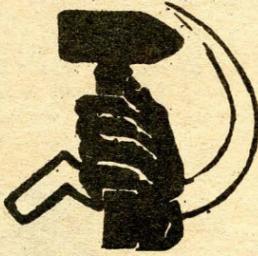


# THE COMMUNIST

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

"A communist should have largeness of mind and he should be staunch and active, looking upon the interests of the revolution as his very life and subordinating his personal interests to those of the revolution; always and everywhere he should adhere to principle and wage a tireless struggle against



all incorrect ideas and actions so as to consolidate the collective life of the Party and strengthen the ties between the Party and the masses; he should be more concerned about the Party and the masses than about any individual and more concerned about others than about himself. Only thus can he be considered a Communist." Mao Tsetung

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POB 1297 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60690

MARCH 15, 1977 15¢

## A WORLD HISTORIC TASK

# WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION

International Women's Day is a day of international unity of working women all over the world in the struggle for liberation, democracy, and socialist revolution. It was first observed in 1911 with the aim of mobilizing broad sections of women for the struggle against bourgeois domination. It commemorates the history of unity in struggles for liberation on the part of the working women of the world, and is closely connected to the advance of the cause of liberation of the world's proletariat. In the December 15, 1975 issue of THE COMMUNIST in our "Resolution on the Woman Question", we stated that: "...we find ourselves in a world marked by disorder and great turmoil. The contention and struggle for hegemony between the two superpowers has heightened contradictions between them to the point where they can only be resolved by force- world war has become an inevitable and imminent reality." We further stated that: "the world over women are playing a vital and essential role in the battles against hegemonism, imperialism, and for national liberation, independence and revolution. The struggle for equal rights and the full emancipation of women is everywhere a component part of those struggles".

For broad masses of women to win liberation they must actively take part in social revolution. The ultimate victory of proletarian revolution must include the full participation of the broad masses of women, particularly working women. Engels pointed out in The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State: "The first class antagonism which appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman... and the first class oppression with that of the female sex by male." The change in social status between man and women gradually took place with the breaking up of primitive society and the emergence of private ownership and the appearance of classes. Oppression of women is first of all class oppression, and since the oppression of women has its roots in private property and class exploitation, a complete change in the unequal status of women can only be achieved through revolution- through the elimination of private property and exploiting classes. Our "Resolution of the Woman Question" states: "The emancipation of women is a world historic task of proletarian revolution. The full emancipation of women can take place only under the dictatorship of the proletariat where it will be possible to abolish private property through socialist ownership of the



means of production and abolish the individual private household as the economic unit of society through the creation of a large scale socialist economy. However, the working class can never overthrow social relations based on private property without overcoming the oppression of women. As Lenin said, the proletariat cannot achieve complete liberty until it has won complete liberty for women. Thus the struggle for the emancipation of women and the struggle for the proletarian revolution are inseparably linked." (THE COMMUNIST, Vol. II, no. 4, p. 10)

### WORKING WOMEN IN THE U. S.

In the past quarter century there has been a dramatic increase in the number and proportion of women who work for pay outside the home. Over the last 25 years the number of women in the entire labor force more than doubled, and in the last decade, it has increased by 40%. Because of the nature of capitalist production, more and more women have been drawn into the labor force. By the end of 1975, 37.4 million women were in the labor force, representing 47% of all women age 16 and over, and 2 out of every 5 persons in the entire work force. Capitalism breeds crises and unemployment and women have consistently made up a larger percentage of the unemployed. Based on annual averages in 1974, unemployed women numbered 2.4 million and accounted for 47% of all unemployed. The unemployment rate for women was 6.7%, compared to 4.8% for men. The unemployment

rate for women 16-19 years of age was 16.5%; for women 20 and over, 5.5%; for minority women it was 10.7% compared with 6.1% for white women.

Although women make up a growing share of the work force they continue to lag behind men in their wages and earn less, whatever the job.

Occupation	Average Weekly Earnings Full-time woman worker	Percentage of Average Earnings of MEN
Professional, Technical	\$208	78%
Managers, Administrators	\$173	58%
Clerical Workers	\$138	65%
Craft Workers	\$138	61%
Laborers	\$116	73%
Factory Workers	\$115	61%
Service Workers	\$103	64%
Sales Workers	\$102	44%
Farmworkers	\$ 95	84%

This continuing gap between the wages of men and women is one of the clearest reflections of the discrimination against women in the work force. In 1956 the median earnings of women was 63 percent that of men; in 1964 it was 59% that of men; in 1974 it was 57% that of men- ie. a steadily declining trend. As long as women enter the workforce in a second-class status, receiving lower wages than men for the same work, their large scale entry into the work-force will drag down the wages of the entire working class. This is why it is crucial for the entire working class to take up a militant struggle for the equal rights of women.

Two additional significant points on women in the work force are the rising trends of working mothers and the special,

oppression of minority women. Between 1940 and 1974, the labor force participation rate of mothers increased five-fold. For example, in 1940 there was only a small fraction of mothers compared to all women (9% of workforce were mothers versus 28% for all women working), but in 1974 the rate of mothers was slightly higher compared to all women- 46 and 45 percent, respectively. The sharpest increase during the 1940's and 50's was among mothers of school-age children. However, this pattern has reversed itself since the early 1960's, with the sharpest increase among young mothers of preschool age children.

In 1974 there were 4.6 million minority women 16 years of age and over in the work force. They accounted for 11 percent of all women in the population and 13 percent of women workers. Among all minority women, about 49 percent were workers, as compared to 45% of the white women. Minority women workers were more heavily concentrated in private household work and service work than were white women - 37 and 19 percent, respectively. In contrast a large proportion of white women were in professional, technical, managerial jobs and clerical jobs than were minority women, like those of white women, are substantially less than the earnings of men, either minority or white. Recent statistics showed minority women who work year round at

full-time jobs had a median wage of \$5,772 - only 88% of that of white women, 69% of that of minority men and 50% of that of white men. The unemployment rate of minority women continues to be the highest of any sector of the workforce. During the first quarter of 1975, the unemployment rate of minority women workers 20 years of age and over averaged 11% - up from 7.9% in the same period the year before - while the rate for white women rose from 4.7% to 7.8%. Minority mothers in the labor force recently totaled 2.1 million or 15% of all working mothers. 61% of minority mothers with children 6 to 17 years of age were workers, as were more than half (52%) of those with children under 6. The compara-

# LOLITA LEBRON, REVOLUTIONARY PATRIOT

As we celebrate International Women's Day, it is important that we remember the heroines of our struggle, whose example and sacrifices have pushed forward the struggle of the oppressed masses. One such example is Lolita Lebron, a leader and warrior in the struggle of the Puerto Rican people against U.S. imperialist oppression.

On March 1, 1954, Lolita Lebron and three comrades--Rafael Miranda, Irving Flores, and Andre Cordero--stood up in the U.S. House of Representatives and opened fire on the Congressmen below. Five Congressmen in all were injured. Since that day she has been in prison. Now as then, her act represents the burning outrage of the revolutionary sentiments of the Puerto Rican people and their hatred for the barbarous oppression of the Yankee imperialists who have dominated Puerto Rico since the 1890's. (See THE COMMUNIST, v. III, no. 2)

Lolita Lebron's revolutionary sentiments developed in her as a child as she came to know the full effects of colonialism at the hand of Yankee imperialism. As she said in a statement reprinted by the Committee to Free the 5 Nationalists:

"When I was in the sixth grade, I knew that life's lessons in the classroom and in my environment taught me two principles: to do the will of God and to do the will of the United States of America...I saw a peasant wife taking a piece of meat out of the garbage can of the landowners. This beautiful woman took that piece of meat from inside that garbage can and refried it at the wood stove of a little kitchen and divided it among her five hungry children...My life experience in New York City grew to greater knowledge of human oppression, exploitation, negation. There came a day in which, after having tried for three days looking for jobs, getting left in the trains, walking under snowfalls, without money for lunch or shelter, I had to deny that I was a Puerto Rican woman in order to have a job...The so-called associated state of Puerto Rico with the United States is a mockery to the principle of sovereignty to the human nations. This so-called form of political government and usurpation that governs my country is an imposition, a compulsion, it has been established by force. These so-called referenda and ass-

CORRECTIONS TO THE COMMUNIST

In the March 1, 1977 issue of THE COMMUNIST, end letters were lost in the fourth column on page 2. In most cases the meaning is clear from the context. If any reader is unclear, please write and we will provide the full text.

