

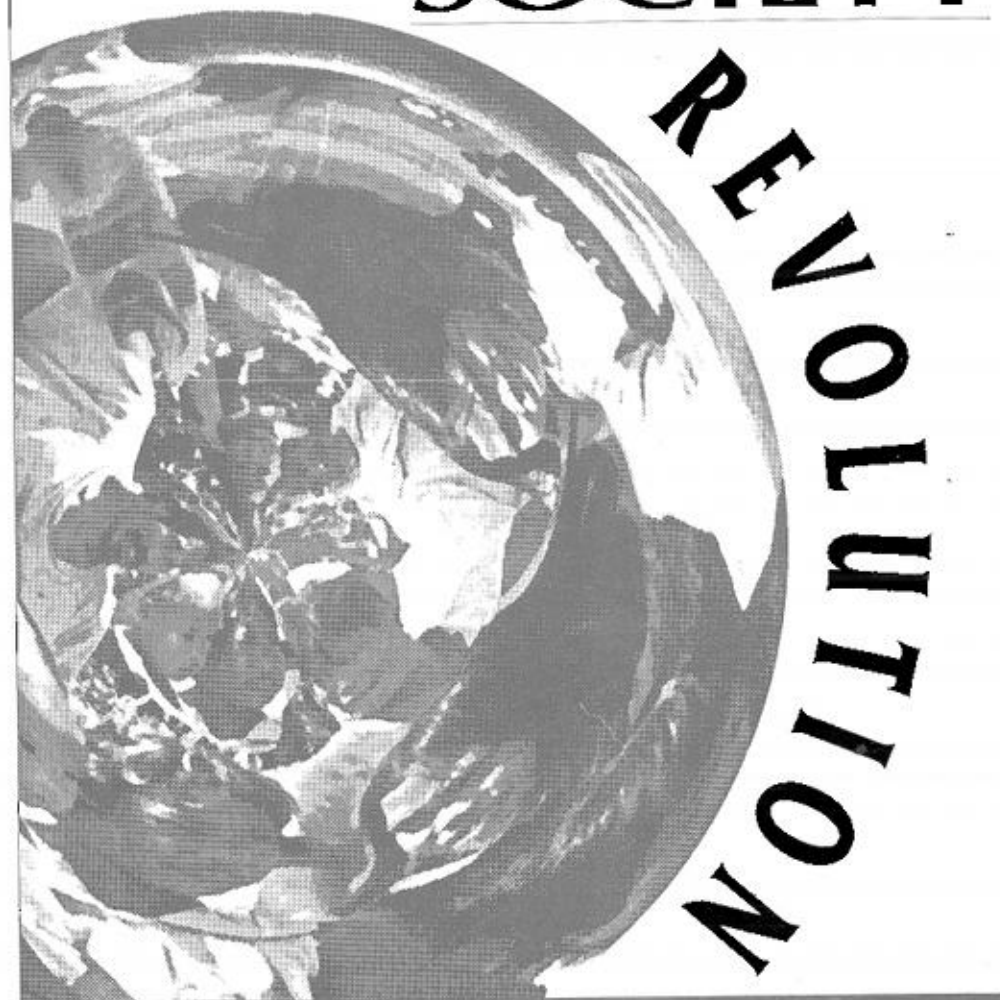
MIM THEORY

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THE OFFICIAL THEORETICAL JOURNAL
OF THE MAOIST INTERNATIONALIST MOVEMENT



ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY



Plus: Political Prisoners, Philippines Photo Essay, Reviews...

MIM Theory

1997

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Maoist Internationalist Movement

Editor: MC12

MIM Theory is the official theoretical journal of the Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM). Subscriptions are \$18 per year/four issues. Overseas airmail subscriptions are \$36.

MIM also publishes MIM Notes, the party's official voice on current news (\$12/12 issues or \$1 each); *Notas Rojas*, the newspaper of emerging Spanish-speaking parties of MIM (\$4/year); and, *Maoist Sojourner*, by and for Third World Maoist exiles led by MIM (\$12/year 12 issues). International subscriptions cost more.

MIM is an underground party that does not publish the names of its comrades in order to avoid state surveillance and repression that has been historically directed at communist parties and anti-imperialist movements. In the text, "MC" means a MIM Comrade, "RC" means RAIL Comrade, a member of the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League, which is led by MIM.

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MIM • PO Box 3576

Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3576

West Coast info:

MIM Notes • PO Box 29670

Los Angeles, CA 90029-0670

Internet:

mim@mim.org

www.ctext.org/Politics/MIM

What is MIM?



The Maoist Internationalist Movement is the collection of existing or emerging Maoist internationalist parties in the English-speaking imperialist countries and their English-speaking internal semi-colonies, as well as the existing or emerging Spanish-speaking Maoist internationalist parties of Aztlán, Puerto Rico and other territories of the U.S. Empire.



MIM upholds the revolutionary communist ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and is an internationalist organization that works from the vantage point of the Third World proletariat.

MIM struggles to end the oppression of all groups over other groups: classes, genders, nations. MIM knows this is only possible by building public opinion to seize power through armed struggle.

Revolution is a reality for North America as the military becomes over-extended in the government's attempts to maintain world hegemony.

