

CPML on Iran

Revolution? How Disruptive!

A recent article in the *Call* (May 28), newspaper of the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) (CPML), has provided yet another example of the opposition of these so-called "communists" to the struggle of the Iranian people against U.S. imperialism.

Just a few months ago in the February 12 *Call* on the eve of the insurrection they were yapping about Ayatollah Khomeini in worried tones for his "Islamic and pro-feudalistic program" and "not taking a clear stand" against the Soviets. The CPML was wringing its hands over whether he could "make some kind of compromise with Bakhtiar [the Shah's stand-in]" or whether—horror of horrors—"the country will be propelled into civil war"—in other words into revolution. Quite a stand for so-called "communists."

But now these CPML phony "revolutionaries" are lauding Khomeini to the skies, building him up as the true leader of the Iranian people and telling us "the majority of Iranians support the newly established Islamic Republic." What has happened between now and then? What the CPML has realized is that Khomeini is in, the man with the power. And they are hoping like hell that he will be a force for "stability and unity" in Iran—stability for and unity with the U.S. imperialists, that is, against their Soviet superpower rivals.

While revolutionaries give support to Khomeini to the extent that he opposes imperialism, particularly the U.S. which is the main danger to Iran at this time, the CPML supports him for exactly the opposite reasons. They support him to the extent that he vacillates toward the U.S. and to the extent that he attacks the continuing struggle of the Iranian people who are mobilizing to push the revolution forward and complete its pressing task of kicking the U.S. out lock, stock and barrel.

So now the CPML is bending over backwards to gloss over the contradictory nature of the Khomeini government and its growing attacks on the masses and in particular the Marxist-Leninist forces who are leading the revolution forward. And in the process they are driven to distortion and slander of revolutionary struggle and fabricating support for the backward aspects of the Khomeini government when increasingly there is struggle against them.

Take for example their reportage on May Day in Iran. In a couple of slickly worded sentences they say that "2 million workers participated in mass meetings officially supported by the new government" where they came out to "celebrate the birth of the Islamic state." Evidently we are supposed to believe that this was a massive outpouring of support for Khomeini who "used the occasion to call for the people's help in a crash program of housing..." etc., etc.

Of course there is no mention of the fact that these two million people were organized mainly by the revolutionary Left, that they marched through the streets with guns in hand vowing to carry the revolution forward and raising demands on the Khomeini government to nationalize U.S. enterprises and recognize the right to strike. Not a word about the fact that Khomeini originally opposed May Day as "foreign inspired" or that when he saw he was unable to stop these revolutionary demonstrations he called his own "Islamic May Day", bussing people to a separate rally where he used the occasion to call on workers to "give up the weapon of the strike." And not a hint of the fact that the Khomeini forces allowed and even encouraged right-wing elements to hoist banners which read: "Marxists are agents of the Shah" and "Death to communism". No wonder the CPML waited a whole month before attempting to mention May Day in Iran!

As the Khomeini government increasingly stands in opposition to completing

the anti-imperialist and democratic tasks of the revolution, the more the CPML likes what it sees. Khomeini's failure to nationalize U.S. holdings, his refusal to completely break up the old Imperial Army—these are encouraging signs to the CPML. What does it matter, the Shah or Khomeini, as long as the U.S. retains its hold on Iran? All the better to oppose the Soviets, who according to the twisted logic of the CPML are the "main danger", "the real threat to Iran's independence and sovereignty"!

CPML—Long-Time Fan of the Shah

This concern for "order" and "stability" (of the U.S. brand) is of course nothing new for the CPML. For years they brazenly sucked up to the Shah, upholding this blood-drenched U.S. puppet as a "national leader" of the Iranian people simply because he opposed the Soviets. They attacked anyone who demanded an end to U.S. arms shipments to this murdering dog—the U.S. "policeman of the Middle East". Meanwhile these weapons of repression were viciously used against the Iranian people and others in the Persian Gulf area in the service of U.S. imperialism, which has long been the dominant exploiter there.