In addition, in the same issue, the second sentence in the fourth paragraph of the first column on page 3 should read:

"Feigning distinctness from or opposition to the 'C'PUSA, this trend was able to cover itself with the cloak of Marxism-Leninism and ally itself with the developing leadership of Marxist-Leninists for two reasons: first, the opportunist trend came forward in the correct struggle waged by Marxist-Leninists against ultra 'left' adventurism and terrorism--an example of the truth brought forward by the Chinese comrades that the struggle against one error covers another."

Also we would like to correct a sentence in the January 27, 1977 issue, Vol. III, no. 2. In an article on Puerto Rico we said that the pro-statehood party "defeated the independence parties who dominated politically for the last few decades." The Popular Democratic Party, which had been in power, did not support independence, but the maintenance of the commonwealth status.

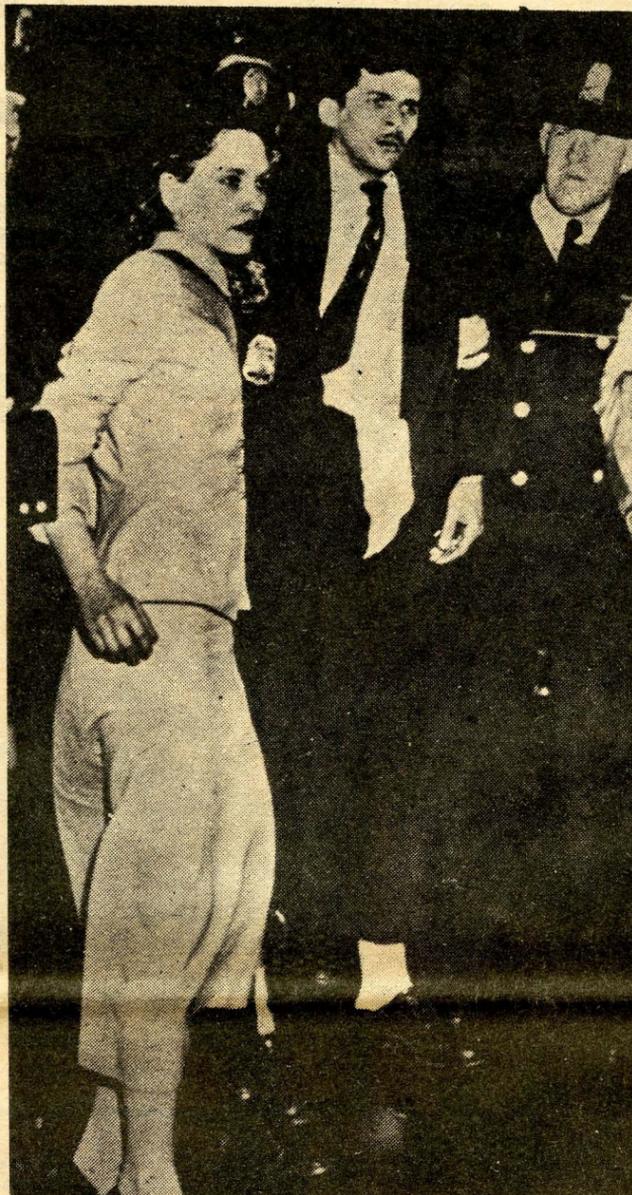
embles made by the government officials of the United States in the captive nation of Puerto Rico carry the force of the oppressors and fits premeditated intention to bring about the results that fit its pockets and political business...We will continue to fight what terror we must fight and we will win, and we shall overcome."

Their act to dramatize their desire for independence was planned to coincide with the opening of the Inter-American Conference at Caracas, Venezuela which had been set up by John Foster Dulles to strengthen the power of the imperialists in Latin America. The patriots wanted to bring to world attention the resistance of the Puerto Rican people and to expose the role of the U.S. imperialists who were consolidating their gains made during World War II particularly in the Third World. In a note in Lebron's purse, she expressed the purpose of her act as she full expected to die in the course of it. She said, "Before God and the world my blood claims for the independence of Puerto Rico. My life I give for the freedom of my country. This is a cry for victory in our struggle for independence. Which for more than a half century has tried to conquer that land that belongs to Puerto Rico. I state that the United States of America are betraying the sacred principles of mankind in their continuous subjugation of my country, violating their rights to be a free nation and a free people...". As she stood in the gallery she yelled, "Viva Puerto Rico" and waved the Puerto Rican flag.

In the United States, there was an immediate hysterical response. The patriots were taken to jail in a lynch mob atmosphere. In weeks to come other nationalists and communists were arrested and harrassed. The patriots maintained their dignity and clarity of purpose. Their leader, Albizu Campos of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, who had just been released from prison on the condition that he would not participate in the revolutionary movement, called the acts, "sublime heroism". In their trials, they never renounced their acts and their commitment. During the trial, Lebron loudly protested when the Puerto Rican flag that she had been

carrying brushed the floor. Finally on July 9, 1954 she was sentenced from 16-50 years for five counts of assault with a dangerous weapon. While in prison, the patriots have been subjected to continuous abuse. They have been constantly pressured to make a deal and promise to give up the struggle if they would be

We must take up the struggle to demand freedom for these Puerto Rican patriots as an important part of forging a militant united front of the revolutionary masses in the U.S. and the masses of Puerto Rican people. In doing so we will remain inspired by the courage of Lolita Lebron who cried out, "Fight for the



released. They stand united in their refusal to capitulate. This is true even though one of them, Andres Cordero, is dying of cancer.

During the first week in March, Lebron was allowed to go to Puerto Rico to attend the funeral of her daughter. When she arrived over 3000 people had gathered and raised their voices in militant chants of "Independence for Puerto Rico" and "Free the Five Nationalists". This proved that despite her long years in prison that she still was a heroine to the masses of Puerto Ricans.

Freedom of my country! To love me is to love my country."

FREE THE FIVE PUERTO RICAN NATIONALIST PRISONERS!!

INDEPENDENCE FOR PUERTO RICO!!

## Suscribe To THE COMMUNIST

Consistent with the plan of the WORKERS CONGRESS (M-L) to fight for an ISKRA type newspaper for the Leninist trend as the main link in the fight to prepare the conditions for a new Communist party, we call on all comrades and friends to send in topical exposures, polemics, letters, criticism and reports on their work and their use of THE COMMUNIST. Every comrade should strive particularly to develop worker correspondents as an essential means to link the newspaper with the working masses.

Subscription rates are \$4.25 per year.



Send to: WC  
POB 1297  
Chicago, Ill  
60690  
The WCML can also be contacted at:  
POB 11713  
Los Angeles, Ca.  
90111

# CONTRADICTIONS IN THE FAMILY

The following contribution by the San Diego Organizing Committee is an excellent presentation of problems in family relations faced by communists which are rarely presented in our press. Our own organization has struggled with these same problems. Based on our experience, we expect the article to be a useful propaganda weapon to assist in overcoming contradictions within the family.

It is essential that comrades and friends recognize the practical, revolutionary importance of this kind of political sum-up of actual work. Preparing the conditions for a new communist party requires that revolutionaries throughout the country generalize their experience. Comrades need to provide political analyses of the problems we confront in day to day work. By submitting results openly to the movement for criticism and evaluation, we enrich the fund of our common experience. This is a powerful means to develop common method and policy which is stable, consistent and correct in the face of our tasks.