MIM differs from other communist parties on three main questions: (1) MIM holds that after the proletariat seizes power in socialist revolution, the potential exists for capitalist restoration under the leadership of a new bourgeoisie within the communist party itself. In the case of the USSR, the bourgeoisie seized power after the death of Stalin in 1953; in China, it was after Mao's death and the overthrow of the "Gang of Four" in 1976. (2) MIM upholds the Chinese Cultural Revolution as the farthest advance of communism in human history. (3) MIM believes the North American white-working-class is primarily a non-revolutionary worker-elite at this time; thus, it is not the principal vehicle to advance Maoism in this country.

MIM accepts people as members who agree on these basic principles and accept democratic centralism, the system of majority rule, on other questions of party line.

"The theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is universally applicable. We should regard it not as dogma, but as a guide to action. Studying it is not merely a matter of learning terms and phrases, but of learning Marxism-Leninism as the science of revolution." — Mao Zedong, Selected Works, Vol. II, p. 208

MIM Theory

Number 12 • 1997

ENVIRONMENT, SOCIETY, REVOLUTION

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WHAT WE WANT, WHAT WE BELIEVE

MAOIST INTERNATIONALIST MOVEMENT PROGRAM, AUGUST 1996

1. WE WANT COMMUNISM.

We believe that communism is the elimination of all oppression—the power of groups over other groups. This includes national oppression, class oppression, and gender oppression.

2. WE WANT SOCIALISM.

We believe that socialism is the path to communism. We believe that the current dictatorship of the bourgeoisie oppresses the world's majority. We believe that socialism—the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry—is a necessary step towards a world without inequality or dictatorship—a communist world. We uphold the USSR under Lenin and Stalin (1917-1953) and China under Mao (1949-1976) as models in this regard.

3. WE WANT REVOLUTIONARY ARMED STRUGGLE.

We believe that the oppressors will not give up their power without a fight. Ending oppression is only possible by building public opinion to seize power through armed struggle. We believe, however, that armed struggle in the imperialist countries is a serious strategic mistake until the bourgeoisie becomes really helpless. Revolution will become a reality for North America as the U.S. military becomes over-extended in the government's attempts to maintain world hegemony.

"We are advocates of the abolition of war, we do not want war; but war can only be abolished through war, and in order to get rid of the gun it is necessary to take up the gun."—Mao Zedong

4. WE WANT ORGANIZATION.

We believe that democratic-centralism, the system of unified application of majority decisions, is necessary to defeat the oppressors. This system includes organization, leadership, discipline and hierarchy. The oppressors use these weapons, and we should, too. By building a disciplined revolutionary communist vanguard party, we follow in the tradition of comrades Lenin, Mao and Huey Newton.

5. WE WANT INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS OF AND FOR THE OPPRESSED.

We believe that the oppressed need independent media to build public opinion for socialist revolution. We believe that the oppressed need independent institutions to provide land, bread, housing, education, medical care, clothing, justice and peace. We believe that the best independent institution of all is a self-reliant socialist government.

6. WE WANT CONTINUOUS REVOLUTION.

We believe that class struggle continues under socialism. We believe that under socialism, the danger exists for a new bourgeoisie to arise within the communist party itself. We believe that these new oppressors will restore capitalism unless they are stopped. We believe that the bourgeoisie seized power in the USSR after the death of Stalin in 1953; in China it was after Mao's death and the overthrow of the "Gang of Four" in 1976. We believe that China's Great Proletarian Cultural

Revolution (1966-1976) is the farthest advance towards communism in human history, because it mobilized millions of people against the restoration of capitalism.

7. WE WANT A UNITED FRONT AGAINST IMPERIALISM.

We believe that the imperialists are currently waging a hot war—a World War III—against the world's oppressed nations, including the U.S. empire's internal colonies. We seek to unite all who can be united under proletarian and feminist leadership against imperialism, capitalism and patriarchy.

We believe that the imperialist-country working classes are primarily a pro-imperialist labor aristocracy at this time. Likewise, we believe that the biological-wimmin of the imperialist countries are primarily a gender aristocracy. Thus, while we recruit individuals from these and other reactionary groups to work against their class, national and gender interests, we do not seek strategic unity with them. In fact, we believe that the imperialist-country working-classes and imperialist-country biological-wimmin, like the bourgeoisies and petit-bourgeoisies, owe reparations to the international proletariat and peasantry. As such, one of the first strategic steps MIM will take upon winning state power will be to open the borders.

We believe that socialism in the imperialist countries will require the dictatorship of the international proletariat and that the imperialist-country working-classes will need to be on the receiving end of this dictatorship.

8. WE WANT NEW DEMOCRACY FOR THE OPPRESSED NATIONS. WE WANT POWER FOR THE OPPRESSED NATIONS TO DETERMINE THEIR DESTINIES.

We believe that oppressed people will not be free until they are able to determine their destinies. We look forward to the day when oppressed people will live without imperialist police terror and will learn to speak their mind without fear of the consequences from the oppressor. When this day comes, meaningful plebiscites can be held in which the peoples will decide for themselves if they want their own separate nation-states or some other arrangement.

9. WE WANT WORLD REVOLUTION.

We believe it is our duty to support Marxism-Leninism-Maoism everywhere, though our principal task is to build public opinion and independent institutions in preparation for Maoist revolution in North America. The imperialists think and act globally—we must do the same.

10. WE WANT POLITICS IN COMMAND.

We believe that correct tactics flow from correct strategies, which flow from a correct ideological and political line. We believe that the fight against imperialism, capitalism and patriarchy goes hand-in-hand with the fight against revisionism, chauvinism, and opportunism.