As millions took to the streets of Iran in September last year, the *Call* was content to loyally parrot the reactionary line of their revisionist mentors in China—which held that the Shah was a force for "stability" in the Middle East and that Iran's "unstable political situation" was becoming most worrisome. They warmly greeted the visit of the traitor Hua Kuo-feng, who toasted it up with the Shah as fighting raged outside, and hailed his disgusting praise of this butcher: "Let our two countries strengthen our friendship and co-operation, learn from (!) and support each other and advance together triumphantly." Yes, learn from the Shah as the streets of Tehran ran red with the blood of the masses massacred by the troops of this royal dog!

Even as their precious Shah crumbled before their eyes, the CPML still clung desperately to the hope that Iran's "stability" in the camp of the U.S. could still be preserved. As the all-out popular insurrection raged in Tehran, the then current issue of the *Call* complained that "...the possibility (!) of continued unrest and civil war remains. This presents the danger of heightened U.S.-Soviet contention and involvement in Iran, which would result in increased threats to the country's stability and national independence [sic]."

What shameless grovelling before the U.S. imperialists! Those nasty masses, says the CPML, should be satisfied with "stability" and "national independence" under the iron boot heel of the U.S.-backed Shah! How kicking the U.S. out of Iran will only create "heightened U.S.-Soviet" involvement is beyond comprehension. But what these twisted servants of the U.S. really fear here is that, "The Soviet Union, in particular, is trying to take advantage of the upsurge to serve its expansionist aims in the region." So the masses should cool it. Clearly, the CPML would have preferred a "compromise" with the U.S. imperialists—anything but "continued unrest and civil war"!

While it is certainly true that the Soviet imperialists are actively engaged in trying to get a hold of Iran, the CPML is as quick as the U.S. imperialists to raise this as a reason to oppose the revolution. It clearly never crosses the minds of the CPML that the Iranian masses are quite capable of dealing with the Soviet threat when armed with the correct political understanding, just as they did with U.S. imperialism. In fact, the CPML is even forced to admit the widespread opposition to *both* superpowers in the recent demonstrations in Iran where the masses carried pictures of the U.S. flag with the symbol of the Soviet Union superimposed over it.

But now the Shah is gone for good and the CPML has to deal with the

phenomenon of Khomeini—after all he's the man in power. Thus the May 28 issue of the *Call* goes to great lengths to paint all those moving the Iranian revolution forward as acting on behalf of the Soviet Union, distorting the continuing revolutionary struggle as nothing less than a Soviet plot.

We are, for example, told that "Soviet agents have been actively promoting a secessionist movement in the northern territory of Azarbyjan." There can be no doubt that the Soviets have designs in the area, but to say the upsurge of struggle in Azarbyjan is Soviet inspired is a total lie and a vicious slander against the just struggles of the oppressed nationalities for autonomy (not secession) within the Iranian state—an important part of the revolutionary struggle opposed and attacked by the Khomeini government.

Likewise the *Call* hails a reactionary strike stirred up by Khomeini to purge leftists from the editorial board of Iran's largest daily newspaper, *Kayhan*—an action protested by a demonstration of 100,000 outraged Ira-

nians the following day. Those purged were of varying political views but the vast majority were revolutionary and democratic forces. Those who dare to print criticism of Khomeini for his attacks on the revolutionary Left are falsely labeled by the *Call* as "pro-Soviet" who were "printing attacks on the government."

The sheer opportunist depths to which the CPML is sinking are certainly proving to be bottomless. With each new development in the storm that is shaking Iran they have shamelessly trailed in the wake of the struggle, trimming their sails just enough to give the appearance of being "revolutionaries" while steering a course dead to the side of the U.S. At the first sign of a revolutionary wind, they are busily hauling in the sheets, screaming, "Don't rock the boat!"