Our struggle to build the vanguard communist party of the working class confronts us with tremendous theoretical and practical tasks. For most of our cadre and advanced contacts, this political work affects not only themselves but also their entire families. Whole evenings and weekends are now required for study and meetings. Ideological struggles among family members develop as some transform their world outlook faster than others. Security measures impose new restrictions on a whole set of existing family habits. These are just a few examples of the situations that we have seen develop in our own work. We see this article as an introduction to some aspects of the contradictions that arise in families of the advanced, particularly contradictions between parents and children.

## WORK WITH PEOPLE

Enver Hoxha has stated, "The work of the Party (for us this means pre-party organizations-SDOC) is, above all, work with the people, and as such, it has many approaches, for people themselves are different, with interests, requirements, problems, and worries of all kinds. Their life is a whole complex; therefore, the Party should grasp all this complex and must not be one-sided in its work." (Hoxha Speeches 1969-1970)

Comrade Hoxha makes clear that our work with the advanced is all-sided work. Furthermore, it must be taken up in a class-conscious way. Hoxha goes on to say, "Work with the people requires a thorough knowledge of the line of the party and a skill and tact in carrying it out... side by side with its Marxist Leninist content, its militant revolutionary class spirit, the method and style of our Party work plays a very important role." (Ibid) (Also see "Be Concerned with the Well-Being of the Masses." Mao's Selected Works, V. 1, pg.147)

## M-L LINE AND METHOD OF WORK

First of all, like all other political work, our approach to family relations must be guided by our political line. Family relations are inseparably connect-

ed with the Woman Question. The source of the oppression of women and children is historically connected with the appearance of private property and the consequent establishment of the male supremacist, monogamous family as the economic unit of society. Engels clearly demonstrated in Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State that the monogamous family of this period is "based on the supremacy of the man; its express aim is the begetting of children of undisputed paternity, this paternity being required in order that these children may in due time inherit their father's wealth as his natural heirs." (The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, Engels, Moscow Ed. pg. 62) With the overthrow of mother right (descent traced through women) and the changes of family form, children became the private property of their fathers and the care of children became the individual responsibility of women inside their private households. The full emancipation of women can occur only under the dictatorship of the proletariat, with the socialist ownership of the means of production, the full and equal participation in social production, the transformation of private household production into large scale socialized production, and the ideological struggle against all manifestations of male chauvinism. In socialist society there will exist the basis to struggle for the end of relations of exploitation and oppression between family members, between husband and wife, between parents and children.

While we struggle for proletarian revolution and the emancipation of women and children, we must recognize that contradictions exist within the working class family. These contradictions are a reflection of the inequality between men and women under capitalist production. They are a reflection of the bourgeois ideology of male chauvinism, which seeks to justify the existing inequalities by the idea that men are superior to women, that children belong to their parents. We unite with WCML's position that these contradictions, including the contradictions between parents and children, are "contradictions among the people." As such they "must be handled through democratic methods of discussion, persuasion, education and criticism-self criticism." (see WC's Resolutions on the Women Question, section 3.3)

Furthermore, we unite with WC's position that "contradictions within the family are the responsibility of the whole organization". Here, as in all our political work, it is a question of combatting bourgeois ideology. Instead of permitting individuals to take up these contradictions as purely "personal" matters, we should be applying a communist collective style of work. As Comrade Hoxha has said, "it is indispensable to eradicate the mentality of private property, the idea that family problems are merely private". (Problems of the Struggle for the Complete Emancipation of Women, pg.185) If we consider our daily lives for a moment, we can realize that our personal family relations have a powerful effect on our political work. Our failure to handle these con-

tradictions correctly retards the work of communist organizations and, consequently, the revolutionary struggle of the masses.

## AN INCORRECT APPROACH

We learned of one person's experience with the CPUSA in the 1940's, when he was a young boy. His father had

tween parents and children. We didn't start off being clear on the political line that could guide our work. And we have vacillated on how much organizational responsibility was correct and even realistic in this pre-party period. But we did realize that organizational discussion and decisions about



MAKE OUR PROLETARIAN FAMILIES UNITS OF REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE!

been designated as an open representative of the party in his trade union work. The boy resented the fact that his father's political work kept them apart most of the time. He also resented the hardships on the whole family which was frequently harassed by the police. According to this person, the father's response to his resentment was to avoid discussion of the problems of his work.

The boy came to resent the party itself and the ideology it stood for. Consequently, he never became active in the party, never took up the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat (which the party itself began to abandon by that time). The question arises--what does it mean to be trying to win people to communism and fail to win our own children?

In this case we don't know what the policy of the party was on this particular question; but we do see a definite line in practice. The father failed to deal with the contradictions between himself and his son as part of the class struggle. The father failed to take up the ideological struggle within his own family and thereby lost the invaluable initiative of at least one child. We can also conclude that the party itself, in this case, did not consciously struggle with the contradictions within the family, but rather left it to the spontaneous activity of the family, assuming that the father would take care of any family problems. In accepting that the family is a private matter, they promoted the ideology of male chauvinism.

## OUR EXPERIENCE

From the beginning of our organization, we have had to deal with contradictions be-

parent-child relationships are crucial to the political development of the advanced, both cadre and people with whom we work.

## 1. THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

First of all, the same bourgeoisie that parents are fighting in the plants and communities is also oppressing our children: autocratic and anti-proletarian education, national chauvinism, police repression, sex-role stereotyping, "teen culture", T.V. propaganda etc. These are powerful weapons of the bourgeoisie and any class conscious parent can testify to their influence on our children. This influence demands that we pay more attention to developing our children politically and to help them with these problems. We cannot collectively transform ourselves into class conscious revolutionaries and leave our children to deal with bourgeois society alone.

An important part of political work with our children is the ideological struggle to transform their world outlook. One reaction to this position is "No, they're my kids." Actually this means that the parents are viewing their children as private property. Communists instead view children as members of the revolutionary proletariat, whose care and education is the responsibility of us all. Another reaction is "Oh, not the kids, they're too young." Actually what this boils down to is that comrades don't want to deal with the situation. It means that they are agreeing with bourgeois ideology that children are incapable of being responsible, productive members of society. Thus they are exaggerating the differences between children and adults

CONTINUED TO PAGE 6



# Resolution on the Woman Question

## I. PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE OPPRESSION OF WOMEN

1.1 The bondage of women is connected historically with the appearance of private property and with the monogamous family based on private property as the economic unit of society. The classical monogamous family is based on the supremacy of the man, its express aim being to produce children of undisputed paternity to inherit property. Within the monogamous family the social status of women was degraded and her role in production reduced to that of being an instrument to produce a man's legitimate heirs and a domestic slave restricted to the petty tasks of a private household economy. Based on private property the monogamous family arose as the subjection of one sex by the other, establishing a family system entirely dominated by the private property system.

In reprinting our resolution on the Woman Question we take the opportunity to include brief study notes. These are informal and incomplete; nonetheless comrades have found them helpful in providing some guidelines for study.

The foundation for a scientific view of the Woman Question is THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY, PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE STATE by Engels. This is a text second only to CAPITAL as a classical foundation of Marxism and one which Lenin emphasized must be studied again and again.

Important selections from THE ORIGIN as well as other excerpts from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin are collected in the Little New World paperback THE WOMAN QUESTION (WQ). The collection of Lenin's writings called THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN (EW) is essential and should be studied by every comrade. In addition the Albanian comrades have recently published a collection of articles and speeches which sums up the experience of the Party of Labor of Albania on the Woman Question entitled PROBLEMS OF THE STRUGGLE FOR THE COMPLETE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN.