"The correctness or otherwise of the ideological and political line decides everything. When the Party's line is correct, then everything will come its way. If it has no followers, then it can have followers; if it has no guns, then it can have guns; if it has no political power, then it can have political power."—Mao Zedong

Introduction to this Issue

MIM publishes this issue of MIM Theory on revolutionary environmentalism to push the debate forward on socialism and the environmentalist agenda. We offer criticisms of various "left" environmentalist lines — from the outright First World "Not-In-My-Backyard" movement to the idealist, Luddite anti-industrialism — to the revolutionary environmentalism of the Communist Party of the Philippines. Our fundamental goal is eradicating the oppression of people over people, and this goal is also the most effective way to liberate the environment from human aggression. We do not believe that socialism necessarily achieves environmental salvation, but we do argue that *only through socialism* do we have a chance at it. So we outline our own position on the following principles:

1. Historically, the most egregious assaults on the environment have been products of oppressive relations among people. Production processes most damaging to land and resources have been made possible through violent coerced labor conditions — from the extraction of gold, rubber, sugar and other monocrops to the industrial pollution of multinational industries — that characterize colonialism and imperialism. The drive for profit and wealth from resource-rich areas to the First World has treated people and resources as the same expendable mass. Multinationals' pursuit of land has forced landless peasants to practice destructive agricultural techniques to survive. The eradication of these destructive processes through land reform, self-determination and independence in the Third World will halt the environmental destruction they cause.

2. Being a true environmentalist in the First World means committing national suicide, as it requires the inevitable "sacrifice" of these resources for use above human need. But opting out of consumption alone is reformism — active support for revolutionary national liberation struggles, through working with a Maoist party, is the most effective path to overthrowing imperialism and liberation for its human and non-human victims.

3. Toward the goal of equality among people, production and development — including technological development — is essential to the construction of socialism. We will not support destroying or halting technological developments in areas such as power plants, refrigeration, and medical care (to name a few) in the name of environmental protection. After socialist revolution, a strong military (i.e. weapons production) to defend against capitalist aggression will also be a necessity and must not be compromised for environmentalist reasons. However, as dialectical materialists, we know that only through mobilizing the masses of people who participate in production and agriculture in an equitable way can we apply the scientific knowledge we've gained since the Soviet and Chinese socialist experiences to work on reducing the toxic pollutants that characterize advanced industrial and agricultural production.

4. Maoists recognize that "the environment," "natural resources" and other such concepts are socially constructed according to the values of human society. Something that exists in nature is designated a "resource" if it is beneficial to human life; and that social construction is not democratically determined. "Resources" that could produce cheap food and medicine for the poor may not be "resources" worthy of protection by those in power. Hence, we do not speak of the absolute morality of "saving the environment" apart from our understanding of revolutionizing human social relations — and with them conceptions of morality.

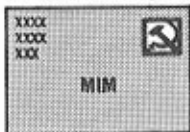
5. Only by putting proletarian politics in command will we be able to address the problems of human oppression and the exploitation of the non-human world. Toward a greater understanding of this issue, we explicitly invite criticism to this issue of MIM Theory, and are eager to host further polemics and struggle over the correct course for Maoist environmentalism.

— MC44 & MC12

Letters to MIM Theory

Spear & Shield: MIM Wrong on Political Prisoners

Two Problems (with what MIM says about what We say). I just received MIM



Theory 11 [Amerikkkan Prisons on Trial -ed.], and here are some comments, followed by a

piece which We published in 1992.

1. We (Spear & Shield Collective) didn't (New Afrikan P.O.W. Journals in 1977/1978) & don't say that consciousness is principal ("... if consciousness rather than material conditions was principal, then oppressed people who did not THINK they were oppressed would not be." (p. 36)). - Practice is principal; this is what makes Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War! So, "a New York Prisoner," as well as MIM, has quoted us incompletely and incorrectly.

2. You don't seem to understand that We have YEARS OF EXPERIENCE with "applying revolutionary leadership to an overwhelmingly revolutionary population." Our focus on imprisoned revolutionaries is to give the people concrete examples of what We are fighting for, what kind of people We need to be, and the requirements of the struggle for land, independence & socialism. Oftimes when conditions change for this "overwhelmingly (!?) revolutionary population" (i.e., release from prison or transfer), their PRACTICE doesn't manifest their revolutionary potential.

This all leads me to some other questions:

1. How closely have you REALLY studied this question?
2. Have you ever been in prison?
3. Have you ever visited a political prisoner or a prisoner of war in u.s. pris-

ons?

4. Have you ever spoken with one (a PP or POW) outside of the MIM circle (particularly a New Afrikan Political Prisoner or Prisoner of War)? 5. You may call all prisoners political prisoners, but do you call all prisoners revolutionaries?

ReBuild!

—Spear and Shield Collective
October 27, 1996

WHO ARE NEW AFRIKAN POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OF WAR?

Reprinted with permission from CROSSROAD, vol. 4 #3, winter 1992. Spear & Shield Publications, 1340 West Irving Park Road, suite 108, Chicago, IL 60613.

During the past twenty years a very active theoretical struggle has unfolded around the New Afrikan Independence Movement's stand on New Afrikan citizens held in U.S. jails and prisons. A major subject of this struggle has been the evolving definition of New Afrikan Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War.