Curious "communists" these CPMLers, who are always defending the "stability" and present order against "instability", whatever is rising and developing, whatever is revolutionary! And no matter how hard they try to cover their asses with self-serving lip-service against "U.S. interference" their line shines through: rely on the U.S. imperialists to oppose the Soviet imperialists and not—heaven forbid—on the revolutionary struggle against all imperialism. ■

Rock Against Racism Continued from page 3

some right on political content. Patti Smith had also agreed to play, but pulled out when an ad appeared in the *Reader* which violated an agreement she had made with RAR not to advertise her performance. Her band showed up anyway, which was right on, but Patti under pressure from her producer for possible contract violations, did an interview on the radio basically putting down the Rock Against Racism as unnecessary and came off like she wanted to teach RAR a lesson. A lot of people learned something from this, but it wasn't quite what Patti had in mind.

Careerists Rob the People

The same sort of thinking which prompted someone to advertise Patti Smith as a "big draw" to bring people out for Rock Against Racism showed up in other ways, and was very harmful to the people. In fact RAR has some questions to answer from many people who felt that the political bands got pushed aside because some people thought that the masses weren't down for righteous ass-kicking music that took on the system. D.O.A. got pushed to the front of the concert, when the least number of people were sure to be there.

Prairie Fire, a revolutionary band who came all the way specifically to play RAR from San Francisco, (raising their own fare through a benefit concert) got pushed further and further back and off the stage altogether. Prairie Fire originally had a contract to play at 3 o'clock and they were there to play, but they kept getting put off. First they were rescheduled for 8 PM and then other bands who were scheduled to play after them kept getting pushed ahead until they were last.

Then it started to rain before Skafish, a local Chicago band, and Prairie Fire could play. Contrary to what may have appeared as a natural disaster, certain small minded people in influential positions had *no intention* of letting Prairie Fire hit the stage before the park curfew was up—setting Prairie Fire up not to play at all or to take the heat if they played after curfew and the cops moved on the concert.

Toward the end of the concert, as some chants went up calling for Prairie Fire, a line of cops appeared behind the Prairie Fire table, which had been a hub of revolutionary activity and interest all day and which was extra visible with its dummy of a capitalist holding up a Nazi and hanging by the neck.

No, it wasn't the rain that prevented Prairie Fire from playing. But the rain did cover the ass of certain devious people and settled the question of whether or not these fools were going to be able to prevent the masses from hearing Prairie Fire. ■

Those aspiring hot shots who consciously moved to keep the powerful Rock n' Revolt sound of Prairie Fire off the stage robbed the people, because Prairie Fire's music speaks to the hopes and dreams of the working class and oppressed people. It hits hard at the enemy, it speaks to why the masses came out on Saturday, and more—to the need for revolution.

As hundreds found out on Sunday and Monday night, when Prairie Fire played at two Chicago clubs, (see page 7) it was no surprise that certain people did not want Prairie Fire on stage and plotted to keep them off. In culture like in all aspects of society the class struggle rages and as one musician put it, "There are some people who didn't give a damn about Rock or Racism. All they care about is their own careers." Let's face it, promoting revolutionary music is not a real plus for someone who is concerned about their own bourgeois career above all else.

One of the musicians who played on Saturday commented later that night on the fact that the people who came to RAR were down for some heavier political material than what they got for the most part. "It was a good thing, but I'd like to do it again, and next time I'd like to do it *right!*" he said.

The problems that arose have helped to sharpen up some things for those who really want to build the struggle of the people against a common enemy and not their own cushy careers. What is clear is that Rock Against Racism can't be a Jam Productions "Junior." That's not what the people were down for on Saturday, that's not what they want to hear.

And when it comes right down to it, the bourgeoisie could pull out their superstars for Jam Jr. in the park and build public opinion for their stinking system all day long—and they would do it for free—to suck off the energy of the movement of the people against them. If Rock Against Racism is going to be just a jam in the park, then it won't go anywhere, because people who come out hungry for righteous struggle and inspiration will not be satisfied with pablum.

What also got clearer on Saturday was that the thousands of people who came out to Lincoln Park are only the tip of the iceberg as far as the tremendous desire and potential for the masses of people to unite against all the shit that's coming down in this country. And when that force is galvanized in the storms that we can see shaping up, the whole system is gonna rock to its very foundations. As to the high and mighty and all those who want to suck the blood of the people, when the time comes, heads will definitely rock and roll. ■