In taking up the study of the Woman Question two general points are important. First, as we say in the Resolution: "the emancipation of women is a world historic task of proletarian revolution." The oppression of women arises historically with class oppression and private property. Lenin emphasized that we must show the unbreakable connection between woman's human and social position and the private ownership of the means of production" and Enver Hoxha says "one of the main

1.2 In bourgeois society sex oppression in the monogamous family based on private property is the source of the social inequality of women and the second class status of working women in the labor force. Just as national inequality and the superexploitation of oppressed national minorities in the workforce have their material basis in the imperialist control of the oppressed nation, so too sex inequality and the superexploitation of women in the workforce have their material basis in the degraded status of women and their domestic servitude within the individual family as the economic unit of society.

## II. THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

2.1 The emancipation of women is a world historic task of proletarian revolution. The full emancipation of women can take place only under the dictatorship of

scientific deductions of Marxism-Leninism is that which says that the bondage of women is connected with the appearance of private property." The key to the age old oppression of women is the abolition of private property. But that is also the main task of proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. So in doing our job we accomplish a task as old as civilization. But as we also point out, this works both ways -- it is impossible to abolish private property without achieving the full emancipation of women.

The second point concerns the importance of the Woman Question as a democratic question. Failure to pay attention to the democratic tasks of the revolution has always been a fertile source of "left" opportunism. It is the proletariat that must lead the struggle for democracy and a careful study of the Woman Question will promote our understanding of the democratic tasks of proletarian revolution. But we study Marxism-Leninism in order to apply it. We take up this question in order to become practical fighters for democracy.

Section 1. Private Property and the Oppression of Women. The material basis for the highly respected position of women under primitive communism was the communal household. (WQ, p. 13) There was no surplus product and thus no possibility of one group living off another. While men hunted, women governed common household affairs. Men and women were on a footing of equality and participated equally in all tribal affairs.

the proletariat where it will be possible to abolish private property through socialist ownership of the means of production and abolish the individual private household as the economic unit of society through the creation of a large scale socialist economy. However, the working class can never overthrow social relations based on private property without overcoming the oppression of women. As Lenin said, the proletariat cannot achieve complete liberty until it has won complete liberty for women. Thus the struggle for the emancipation of women and the struggle for proletarian revolution are inseparably linked.

2.2 Materially, communists must work for the full and equal participation of women in social production as the first premise for the emancipation of women. This requires the socialization of housework and the transformation of the narrow, petty individual household economy into large scale socialist economy. It includes our immediate revolutionary struggle for the development of institutions to facilitate the participation of women in social production, such as low cost public dining rooms and laundries, childcare programs, etc., as well as programs of technical and professional education. It demands unremitting struggle against every form of discrimination

against women at the workplace and in trade union activity.

2.3 Politically we stand for the abolition of all restrictions on the democratic rights of women and for the absolute equality of men and women before the law. But formal equality in bourgeois society is inevitably undermined by household bondage, male privileges and inequality in fact. Like national equality, sex equality is a component part of the bourgeois democratic revolution which the bourgeoisie can proclaim but cannot accomplish. Only the proletariat can lead the struggle for the democratic rights of women because we intend to abolish private ownership of the means of production which alone is the material basis for establishing the real, not merely formal, economic and social equality of women. Proletarian revolution is impossible unless the working class leads the struggle for the democratic rights of women. At the same time the struggle for the democratic rights of women cannot be separated from the struggle of the working class for the conquest of political power and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

We must take concrete steps to overcome the inequality of women's participation in politics. As Lenin

says you cannot draw the masses into politics without drawing women into politics as well. The experience of all liberation movements shows that the success of a revolution depends on the extent to which women take part in it.

2.4 Ideologically we must wage an uncompromising struggle against all forms of male chauvinism. Our communist work on the woman question involves widespread educational work among men to eliminate every trace of the conduct and mentality of male supremacy. We must fight all manifestations of oppression in bourgeois society which promotes women's lack of interest in politics or which stifle the political initiative and activity of women. We must also fight against any narrowness on this question such as that represented by the various feminist trends.

2.5 Organizationally, as communists we take the jackhammer of criticism-self criticism to smash all forms of male chauvinism or female slavishness and passivity within our ranks. It is the duty of every comrade, male and female, to actively repudiate all liberalism concerning the oppression of women. Within our organization women must be brought forward as leaders of the organization's work in all spheres. We totally reject any vestige of male suprem-

acy which ignores or disregards the revolutionary experience and ability of communist women and fails to promote them to positions of responsibility based on proven capability. We also recognize that male supremacy and domestic slavery of women are the primary source of unevenness between men and women comrades and therefore insist on the need to take concrete steps to promote the ideological, political and organizational training of women. The key to women's full participation in proletarian revolution, the path to the emancipation of women, is our ability to move forward aggressively to arm women with Marxism-Leninism.

## III. THE PROLETARIAN FAMILY AND PROLETARIAN MORALITY

3.1 We stand for stable monogamous proletarian marriages, whether officially sanctioned or not, based on mutual acquaintance, free and frank consent, and sincere proletarian love between man and woman. Although bourgeois society hypocritically proclaims marriage based on individual sex love, freedom of choice and mutual affection, these remain unrealizable in the monogamous family based on private property, male supremacy and the domestic slavery of women. In bourgeois society freedom of marriage and individual sex love based on mutual affection can become the rule only among the oppressed classes

because all the foundations of the monogamous family based on private property are removed. But this can happen only where there is a constant and militant struggle against every form of male chauvinism, a sharing of domestic chores and a struggle for the full and equal participation of women in social production.

3.2 We defend a proletarian relationship between a man and a woman which is free from material considerations and free from religious and social prejudice. We do not defend freedom from the responsibilities of marriage and childbearing and oppose every form of bourgeois licentiousness which sees in sex relations only the search for a bedmate to satisfy one's sexual desires. These views are the product of the loveless monogamous family based on private property which has always carried with it prostitution and adultery, enforcing strict monogamy for the women but assuming polygamy and sexual freedom for the man. It is the slaveowner's mentality toward women derived from the monogamous family based on private property that reduces women to sex objects and also promotes other degenerate forms of sexual expression such as homosexuality. We adopt the standard of the People's Liberation Army of China: "Don't take liberties with women." As Lenin said, "Promiscuity in

sexual matters is bourgeois." Sexual license is a barrier to the emancipation of women and debases both men and women. It is a sign of degeneracy and a waste of the concentration and energy essential to the class struggle of the proletariat.

3.3 Unless properly handled, contradictions within the working family--contradictions between a man and a woman and between parents and children--will inevitably stifle the revolutionary drive of both men and women and will powerfully contribute to the political backwardness and passivity of women. Among the proletariat and oppressed masses these contradictions are contradictions among the people and must be handled through democratic methods of discussion, persuasion, education and criticism-self criticism. Failure to handle such contradictions correctly will give rise to increased oppression, retard the emancipation of women and promote degenerate views and activity on the relations of the sexes. This can only retard the work of a communist organization and the revolutionary progress of the masses. Therefore contradictions within the family are the responsibility of the whole organization. If handled correctly they will promote the political consciousness and revolutionary initiative of every family member, making the family a mighty unit of struggle on the path of proletarian revolution.

## STUDY GUIDE FOR RESOLUTION

The production of a surplus product created a revolution which overthrew all this. How did this occur? The domestication of cattle, sheep, etc. was decisive WQ, p. 14) Domesticated herds increased faster than the tribe and this meant that extra labor power could be supported and used. Domestication therefore brought with it slavery. But who did the cattle and slaves belong to? By the primitive division of labor they were outside the household and therefore belonged to men. The division of labor did not change, but because of the production of a surplus product the new social relations which came into being on the basis of the old division of labor profoundly altered the social structure.

As the primary means of production the herds were not socialized and in the end not controllable by the commune. Appropriation became private, destroying the primitive commune, and the individual private household became the basic economic unit of society.

The common household of the commune based on common property was supplanted by the private household based on private property and woman's public or social role in the former reduced to petty domestic servitude in the latter.