A tendency within the Movement has recently arisen which believes it necessary to make a sharp distinction between New Afrikan and non-New Afrikan (e.g. "black") political prisoners and prisoners of war. Two reasons are put forth for making such distinctions: 1) the New Afrikan Independence Movement needs to strengthen its ideological and structural base; 2) the struggle to assert New Afrikan nationality is a form of the struggle between contending ideologies.

The Need to Assert New Afrikan Nationality

The struggle for an advanced, comprehensive and ideologically consistent political line within the New Afrikan Independence Movement is an expression of necessary theoretical debate which must occur in order that contradictions within the Movement and contradictions between the people and the oppressive state may be sharpened and

resolved, and so that the Movement may hasten the realization of its goal of national independence and socialist development. Theoretical struggle is necessary because different ideas exist within the Movement — ideas which have their basis in the class forces which exist inside the nation — and it is thus an expression of class struggle within the nation and within the Movement.

For nearly thirty years the New Afrikan Independence Movement has led a revitalized theoretical struggle within the nation to further develop (and to make predominant), the line which asserts the strategic goal of national independence for Afrikan people inside present U.S. borders. This was not a new undertaking.

From the fifteenth century, at which time the colonial contradiction in the Western Hemisphere between Afrikan peoples and European settler-colonialists has its origins, the primary contradiction WITHIN the colonized nation has been expressed, on one side, by those who sought to regain some form of separate existence as a distinct and free people. On the other side of the contradiction are those who have sought to assimilate themselves into the U.S. as, in effect, partners in imperialist oppression and plunder.

This historic struggle between those who "want in" and those of us who "want out," is more than a mere strategic difference between sectors of a single movement: Those who pursue national independence embrace one ideology and belong to one movement, and those who oppose this movement clearly belong to another and embrace a different ideology.

The other major movement of Afrikan people inside the U.S. is most often referred to as the "black liberation movement." Whatever this movement may be about, it is not about NATIONAL liberation. If it were, then it would be described in terms of the nationality of the people pursuing their existence as a nation-state independent of the U.S.

It is extremely necessary that the New

Afrikan Independence Movement assert, at every opportunity, its separate (national) identity from all movements which do not seek the establishment of a sovereign and independent state for Africans in the U.S., because the failure to do so WILL impede the national liberation struggle.

The question of national identity is uniquely important to Africans in the U.S., unlike most peoples who struggle for national liberation. The colonization of Afrikan peoples in the Western Hemisphere was facilitated by forms and techniques of oppression which were designed to undermine or destroy our original identities as peoples — peoples who shared similarities with each other, and who shared differences from the peoples of the oppressive settler-colonies.

So long as We maintain our sense of similarity between ourselves and the sense of difference from the oppressor (and the sense of dignity inherent in our sense of separate identity), then We will continue to resist oppression and fight to regain our independence as a people — a people separate and distinct from the oppressive state.

The distinct national identity of New Africans, when expressed by us as a group/movement/people, characterizes the fundamental contradiction which exists between our nation and the U.S. settler-imperialist state. Our form of NATIONAL identification signals: 1) the actuality of our separateness; 2) our desire to be free of the culture of the U.S. and to be free of its political jurisdiction.

Conscious and Unconscious New Afrikan Citizens

The New Afrikan Independence Movement recognizes two basic classes of citizens:

- 1) Unconscious;
- 2) Conscious.

The Movement recognizes three categories of New Afrikan citizens held in U.S. prisons and jails:

- 1) Captured Citizens (unconscious);
- 2) Political Prisoners (conscious);

3) Prisoners of War (conscious).

Our stand on New Afrikan citizens held in U.S. prisons and jails rests on our understanding of the different levels of consciousness and commitment among them, and upon recognition of the different kinds of activity that they were and/or are engaged in.

The formal distinction between "Conscious" and "Unconscious" New Afrikan citizens was made — and the importance of the distinction was emphasized — in the first Article of the Code of Umoja, our nation's Constitution:

Article I

New Afrikan Citizenship

Section 1 — Citizenship by Birth: Each New Afrikan person born in America is a citizen of the Republic of New Afrika.

Section 2 — Citizenship By Parentage: Any child born to a citizen of the Republic of New Afrika is a citizen of the Republic of New Afrika.

Section 3 — Citizenship By Naturalization: Any person not otherwise a citizen of the Republic of New Afrika may become a citizen of the Republic of New Afrika by completing the procedures for naturalization as provided by the People's Center Council.

Section 4 — Pre-Ratification Citizenship Retained: Each person who is a citizen of the Republic of New Afrika at the time of the passage of this CODE OF UMOJA is hereafter a citizen of the Republic of New Afrika.

Section 5 — Right to Choice of Citizenship: Notwithstanding Sections 1,2,3, and 4 of Article 1, the right of any person to expressly deny or renounce his/her citizenship shall not be denied.

Section 6 - Citizenship of Other Africans: Persons of Afrikan descent, wherever their original place of birth or domicile in the world, have a right to New Afrikan Citizenship, as provided by the People's Center Council.

Section 7 — Conscious Citizenship: All citizens of the

Republic of New Afrika who are aware of their citizenship are conscious New Afrikan citizens. As a result of an over 300 year-old policy of force and fraud used by the United States government and the governments of various American states against the New Afrikan nation, many citizens of the Republic of New Afrika are not aware of their human right to New Afrikan Citizenship and indeed are not aware of the existence of the New Afrikan nation in North America. The growth of a conscious New Afrikan citizenship is related to the success of the liberation struggle. The objective measurement of that growth shall be a consideration in the development and implementation of Provisional Government policy, programs and structure as determined by the People's Center Council.

