab oil embargo which “the USNA oil firms not only orchestrated but profited greatly from.” (PT, March 1974, p. 7) Once more this is completely one-sided and loaded in favor of the U.S. imperialists.

The fact is that the oil embargo was a real blow at the U.S. imperialists, politically as well as economically.

As the Albanians point out, the Arab imposition of measures to stop or limit the sale of oil to the United States and other countries which support the Zionist aggressors, has greatly shaken the capitalist world.” (Albania Today, Nov.-Dec. 1973, p. 36)

As always, of course, the U.S. imperialists tried to turn this to their advantage, and in particular, to use the fact that they control much of the Middle East oil to gain an advantage against their Japanese rivals, who are more dependent on Middle East oil than the U.S. But there is no doubt that the action of the Arab oil-exporting states, in demanding higher prices, carrying out nationalizations and other measures, have, looking at the past several years as a whole, cut into the rate of profit of the U.S. oil firms and hurt U.S. imperialism. And even during the embargo, while the U.S. used oil control as a weapon against Japan, Japan and a number of European countries struck back by making independent deals with the Arab states, just as a number of European governments resisted U.S. demands on troop movements in their countries during the recent Middle East war.

In sum, in opposition to the world situation is determined by the consolidation of hegemony by U.S. imperialism—resulting from the “China-Soviet conflict”—the line of the Chinese Communist Party is absolutely correct: the world today is characterized by great disorder, marked by the contention of the two superpowers, and this is a very good thing for the oppressed people and their struggle for liberation.

CL presents its distorted view in order to spread defeatism, to overestimate the strength of U.S. imperialism. This serves not only U.S. imperialism, but Soviet social imperialism especially, and is an attempt to attack the building of a broad united front against the two superpowers. The May 1974 “International Report” by CL goes further than CL has previously attacked China, exactly because the development of this united front, and the leading role of China within it, has made significant advances.

Not An Open Attack

But exactly because the Chinese are continuing to grow in support among revolutionaries and oppressed people throughout the world, CL does not come out and attack China openly. In fact, at the end of its May 1974 “International Report,” after attacking the whole substance of the China line, after attempting to pit the Albanians against the Chinese, and even attempting to pose different Chinese leaders against each other, after trying to cover the Chinese Communist Party with mud, CL has the nerve to say, “The Great Communist Party of China has covered itself with glory in its military and ideological battles of the past five decades. It has emerged as the leader, the most experienced and most consistent standard bearer of the revolution.”

Whom does CL expect to fool with this low-life, back-stabbing attempt to bury the Chinese Party while praising it? If CL at least had the courage of its convictions it would come out openly and blast the Chinese Communist Party as counter-revolutionary and imperialist traitors. Of course that would only increase the exposure of CL itself, so like the cowards and reactionaries they are, CL’s “leading members” shrink from doing this.

But they cannot cover up their real nature, nor disguise their attacks on China, nor even hide the fact that they think it is they, and not the Chinese Communist Party, who are the real leaders of the world revolution. CL’s leaders claim they have an organization that is “100% working class,” but the only
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"100%" that CLI is a 100% counter-revolutionary.

The line of CLI in general, and of its May 1974 "International Report" in particular, is something that all revolutionaries in the U.S. must ask a clear-cut stand on, especially now when the task of building the new Communist Party, a genuine vanguard of the working class, confronts us. We must ask groups or individuals that are presently relating to CLI's "party-building"—can there be any possible basis whatsoever for even considering adding a Party together with a group whose line is thoroughly counter-revolutionary as CLI's?

CLI declares that it will not struggle any more with "these leftists." This is nothing but an admission that CLI knows it cannot defend its line in the face of Marxism-Leninism, and so it is retreating even before the real struggle begins, while building up the CPUSA, exaggrerating its base in the working class, and in fact covering for revisionism. We are firmly convinced, however, that the struggle against CLI's counter-revolutionary line will help to unite all who can be united around a correct line and programme to form a genuine Marxist-Leninist Party.