In addition, in order to pass on wealth (inheritance) is obviously a way of increasing the donor's power during his life -- and where it passes within the family a way of increasing the power

of the family now), men had to have children of undisputed paternity. Mother right -- the reckoning of kinship according to the maternal line -- was overthrown and strict monogamy for women enforced, replacing, for women, every vestige of the sexual freedom of the earlier primitive group.

The first paragraph of the Resolution shows how private property determined a family system based on the exclusion of women from social production, their restriction to the petty domestic slavery of the private household economy as the basic economic unit of society and the subjection of women to men.

The second paragraph shows how the narrow economic role to which woman is confined in this family system based on private property affects woman's entry into the workforce under capitalism.

Working women are subject above all to the class oppression of all workers. In addition they are subject to the oppression of the family system based on private property -- domestic slavery and male supremacy remain wherever there is private ownership of the means of production. This additional oppression determines the special vulnerability of women to exploitation and oppression within the workforce, ie their superexploitation in terms of available jobs, working conditions, wages, etc.

Section 2. The Emancipation of Women. Engels says that the full and equal participation of women in social production is the first premise of emancipation. This deals a mortal blow to the foundations of classical monogamy: 1) male supremacy and 2) domestic servitude, both of which become untenable. Genuinely full and equal participation, however, demands that the petty individual household economy be transformed into a largescale socialist one. (WQ, pp. 39-40).

The demand for the absolute social equality of women in 2.3 is fundamental. Lenin emphasizes this throughout the collection THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN -- e.g. pp. 21, 45, 46, 59, 62, 63, 69, 78, 80, 81, 83, 88, etc. But Lenin constantly emphasizes also that formal equality before the law is not real equality. The best democracy cannot establish the real social equality of women under capitalism, because "wherever there is private property . . . men retain their privileges." (EW, p. 67). The emancipation of women is a part of the bourgeois democratic revolution (EW, p. 88) but the more democratic the government, the more clearly workers will see the inadequacy of democracy ("democracy . . . is not enough for us!" EW, p. 81) and the more clearly see their rights. The bourgeoisie cannot accomplish the real economic and social equality of women: "no matter how much democracy there is under capitalism, the woman remains a domestic slave . . ." (cf EW, pp. 73, 85, etc.)

Lenin emphasizes the practical importance of drawing women into politics throughout the text, and especially in the whole interview with Zetkin (e.g. EW pp. 83, 70, 60, 111, etc.)

Section 3. The Proletarian Family and Proletarian Morality. On the propositions of section 3 the writings of Enver Hoxha are very good as well as those of Lenin -- particularly again the Zetkin interview and also some of his letters to Inessa Armand, EW pp. 36-41. But the moral views of Hoxha and Lenin clearly rest on Engels' work. Individual sex love comes into being outside marriage under feudalism (marriage being a question of land and political power). Among the bourgeoisie marriages are supposed to be based on individual sex love but this is idealism or hypocrisy since in bourgeois society love is undermined and corrupted by private property, male supremacy and the domestic servitude of women. Love is possible among the oppressed classes because the oppressed are propertyless and the foundations of the classical monogamous family are lacking, but this cannot occur without an unrelenting struggle against every vestige of male supremacy.

The principle of the Chinese Communist Party's People's Liberation Army sums up the essence of that struggle: "Don't take liberties with women. Lenin's statement that promiscuity is bourgeois comes from the Zetkin interview. Classical monogamy was

always monogamy for the woman only. Men continued the sexual freedom derived from the primitive horde. Treating women like sex objects derives from man's view of marriage based on private property: marriage is loveless, woman being an instrument to produce heirs and a domestic slave; female slaves taken by the male are so many sexual possessions. Or if there is not full slavery there is wage slavery -- prostitution. It is essential to recognize that the greater degree of instability in sexual relations manifested by men is directly derived from the hypocrisy of the classical monogamous marriage and the slaveowner's mentality towards women that is based on it. Engels points out that sexual love is by nature exclusive. Freed from property considerations, individual inclination, mutual affection, interests, comradely collaboration, etc. will be decisive in creating stable proletarian relationships between men and women.

Section 3.3 stresses the importance of paying much more attention to contradictions in the family -- much more practical attention. These contradictions are the responsibility of the whole organization. We must aggressively move forward to overcome the backwardness of either the man or woman in the couple, and especially of women, because the lack of interest in politics on the part of women is historically conditioned, a manifestation of the oppression of women, of the restriction of women to the petty and narrow domestic tasks of the individual household and of male supremacy. Failure to do so means the failure to draw women into politics and without the support of the masses of wo-

men we will not draw the masses as a whole into politics (Lenin). This is also true of contradictions between parents and children. Since the primary responsibility for the family has traditionally fallen to women, if we do not take up the practical problems which confront proletarian and revolutionary families these problems act as a barrier to the full participation of women in politics. In all this our lack of attention leads to losing potential comrades and stifling the initiative of comrades since they are torn by their political and family obligations.

We can transform that contradiction into a driving force of the revolution by making the family a unit of struggle -- cf Lenin, EW, p. 29, attacking the zero population growth morons. Generally on this point the Chinese comrades emphasize the importance of paying close attention to the special problems of women, recognizing in the proper solution to these problems a powerful stimulus to the revolutionary initiative and enthusiasm of women.

and justifying the oppression of children. We aren't talking about petty-bourgeois counter-culture trips where we get three year olds to yell pig at cops passing by. No, we mean that we apply the science of Marxism-Leninism to the everyday experiences of our children to show them our view on the questions facing them. We use the science to help them to work through the problems they face.

For example, several children of people we work with were fighting a lot when together. Their parents and other adult friends arranged a criticism-self criticism session for the children, who are of grade school age. In this session, and in other individual discussions, the children are learning to take criticism and to do self-criticism, analysing the source of their actions and trying to work out plans for improvement in the future. This is one aspect of our children learning collective behaviour and learning to overcome the individualism they are taught in school and elsewhere.

As another modest but real example, the daughter of an advanced worker, along with three other girls had joined a grade school athletic team. They immediately faced a lot of male chauvinist harassment from the teacher and some boys on the team. Although the girls would fight back as individuals, they faced a superior force. The worker explained to the daughter that she should organize the others to all confront any further harassment from the boys or the male teacher. The girls did organize and at least temporarily halted the harassment. For the daughter of the worker, she learned through discussion and struggle about the need to organize the unity necessary to overcome the special oppression of women.

Some people might argue that this was no great victory for the proletariat, but it is one example of the real world of our parents and children. Moreover, in our

present state of amateurishness and fragmentation it is a step forward. It cannot be dismissed anymore than the day-to-day struggles against harassment in a plant. Our movement is still plagued by the narrow notion that workers' struggles occur only in plants. Our political work with children will not only help transform their world view, but also broaden our own view of the complexities of class struggle in the every day lives of working people.

## 2. CHILDCARE

We have found that the second aspect of this question is the responsibilities of childcare. The commitment of politically advanced forces to party-building means a very full week, not just an occasional evening now and then.

Parents, especially single parents, need help with childcare if they are to study and do their other political work. Moreover, because parents are not able to spend as much time with their children, childcare must be an all-sided responsibility, not only babysitting. We have tried to take up this responsibility not only to help our comrades, but also because as communists we share responsibility for all children.

Because of the woman's role in household production, she bears primary responsibility for childrearing. We all know that all too often the woman in the family is left to deal with the problems of the children. As a result, women are held back the most by the contradictions between parents and children. We need to struggle with families to see that the responsibilities of childrearing are shared.