One cannot fight for national independence if one is unaware of the very existence of the nation, i.e., if one's nationality is not New Afrikan. Unconscious citizens owe no permanent allegiance to the defined objectives of New Afrikan people, and they owe no allegiance to any organ of the New Afrikan Independence Movement, e.g., the Provisional Government, the New Afrikan People's Organization, the Spear and Shield Collective, or the New Afrikan Communist Organizing Committee.

Because New Africans are engaged in a struggle for national independence and socialism, and because of the Movement's relative weakness at present, its aim with regard to the U.S. prison system is not to reform it. We plan to secure the release of all New Afrikan citizens from U.S. prisons — but We will do so only as a consequence of successful national liberation revolution.

We will continue to struggle to secure the release of certain prisoners, and We will struggle to improve the treatment and the living conditions of captured citizens. However, the success of these efforts will themselves greatly depend upon our effective engagement in strug-

gle in all spheres of the lives of the masses of New Afrikan people.

The Movement's major responsibility toward imprisoned unconscious citizens is, at this time, to promote New Afrikan consciousness, and to involve them in structured activity that will promote the further development of the Movement and its struggle for national independence.

New Afrikan Political Prisoners and Prisoners Of War

New Afrikans held by the U.S. as Political Prisoners and those held as Prisoners of War, are Conscious Citizens of the nation, i.e., they are conscious fighters of a people struggling against colonialism and for national self-determination and independent state power. New Afrikan Political Prisoners and Prisoner of War have sworn a general allegiance to the nation and its objectives, and sworn a particular allegiance to one of the formations of New Afrikan Independence Movement.

The primary distinction presently drawn by the Movement between New Afrikan Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War is that the latter are classified as the armed forces of the nation. New Afrikan Prisoners of War are armed anti-colonial combatants; they are members of structured military arms of political organizations; they are commanded by persons responsible for their subordi-

nates; they adhere to international humanitarian law, i.e., they meet all criteria of said law, and they should be accorded Prisoner of War status and treatment by the U.S.

— Owusu Yaki Yakubu
Spear & Shield Collective

MC12 Responds: In response to the specific criticisms of the MIM Theory article, we must say that MIM did not misquote Spear & Shield in the passage cited. Earlier in the article we stated of the Spear & Shield essays: "Fundamentally, the argument against classifying all prisoners (or even all oppressed nation prisoners) as political is to preserve the term for people with a political practice, as opposed to the masses of lumpen prisoners locked down for non-political crimes" (MT11, p. 35). Therefore, there should be no doubt that Spear & Shield argues practice is principal in this case, as we said.

However, we argued that Spear & Shield went on to define the necessary practice by its level of consciousness, so that their logic ends up elevating the conscious over the practical more than we think is correct in the circumstances. In fact, as the article sent with the letter from the Spear & Shield comrades shows, they have defined two levels of citizenship in the New Afrikan nation, conscious and unconscious, a distinction that MIM does not agree with when for-

mally defining national membership.

The second specific argument, that MIM fails to understand Spear & Shield's long years of experience in this area, is also wide of the mark. MIM's own extensive experience in prison organizing has led to some of the same conclusions. We are certainly aware that many, even most, prisoners degenerate politically when they get out of prison. In the MIM Notes prison section, Under Lock & Key, we routinely run an announcement that says, "Many comrades stop doing political work after their release," and urge them to keep in contact with MIM. This fact, however, this only serves to underscore MIM's argument that prison conditions are different from other institutions of colonial oppression, such as schools. This strengthens, rather than weakens, our argument against pitting jailed revolutionary leaders against more lumen oppressed nationals in prison.

Spear & Shield also says "Our focus on imprisoned revolutionaries is to give the people concrete examples of what We are fighting for, what kind of people We need to be, and the requirements of the struggle for land, independence & socialism." MIM does not object to special work on behalf of imprisoned revolutionaries. As we said in the article in question, "Making a distinction between political prisoners with a revolutionary practice — like Mumia Abu Jamal and

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Geronimo Pratt — for the purposes of defending revolutionary leadership is progressive. MIM supports struggles to free these individuals who are leaders of the proletariat and who the proletariat and the party must defend against state attack." But we also said, "The proletariat must defend its leaders without conceding that the masses' imprisonment is any less substantively 'political' on the part of the oppressor we seek to defeat" (p. 34). In this latter statement is the disagreement with the Spear & Shield Collective.

MIM was incorrect to refer to the prison population as "overwhelmingly revolutionary" in that sentence. Rather, we were correct on the previous page when we said that every "common criminal" is a "potential revolutionary." That means that the prison population of the oppressed nations is both more *potentially* revolutionary than the population outside, and more revolutionary in *practice* as well.

Unanswered in Spear & Shield's response is MIM's argument that prison itself leads many people to become revolutionaries who were not when they

went in. In part that is because, for many young people especially, prison is the first place they get a decent education on important matters (including MIM Notes and other revolutionary publications). And in part that results from the dramatically concentrated perpetration of national oppression that takes place in prison. These two elements together make prison a much more revolutionary situation than life on the outside, even in a colonially-oppressed nation.