Members of BWC and PRWKO

Finally, we want to address ourselves especially to the members of BWC and PRWKO, since these two organizations have recently joined the "Continuations Committee" to build a "Party" with CLI. Comrades, why should you allow a few opportunists to drag you into the camp of counter-revolution? In the past nine months, these responsible have put forth one opportunists after another, and built up one neophyte after another: First, "revolutionary nationalism" as a "third ideology." That has been exposed and then it was Charles Lorenz, whose pamphlet was hailed as it was the "What Is To Be Done" of our time. And when his reactionary line on the national question was exposed, then it was—the worst, least respected the question of the Party. Now Lorenz is out (he has been kicked out of the "Continuations Committee") and the CLI is "in." And when the counter-revolutionary nature of CLI's line is fully exposed, will it be said, well, at least they raised the question of the Party? What kind of Party can be built on the basis of unity or compromising with a counter-revolutionary line? Isn't there a fundamental connection between CLI's counter-revolutionary line on the international situation and its line on everything else, including the Party? Don't they have the same philosophical roots—idealism and metaphysics—and aren't they based on the same stubborn refusal to get deeply involved in the actual mass struggle, to apply communism to it, to discover the actual contradictions and development of the struggle as they unfold in real life, to learn from the masses and draw up the experience of applying communism to the mass movement, and in this context to conduct principled ideological struggle to develop the programmatic basis to unite the forces for the Party to lead the masses?

We strongly feel this is something which all communists, and especially the members of BWC and PRWKO, should think deeply about. The previous erroneous lines put forth by BWC and PRWKO leadership represent quantitative steps in the direction of opportunism, but to unite with CLI to form a Party is to make a qualitative leap into the cesspool of counter-revolution.

There's No Race

As far as CLI's claim that the RU has "hastily put out the call to build a Communist Party at once" in order to beat CLI to it, we can only say that the RU's decision to seek to unite with all who can be united to form the Party as an immediate task is not based on any need to "beat CLI" or anyone else to form the Party, but is based on the needs of the mass movement and the communist movement. We are not in any "race" with CLI, because we are interested in uniting all who can be united to form a revolutionary Communist Party; all CLI can possibly form is a counter-revolutionary split. CLI distorts the RU's line on the Party, just as it distorts everything else. CLI even tries to claim that the RU put forward the line of having separate "representatives" for the workers of different nationalities and that we tried to impose that line on the BWC and PRWKO. The publication of Red Papers 6, including the documents of ideological struggle between the RU and BWC and PRWKO, makes very clear that it was the RU that brought forward the line of moving ahead to form a single vanguard Party, and that we fought against BWC and PRWKO's insistence that we must prologue the struggle of the separate communist organizations based on lines of nationality.

The RU has always considered the building of the new Party a key task which must be carried out at the earliest possible time, and we have always held that this task can only be carried out by the joint efforts of all those who genuinely strive to apply Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of our country and who base themselves on the interests of the international proletariat.

At this time, the creation of such a Party on this basis has become an immediate possibility and an immediate task. In carrying out it, the honest forces must conduct principled ideological struggle to ruthlessly expose and root out counter-revolutionary lines and the forces representing them, i.e., CLI, and to unite around a correct line.

Since the above article was written, the June 1974 "People's Tribune" has come out with an article, "Class Struggle in the USSR," where CLI tries to use more double-talk to further displace its act of covering for the social imperialists.

In this article, CLI says "The Soviet state is an imperialist state. The imperialists hold state power." (p. 12) But then CLI says that the Soviet people and Party have not yet and "will not be thrown back into the epoch of capitalist barbarianism." (p. 13) CLI asks, "Is there capitalism in the U.S.S.R.?" and answers, "Yes, there is, and plenty of it." But they also attack as mere "simplistic" the analysis that "the U.S.S.R. is a capitalist country." (p. 12, 4)

Again, a straight attack on China and covering for the social imperialists. The Chinese consistently stress that the Soviet rulers have restored capitalism and that "the economic base of social imperialism is monoply capitalism" which is "subject to the same objective law of imperialism." (See Peking Review, No. 39, Sept. 28, 1973.)

CLI pictures the Soviet Union as a society run by bourgeoisie strata who are only still "attacking the socialist relations of production." (p. 12) So in the Soviet Union capitalism and socialism, according to CLI, exist side by side and are fighting it out, but capitalism has not triumphed.

This line provides an incorrect analysis of class struggle in the USSR and leaves you with no materialist explanation of social imperialism's role in the world. If followed, this line would disarm people in the face of social imperialism's collusion and contention with the U.S. and its aggressive imperialism expansion and drive for hegemony throughout the world—Ed. ■

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