## OPPORTUNISM LIQUIDATES STRUGGLE

We know that some communists do not engage in such struggle against manifestations of male chauvinism when they occur within working class families. They often don't because they have idealized the proletarian family as it exists today. It is an error to assume that the

proletariat has spontaneously been able to combat subjective and objective conditions within bourgeois society and establish families based on mutual love and respect and free of inequality. Marxist-Leninists know that class consciousness does not develop spontaneously. We unite with WC's presentation of the question in their Resolutions on the Woman Question: "In bourgeois society freedom of marriage and individual sex love based on mutual affection can become the rule only among the oppressed classes because all the foundations of the monogamous family based on private property are removed. But this can only happen where there is a constant and militant struggle against every form of male chauvinism, a sharing of domestic chores and a struggle for the full and equal participation of women in social production." (see section 3.1)

To pretend that the proletarian family already spontaneously exists and not to take up the struggle against manifestations of male chauvinism within working class families is opportunism. It is the liquidation of an important aspect of the Woman Question and proletarian revolution. It is the liquidation of the struggle necessary to make proletarian relationships a reality.

## TAKE UP THE STRUGGLE

We certainly recognize that our present level of organization limits us in our ability to carry out the correct line on problems that confront parents and children, just as it limits our ability to carry out all our work. Only with a party can we take up all these questions effectively and in a mass way. Party building is our central task and that points to definite tactical tasks that we must concentrate on and priorities we must set. But we cannot neglect children in the families of the advanced forces who are building the party. We must achieve some division of labor within our organization and collectives for this work.

The kinds of problems we

face when we neglect our children always come back to hold back our other work. Small contradictions become crises and parents then have to stop political work and take the time to deal with a more serious situation. Or, as in the case of the son of the CPUSA cadre discussed above, the children may come to resent our politics and turn their backs on communism, stifling their own political development. We can afford none of this.

## CLASS QUESTION OF YOUTH

Our policies towards political work with the children of the advanced should not be an attempt to create an alternative culture for "our" children alone. Rather the question of youth is a class question. In this pre-party period when we focus on winning the advanced of the whole working class, we are taking up a particular practical part of the whole question of youth--our work with the children of advanced forces.

But in this work we must broaden our view and develop our line on all the questions facing youth. It is only by applying Marxism-Leninism to the particular struggles they face that we demonstrate the power of M-L and begin to win them to our cause. Thus we need to discuss in our communist press our views on the various aspects of family life the divisions of age, bourgeois education, the so-called "youth culture".

In conclusion, we encourage all comrades and advanced workers to defeat the tendency to leave the contradictions between parents and children to the individual family. Defeat spontaneity! Develop our communist line and method of work in all the questions that face us in our struggle to build the vanguard party of the working class! Use THE COMMUNIST to weld our unity!

The heroic youth of our country have been and remain an active force of the revolution and a loyal auxiliary of the Party. The 35-year experience of the Party shows that when the inexhaustible revolutionary energies of the youth are merged with the energies of the working class and the other working masses, under the leadership of the proletarian Party, there is no force which can stop the triumph of the revolution and socialism.

Our youth are surrounded by the special care of the Party and the entire society. Great prospects, which guarantee their present and future and give a lofty content and meaning to their life, have been opened to them. The Party has ever better fulfilled the cultural and spiritual aspirations and various material needs of the youth, it has mobilized them in revolutionary actions and given them the role of active and important participants in the revolution and the construction of socialist society. Therefore, our youth, too, have always followed the Party enthusiastically, optimistically and faithfully, and have gone all out to make the homeland flourish and strengthen its defence.

We see an entirely different picture in the bourgeois and revisionist countries, where uncertainty for the present and fear of the future nags at the youth day in and day out. Every second of every hour their minds are being poisoned by confusing propaganda, urging them to an empty, dissipated life, devoid of ideals, which alienates them from the revolution, which drives them to the road of crime and hooliganism, and casts them into anarchism, adventurism, utopia and despair.

Our Party aims to keep the communist ideals and the healthy revolutionary spirit always alive in the minds and hearts of the youth, to educate them to be loyal fighters of the Party, ready to dedicate their energies, talent and lives to the construction of socialism and the defence of the homeland. Led by the Party, the youth must ceaselessly develop the spirit of revolutionary initiative and action in production and in all fields. They must deepen their irreconcilable stand and be constantly on the attack against the class enemy, against any influence of the bourgeois and revisionist ideology, liberal and conservative manifestations which inhibit progress. They must strengthen their will and perseverance to acquire knowledge and culture, become powerful supporters of technical and scientific progress.

EXCERPTS ON WOMEN AND YOUTH FROM "REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE 7TH CONGRESS OF THE PARTY OF LABOUR OF ALBANIA" BY ENVER HOXHA



Nelo Lluçaj: "The dance of victory".

The correct Marxist-Leninist policy of the Party has led to that true, deep-going, and very broad revolution which has taken place in the life of the Albanian woman.

Our experience has fully confirmed the necessity of linking the problem of the complete emancipation of the woman with the question of national liberation and the cause of the proletariat. Without the participation of the woman the socialist revolution cannot be successfully carried out, and without the socialist revolution the complete emancipation of the woman cannot be achieved.

The energies and abilities of the woman, which lay dormant and suppressed in the past, have burst out powerfully and irresistibly in all fields of our socialist life. The Albanian woman has come out into the arena of the struggle for socialism full of dignity, and is outstanding for her high revolutionary spirit, her determination and patriotism, and distinguishes herself at work and in life. Today, she is found everywhere, in fields and factories, in schools and laboratories. Highly responsible positions in the Party and the state have been entrusted to her. New relationships of equality are being established between husband and wife at work and in the family. The emancipation of the woman is strengthening the socialist democracy day by day. This bears out Marx's affirmation that the level of emancipation of the woman represents a natural yardstick of general emancipation.

Our reality refutes all the bourgeois and revisionist «theories» on the roads to the emancipation of the woman. The attempts of the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries to turn the struggle for the emancipation of the working woman against her husband, children and family, are aimed at diverting her from the revolutionary struggle and disrupting the common front of the working class and the working people against the real oppressors and exploiters.

In the future, too, the Party will consistently fight to carry out its program for the complete emancipation of the woman. At the same time, on the basis of the possibilities ensured by the economic development of the country, better material conditions must be created to lighten the woman's burden of household chores so as to raise the efficiency of her work on the production front and her activity in political, social and cultural life to a higher level.

# ZIMBABWEAN WOMEN TAKE UP ARMS FOR FREEDOM

## THIRD WORLD WOMEN IN STRUGGLE

The Third World people and countries are the main force combatting imperialism, social imperialism, all forms of colonialism and neo-colonialism and especially the hegemonic strivings of the two superpowers. All oppressed classes and strata to various degrees are taking part in this struggle. This includes the struggle of women. Not only do third world women suffer oppression and exploitation as members of oppressed nations; they also suffer special oppression of women, linked to the perpetuation by the imperialists and their lackeys of feudalism and reaction and the complete denial of any semblance of democratic rights.

But it is an irresistible law of history that oppression breeds resistance. Therefore, throughout the third world, women are in the forefront of the struggle for national liberation and independence. And nowhere can we find a better example of this than in the armed struggle for national liberation.

One of the organizations which has for years led this struggle is the Zimbabwe African National Union. A member of the Women's Detachment of the Army of Zanu has told her story and the story of all Zimbabwean women in a pamphlet published by Zanu.

Fungai Tichavapedza was born into a poor peasant family, a victim of the colonial regime and of feudalism which relegates women to a virtually complete submission to men. As the comrade points out: "As elsewhere throughout the world, the women of Zimbabwe are oppressed by two great pillars: one is tradition and the other is colonialism. We have our own grievances apart from the national crimes committed against us by our racist enemy. For us there is actually a need for liberation."

However, it is imperialism which perpetuates the feudal and semi-feudal society and its slave-like conditions for women. Thus it is impossible to raise the status of women without linking this task to the liberation of the nation from imperialism and social-imperialism. She emphasizes:

"We, the women of Zimbabwe are not the only sector of our population that is oppressed. We are oppressed as a nation. We cannot solve our own grievances as women alone. No. Our grievances are part of the national grievances of the six million Zimbabweans."