Finally, with regard to the questions in the letter, we will only answer them in part. The questions about personal background and experience are questions for an individual rather than an organization, so we won't answer them in that way. We also wouldn't answer such questions on an individual basis, because they are idealist anyway. However, it should be clear from MIM Notes and MIM Theory, including MT11, that they are produced in concert with many prisoners, whose contributions are and have been central to the development of our practice and line. One of the articles in question was written by a Maoist prisoner. Many prisoners work with MIM and

RAIL, so the question of whether "we" work with or communicate with "prisoners" is misplaced.

For Maoists, line is decisive. What MIM says is right or wrong because it works or it doesn't work, because it correctly treats the important conditions and questions of the day or it doesn't. This is determined in the dialectic of theory and practice. This line of reasoning by Spear & Shield is self-defeating. Most people who have experienced national-colonial oppression at the hand of Amerika are not revolutionary nationalists. Does this make the theory wrong? MIM receives many criticisms from people who have "been there" and tell us that we are wrong because our argument doesn't fit their ideas. Tom Wicker of the New York Times went to Attica and talked to revolutionary political prisoners; does that make his analysis of that movement correct? No.

With regard to question #1, has MIM "REALLY" studied this question. The answer is Yes, as is readily apparent from reading the years-long record of MIM reading and writing on this issue, the testimonials and arguments of hundreds of political prisoners, and so on. It would be incorrect for MIM to take on such questions lightly, and we have not.

With regard to question #5, MIM does not call all prisoners revolutionary. As we said, they are as a group the most revolutionary population in North America with the possible exception of First Nation peoples. We treat all prisoners as potential revolutionaries because they have a high rate of response to revolutionary politics, and many develop revolutionary political practices inside and outside of prison.

MIM welcomes this struggle with the Spear & Shield Collective and thanks them for their response to our articles. We repeat that in this struggle we believe we have more unity than difference with Spear & Shield, and we urge readers inside and outside of prison to continue this struggle with both MIM and Spear & Shield. MIM Theory will gladly devote more space to this important question in future issues.

What is MIM?

What Is MIM? documents MIM's history and origins, including the Main Principles, Program, Constitution and a collection of defining essays. This is 24 packed pages you need to understand MIM.

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A-APRP Responds

MIM,

It is wrong to believe that one culture possesses alone all the moral, spiritual, social, or intellectual values which exist. To believe that truth only exists in ones own racial or cultural milieu is utopian. Human discoveries, intellectual powers and the development of knowledge aren't restricted to anyone in particular. They are the result of a chain of universal discoveries ... and developments...

—Ahmet Seku Ture

It is incorrect to say that the All-African People's Revolutionary Party "upholds a pseudo- socialist ideology" (MIM Notes 118 July 15, 1996). What is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism? It speaks to working people's conditions as seen by Marx, Lenin (euros) and Chairman Mao (Asian).

African people are survivors of colonialism and chattel slavery. Along with class exploits people of color must deal with white supremacy and racism. Nkrumahist-Tureist Pan-Africanism in short is the ideology necessary for African people to deal with the conditions unique to African people.

Africa began civilization. Present in that civilization was communalism, which communism is based on. We are happy to see people embrace these ideas to fit the cultural contexts of every land mass and people world wide.

We are scientific socialists. We are comrades in the worldwide struggle to end exploitation of one person by another person.

Ready for the Revolution.

— Party Militant, August, 1996

MIM Responds: This letter denies the universal aspects of Maoism: the necessity of revolutionary armed struggle, the theory of Protracted People's

War in semi-feudal and semi-colonial countries, and the continuation of class struggle under socialism. This only corroborates MIM's assessment of the A-APRP in MIM Notes 118, which criticized the A-APRP for cheerleading for all sorts of revisionist and non-revolutionary movements, such as the state-capitalist regimes in the ex-USSR and Cuba and Yasser Arafat's PLO.(1)

Revolutionary anti-imperialist movements which do not fully understand the necessity of armed struggle run the risk of capitulating to the enemy like the PLO or FMLN in El Salvador. National liberation movements which do not understand the necessity of continuous revolution and the development of socialism run the risk of becoming neocolonies (this is a particularly pressing question in the case of Eritrea).

Socialist movements which do not understand that class struggle continues under socialism run the risk of capitalist restoration, which can lead to state capitalism (as in the ex-USSR and China) or neocolonial domination (as in the case of Cuba during the 70s and 80s).(2)

But the letter goes even further than just denying the correctness of Maoism; it implies that because Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin were European and Mao was Chinese, they have nothing to say to Black revolutionaries, African revolutionaries, Mohawk revolutionaries, or Mexican revolutionaries. This is an unscientific standpoint which judges what is said by who is saying it. The hydrogen atom has one electron, regardless of whether Margaret Thatcher or Kwame Nkrumah says so. The science of revolution demands that we investigate the content of what is said and test it against reality before accepting or rejecting it — we cannot afford the luxury of making ad hominem arguments. The letter's flippant dismissal of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the narrow view of a few individuals is a sign of laziness and lack of investigation.

For one thing, Mao himself went to great lengths to explain that the universal aspects of theory have to be creatively applied to concrete reality of every

society, e.g. it wouldn't do just to copy the Bolsheviks tactics in the Chinese countryside. MIM has written extensively about this, and reprints an anti-dogmatist quote from Mao on page two of every MIM Notes and MIM Theory.