The national and sex oppression of the women of Zimbabwe is reflected economically in their exclusion from all but the lowest paying jobs like nannies and housekeepers. Jobs that are "open" to African women like nursing have many restrictions and women with the necessary qualifications cannot find jobs because of the racism of the Smith regime. In fact the Rhodesian racists look for nurses from outside the country to come and fill positions in white hospitals while African nurses, fully qualified, are unemployed.

Also, many others trained to be teachers have lost their posts when they had to take maternity leave. Women without jobs or means to support themselves are still forced into marriages they do not want.

Because there are no jobs for African women in the cities, they are relegated by the regime to rural areas -- the

women for political reasons. They know that as mothers of the children we are the first teachers of these children. Then if we are educated we can be aware of the political situation in the country and we will teach this to our children who will grow up revolutionary and thus be a political threat to Europeans...As a result they have decided to

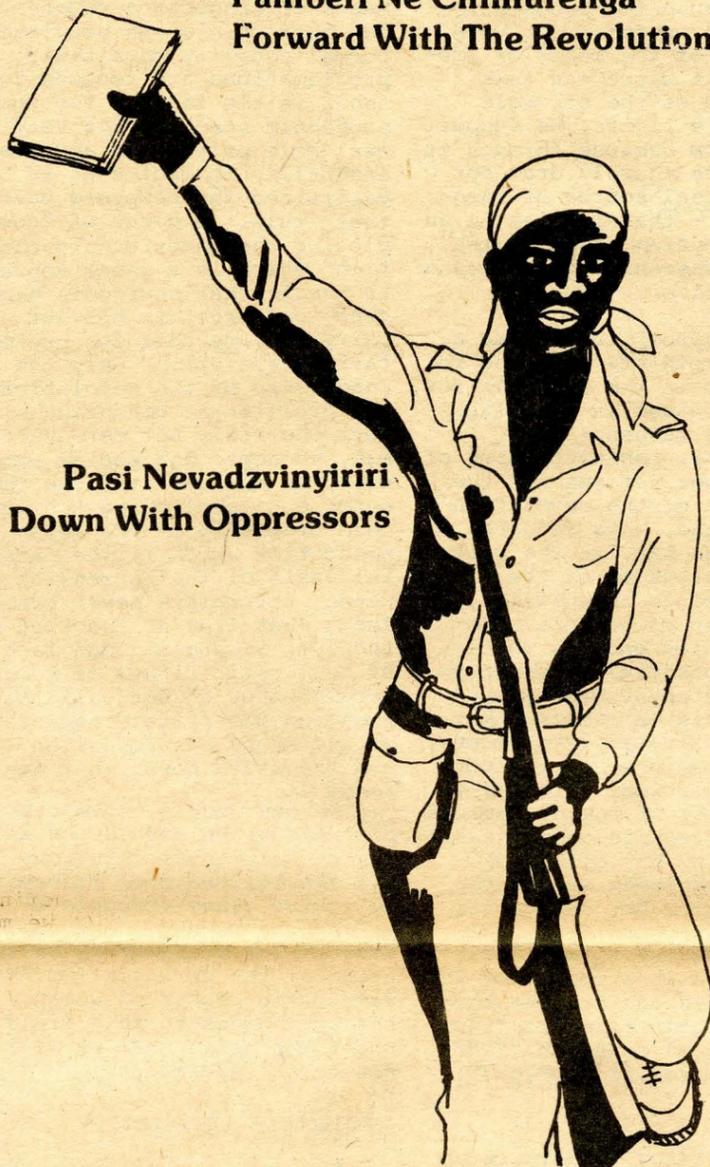
fighters like Comrade Fungai Tichavapedza, that there is no course left open for the women and people of Zimbabwe other than that of CHIMURENGA--the armed struggle for national liberation and independence. She wrote: "We have seen that the racist regime is oppressing us and this is one thing that is very clear. The regime will never stop oppressing us of its own accord. We cannot expect the fascist white settlers to wake up one day very reasonable indeed and say that they are going to end this oppression. . . . This oppression will only stop when political state power has been taken away from the hands of the boers and put into the hands of the Africans. This can only be done through armed struggle. . . . Only a national struggle led by a true revolutionary Party can liberate us. We have these two things already--CHIMURENGA and ZANU. What is left is for each one of you to come forward and play your historic roles. We are already at our posts but yours is still vacant. Will you take up the challenge now and come forward to perform your role?"

ZANU is an organization that has acted on Lenin's teaching that "the success of a revolution depends on how much the women take part in it." Women are trained on equal terms with men and take on the same tasks as male comrades. They perform the same patrol duties, carry the same war material, guard bases, fight ambushes and missions and cook in turns with male comrades. By paying special attention to the ideological, political and military development of female cadres, ZANU ensures that the question of democratic rights of women in Zimbabwe will not be forgotten in the national revolution, but be an integral part of it.

ZANU's Political Program insists on the need for special attention to promoting the rights of women and children and this is being done in areas where the people's army operates. Comrade Fungai Tichavapedza writes: "ZANU is a liberation movement and its resources are very limited, but it tries its best to look after our welfare, particularly that of our children for these children are the future nation of Zimbabwe."

Fungai Tichavapedza is only one woman out of millions. Wherever there is revolution women are in the forefront to create a new society free from exploitation and oppression.

### Pamberi Ne Chimurenga Forward With The Revolution



### Pasi Nevadzviniriri Down With Oppressors

so-called "tribal trust lands" Here on sandy, stony soil, the worst land of the country, women are supposed to support themselves. Fungai Tichavapedza states:

"Actually, for us, the Zimbabweans, the rural areas have become concentration centres of forced labor camps for the African women." They are most often separated from their husbands who are forced to work in the city, but at such low wages that they bring nothing from the city to invest in the rural areas to improve their families' conditions of life.

If a woman does manage to live with her husband in the city, when he dies the woman is immediately forced to go back to the rural areas to live with relatives, and her home is taken from her even if she is still working. In rural areas, when husbands die, widows are forced to pay tax and the acreage of their land is reduced.

Hand in hand with brutal economic exploitation and lack of democratic rights is the cultural oppression of the women of Zimbabwe by the Smith regime. The government tries its best to prevent the education of the masses, and especially women. The comrade explains that the illegal white regime in Zimbabwe has "discouraged the education of

deprive us of education. The white fascists cannot deny this."

The question of health is another example of the brutal colonial oppression of the racist regime which bears especially hard on women. Because wages are too low, proper medical care is not available. Babies are delivered at home and they receive no medical check ups. Children are always ill from the conditions and in an open part of the country 75% of the children die before the age of seven! In addition to this "unofficial" method of barbarous population control, the colonialists also push for sterilization of African women every chance they get.

Because of these inhuman conditions of oppression, it has become quite clear to

#### INSCRIPTION ON A PHOTOGRAPH OF WOMEN MILITIA

These well-groomed heroines carry five-foot rifles,  
On this parade ground in the first rays of the sun,  
Daughters of China have uncommon aspirations,  
Preferring battle-tunics to red dresses.

--Mao Tsetung

ble figures for white women were 53 and 34%, respectively.