Furthermore, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Marxist-Leninists and Maoists led the two most successful struggles for socialism the world has seen so far and at one point led more than one-third of all the people on the planet towards communism. The experience of the Chinese revolution alone encompassed several nationalities and many different concrete situations, from land reform and guerrilla warfare in the countryside to strikes and rebellion in the cities.

Revolutionaries in India, Azania, Vietnam, Eritrea, Turkey, Peru, and the Philippines have studied and used Mao Zedong's theories to lead successful anti-imperialist struggles. The combined practice and thought of these revolutionaries from many societies assure that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is indeed not the property of one "racial" or cultural milieu (that is, cultural atmosphere).

MIM has more unity with the Ture quote at the beginning of the letter than with the letter writer. Ture recognizes that scientific truth exists, and encourages people to learn from other cultures in order to master it. The letter writer turns Ture on his head and essentially argues that African revolutionaries cannot learn from "euros" or "Asians."

Notes:

1. "African Liberation Day 1995" pamphlet, published by the A-APRP.
2. See MIM Theory 4 for a review of how Soviet social imperialism came to dominate Cuba and see MIM Theory 10 for an essay describing how the Soviet social imperialists used the Cuban military as a tool to strengthen their control of Angola.

MIM Theory wants to publish debate over theory and practice. If you're reading this, shouldn't you either be working with MIM or writing us with your criticisms?

'States,' Not 'Snakes'

Greetings.

As per yours of the 10th, you wrong snakes by your reference to the central capitalist state as "the United Snakes." Legless reptiles are not fouling our environment to the detriment of all living things. Although cold-blooded in more than the metaphorical sense, snakes do not napalm innocent villagers or engage in terrorist activities against entire populations. Snakes do not monopolize the globe and pile up surpluses created by the labor of others while those others languish from want of the basics for life. No, you inappropriately discredit snakes by conflating their mythological symbolism and natural defenses with a very real and vicious foe. Perhaps a better term you might consider would be the "US\$." The full-length acronymic referent "United Dollars of Amerika" need only be implied, as the point should be obvious.

I concede the descriptor "Amerikan" as long as it is clear in its usage that the term refers to imperialist state power and not to the many Americans who live in the two continents of the Western Hemisphere. Amerikans irritate Americans from countries such as Mexico, Canada and Brazil by their usurpation of a term that applies equally to those who live in North and South America. While I am not fully in concordance with that appellation (America) as it is rooted in the name of an Italian European merchant adventurer (Amerigo Vespucci), I will admit its common usage. Our purpose must confront the material.

Although no one should be surprised by the monopolistic tendencies of US\$ capital, whether it applies to the real or the terminological, we should perceive that capitalists live in other places than the USA. Although US\$ capitalists domi-

nate, they are joined by capitalists from Canada, England, Italy, France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, etc., in the exploitation of the international working class. The armed force of capital is headquartered in the USA but it has branch offices everywhere, with local bosses (compradors) in charge. Capitalism must be fought everywhere it operates.

I agree that the Amerikan working class is not currently a "revolutionary vehicle" as you put it. However, the US working class must join with the workers of the world for world revolution to be successful. We are currently witnessing the development of conditions that can revolutionize the US\$ working class. US\$ capital is in the process of an increasing immiseration of the Amerikan worker. It should be our purpose as Marxists to elevate class consciousness wherever we are.

We must try to make all workers realize why the rich are getting richer while we are getting less. We are divided and conquered, sliced up and devoured, based on nonsensical notions of nationalism. We must make known that this process of exploitation can only be terminated by the eradication of the perversions of racism and national borders. This "process" that divides our humanity, in all its definitions, is capitalism. Capitalism's eradication, and the necessarily concurrent solidarity of the workers of the world, and the mutual concerns for our wonderful cultures, including those imprisoned in the gilded cages or ghettos of the imperial center, this is revolution. Together we will win; only. In this struggle I remain

Yours in solidarity,

— A worker in the West

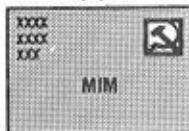
The RAIL Coordinator Responds:

... I think you raise a good point about the use of "the United Snakes" for both its misrepresentation of the animal snake, but I would say more importantly because of the metaphorical and mythical reference. I would say that to fully get a materialist analysis correct and well voiced to the masses one must be

consistent in everything, including terminology. To refer to the "u.s." as snakes leads ones mind to the idea of a "natural" innate corruption where the next step is just believing in human nature. I agree that the use of USA is much more direct and materialist approach to the naming of Amerikkka and its loyal patrons the Amerikkkans. The \$ has a larger meaning in selfishness, corruption, power and individualism - everything that Amerikkka stands for. I hope MIM will reconsider its use and I will pass on this letter to the various RAIL branches to get their input.

One point of struggle I think we have in your analysis of the white working class, what MIM and RAIL call Amerikkans and the labor aristocracy. You said you would only "concede the descriptor 'Amerikan' as long as it is clear in its usage that the term refers to imperialist state power and not to the Americans who live in the two continents of the Western Hemisphere." The indigenous people of European-claimed South America are, yes, part of that continent, but more importantly are native to their individual nations. Just as Native American Nations surrounded by Amerikkka we don't consider Amerikkans, we don't consider other indigenous nations any less than the nation they belong to and define themselves by.