FIGHT FOR DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS OF WOMEN

On the basis of this blatant oppression and discrimination, more and more working women are actively taking up struggles around these conditions. It is against these conditions that we must continue to fight, paying particular and close attention to them in our struggle to build a new anti-revisionist Communist party. We have already stated that without the participation of women in the political struggles of the US people, we cannot achieve our goal of socialist revolution. We further stated that:

"It is also necessary to fight daily for the urgent demands of women, especially working women and to fully draw women into the struggle against US imperialism. These urgent demands include: complete, free childcare; wages equal to those of men and an end to discrimination on the job; safe, free abortions and birth control and the abolition of all laws preventing this right; paid maternity leave with no loss in seniority; an end to forced sterilization. These are some of the major demands which allow women to more fully participate in social production and the political and economic life of the US." (THE COMMUNIST, March 8, 1976, p.4)

Many of the gains that have been fought for and won through the struggles of the masses - ie, an expansion of child-care through federally funded day care centers, the legalization of abortion, the expansion of birth control methods and a more careful researching of the safety of birth control devices - now face sharp attack from the capitalist class mired in its present crisis. An example is the recent Supreme Court decision that permits employers to exclude pregnancy benefits from workers' health plans. (See THE COMMUNIST, Vol. III, no. 2) Another is the recent bill that was passed by the Senate that halts payment for abortions for women on welfare except for medical emergencies. These are just two examples of many of the direct and brutal attack by the bourgeoisie on the rights of working women, whether employed or unemployed, and are part of the general attack on the working class.

SUPPORT THE ERA

It is precisely in the face of such open attacks that communists must take leadership of the fight for women's rights. Guided by the principle that proletarian revolution is impossible unless the working class leads the struggle for the democratic rights of women, we take up support for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and conclude that it is the duty of communists, workers and all progressive forces to support the ERA. The ERA, having initially been introduced in 1923 (3 years after women won the right to vote!), was finally passed in 1972. Currently 35 states have ratified the amendment. As a constitutional amendment the ERA must be ratified by 38 states before March 22, 1979. With a few exceptions, the ERA has not been ratified in the region where women make up a larger percentage of the work force and the majority of workers are non-unionized and face some of the worst working conditions with the lowest wages - the South. These states include Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana,

Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Virginia.

The ERA is a statement of the principle of legal equality. It states that: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." The first principle of our support is that we stand for the abolition of all restrictions on the democratic rights of women and for the absolute equality of men and women before the law. As we pointed out in our "Resolution of the Woman Question", the oppression of women is connected to private property. Because the proletariat intends to overthrow private ownership of the means of production, it alone can take leadership of the struggle for women's rights. We support this reform because through it we can more sharply draw out what the real source of inequality is - that it lies in an economic system based on the private ownership of the means of production.

To the opposition raised against communists fighting for leadership in the struggle for the ERA because it is a legal reform, we respond:

"A Marxist-Leninist point of view is that reforms are the by-product of the revolutionary struggle. This is also true of the ERA. As the revolutionary struggle of the world's people intensifies, recognition of women's role in revolution and the revolutionary potential of women is also heightened. One by-product of this is reforms that promote the equality of women and overcome some of the social and political barriers to the equality of women. Obviously the bourgeoisie does this in an effort to buy off large sections of women and dampen the struggle. But communists take advantage of the revolutionary upsurge to mobilize the democratic struggle of the broad masses and promote the struggle against imperialism and political reaction." (THE COMMUNIST, Vol. II, no. 9, p.3).

"In providing leadership to the mass struggles of the working class, communists must consistently raise the long-term and revolutionary goals of socialist revolution and proletarian dictatorship. We fight tooth-and-nail to expose and drive out from these movements the reformists who make reforms the end-all of the movement, and never raise the question of state power. However, in their attempts to reject reformism, some forces in our movement also reject the struggle for reforms. But through this error they only leave the mass movement in the hands of the opportunist and reformist leaders.

For example, opposition to the ERA in our movement has argued that to struggle for constitutional reforms in the present period of declining US imperialism merely serves to promote bourgeois illusions concerning the state. But as we pointed out:

"Lenin often made clear the importance of communists taking up reforms that would establish legal equality between men and women. In 1916 he proposed that the platform of revolutionaries in Switzerland adopt the following position: 'Abolition of all restrictions without exception on the political rights of women compared to those of men...'...and in 1917, before the October Socialist Revolution, he proposed that the constitution of the Russian democratic republic ensure 'equal rights for all citizens irrespective of sex, creed, race or nationality.'"

The fight for the equality of women under the law will spread bourgeois illusions if reformist leadership of the struggle is unchallenged. That is why we cannot take up the fight for reforms without taking up also the fight against reformist leadership. When the petty-bourgeois forces in the ERA movement say, "Complete the American revolution, pass the ERA", we must expose the futility of their claims. To "complete the American revolution" as they mean it - which is to establish fully the democratic rights and social equality for women - can never be accomplished while private ownership of the means of production remains. The bourgeoisie can proclaim formal equality, but their proclamations are reduced to ashes in the face of the real household bondage, the very real male privileges and the inequality in fact that is maintained and deepened under their rule. In place of "completing the American revolution" which is a phony appeal to ideals that bourgeois democracy can proclaim but not carry out, we call for proletarian revolution. Only the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat can bring about the real, not merely formal, economic and social equality of women because it alone is capable of abolishing the private ownership of the means of production which is the material basis of the oppression of women. Reformists never challenge what lies at the root of the real inequality and lack of democratic rights of women because they do not call into question the private ownership of the means of production and the state power that defends it.

We can proclaim the task of proletarian revolution and destroy bourgeois illusions and the influence of reformism by waging class struggle against the ideology and politics of the bourgeoisie in the arena of the struggle for the democratic rights of women, not by abandoning this field under the guise that we will not touch reforms.

PROTECTIVE LEGISLATION

Some forces oppose the ERA because they claim it will be utilized by the bourgeoisie to take away protective legislation from women and the working class as a whole. In raising this argument, these forces belittle the fact that the arena of the struggle for reforms is an arena of class struggle. The bourgeoisie attempts to utilize reforms to attack gains won by the working class and to stifle and weaken the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. The proletariat, on the other hand, resists these attempts by the bourgeoisie and utilizes reforms to develop and broaden the struggle against the bourgeoisie to better its conditions of life and to overthrow capitalist rule. Secondly, as we have pointed out, protective legislation for women has always had a dual character. Special laws regarding women's conditions of work were the first laws to arise that restricted the bourgeoisie's right to set its own terms with individual workers as to the basis of their employment -- this was a step forward and an outcome of the struggle of the entire working class to better its conditions. But at the same time, artificial and restrictive measures were imposed on the conditions

of work for women that kept them locked out of the more skilled and better paying jobs. These restrictive laws also maintained women as a reserve labor force that the bourgeoisie could bring in or kick out of the labor force whenever it suited their interests.

Today we must fight against these artificial restrictions and fight for legitimate protective legislation for both men and women. At the same time we must support special measures that are necessary for women to participate in the workplace on the same level as men - such as paid maternity leave, child care, paid time off for health reasons particular to women such as menstruation, etc. The ERA can be used as a weapon in carrying out common and consistent propaganda and agitation around these issues. Other areas as well, such as daycare, credit discrimination, financial support for job training, rape prevention, social security and pension benefits, women in the military, community property laws, etc. are areas that would be affected by the ERA. As a general statement of principle applicable throughout the nation, it can be taken to the masses in a unified way and utilized by the proletariat in its class struggle against the bourgeoisie.

The ERA is an important part of the general struggle for democracy. Lenin states that:

"Capitalism in general, and imperialism in particular, turn democracy into an illusion - though at the same time capitalism engenders democratic aspirations in the masses, creates democratic institutions, aggravates the antagonism between imperialism's denial of democracy and the mass striving for democracy. Capitalism and imperialism can be overthrown only by economic revolution. They cannot be overthrown by democratic transformations, even the most 'ideal'. But a proletariat not schooled in the struggle for democracy is incapable of performing an economic revolution." (emphasis ours-ed.) Lenin's Collected Works, Vol. 23, p. 25.

The struggle of women will continue to grow and intensify in their fight against oppression and discrimination. In the process of building and consolidating a militant and revolutionary communist party, communists take leadership of the day to day struggles around the urgent demands and special conditions of working women for equality and democratic rights to prepare socialist revolution and the total emancipation of women.

SUPPORT THE ERA!

STRUGGLE FOR THE COMPLETE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN!

FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM!!