So what about the labor aristocracy? They, as well as their imperialist government counterparts, are what make up the term Amerikan here in North America. The labor aristocracy has relied all along on national destruction to reap its concessions from the Third World and the colonized nationals. Its actions are no less than those of a common Klan member who uses oppression and militarization for its own selfish ends. (For more info on the white labor moment read J. Sakai's *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat* and MIM Theory 10.) You say that now is the time for the development of a revolutionary working class, but what are your reasons? It seems that now the white working class is more complacent than ever, fighting



only for their own reactionary benefits and backing such lines as appear in Ralph Nader's campaign, Mr. imperialist consumerism himself. Raising a minimum wage may find its way into the hands of a minority of the oppressed, but the rest will still be jobless, homeless, ignored and altogether colonized. Sure there may be some advocates of limiting multinationals abroad, but only so that their lives will be secure (even if it is reactionary, it still may be progressive in removing colonial power). Very few members of the labor aristocracy look beyond their own pockets, and have become even more complacent with their material wealth that they have been able to gain through the growing exploitation of American rule. The only strong enough and advanced enough revolutionary force today comes from the Third World proletariat and its allies. The white working class has revealed just whose side it's on, and it certainly is not the side of the oppressed and exploited. A world revolution can and will be successful, but is going to take the physical force of the revolutionary proletariat to force its way into U.S. borders and take what belongs to them. Maybe at that point the labor aristocracy will side with the oppressed, but at this point they have shown themselves to be an reliable opponent.

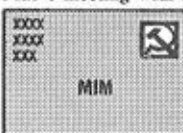
In this current time we no longer live in a simple capitalism. As Lenin pointed out capitalism will, upon need for a larger market and cheaper labor, expand out militarily and politically to all the world and impose the Amerikkkan system, thus reaching imperialism. Yes, it divides our humanity into class, gender and national contradictions. But it is going to take the exploited Third World proletariat to unite against its common oppressor, Amerikkka and imperialism.

If you are interested in hearing more of MIM's line on this you should read MIM Theory 1 and 10. Both are completely full of theory on the labor aristocracy and what sort of force they have proven themselves to be. While yes I do agree that we should, as revolutionaries, unite all that can be united, we also

believe that the white working class has chosen its allegiance with the imperialist bourgeois dictatorship. Please do send a response to this whole issue as well as any requests for MTs or just other comments. We look forward to struggling with you and your organization further on this and any other issues.

Did Mao Help Nixon?

What is MIM's view about Chairman Mao's meeting with President Richard



Nixon in the early 70s? Nixon could quite possibly be called one of the most jingo-

istic, imperialistic presidents that the United Snakes has ever elected. His policies in Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia were an affront to the world community, and a shameful disregard for human rights. Despite all of this, Mao still consented to meet with him under peaceable terms and open diplomatic relations. And all of this was after the Cultural Revolution that purged thousands within the party ranks for collaboration with capitalistic and counter-revolutionary elements in China. Did the Chairman do a complete turn-around of policy, or was there something more to it? Mao surely must have known that a great many Coldwarriors in Amerika were anxious to take a hard line against him and the Chinese Communists. Eight years of Kennedy/Johnson 'liberalism' made reactionaries even more eager to accept Nixon's fascist policies. The Nixon administration hailed the meeting as a political victory because they essentially were able to turn the USSR and Communist China against each other as diplomatic rivals. True, there was tension before, but Nixon's visit brought it all to the surface. Today, China has become a shell of its former self by serving as just another market for U.S. cor-

porate interests, and the Chinese government has clearly demonstrated that it does not share Mao's love for the people (the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre demonstrated this).

So basically, we see China take the course of Cultural Revolution (professed by MIM to be the high water mark in the struggle against imperialism), and then Mao decided to meet with Emperor Nixon after the infamous Cambodia bombings, and while two million Vietnamese were being slaughtered. After this meeting (as well as Mao's death), China went into a decline that continues to this day. How does MIM feel about this historical aspect of the Maoist philosophy?

—Midwestern Student
Internet reader

MC12 replies: First, there is no reason to make a connection between Mao meeting with Nixon and the subsequent rise to power of the state capitalists and eventual fascists who have run China since 1976 under Deng Xiaoping. You make no causal argument to support your assertion that there is a connection between the two events, and we see no evidence that there is. Mao may have been entirely correct to meet with Nixon without influencing whether or not fascists would eventually come to power in China. In this argument, you join many others, most notably perhaps Trotskyists such as the Spartacist League, who routinely assert with no evidence that Mao's meeting with Nixon led to the degeneration of the Communist Party (and, we would add, the restoration of capitalism). They call this "Marxism-Leninism-Henry Kissinger Thought." (1) We do not believe this is the case.

Mao's meeting with Nixon was a matter of diplomacy and foreign policy. You say: "Mao surely must have known that a great many Coldwarriors in Amerika were anxious to take a hard line against him and the Chinese Communists." If this is true, and the meeting with Nixon reduced reactionary American antagonism toward China, is that a bad thing? China was, quite correctly, not seeking a

war with the United States, so what would be the good in provoking it?

On the other hand, you say: "The Nixon administration hailed the meeting as a political victory because they essentially were able to turn the USSR and Communist China against each other as diplomatic rivals. True, there was tension before, but Nixon's visit brought it all to the surface."

Well, here you are skirting the point. Was there "tension before" or not? Of course there was. What is the effect of Mao's decision to bring it "all to the surface"? Does this mean that Nixon was "able to turn the USSR and Communist China against each other"? Of course not. Mao met with Nixon because he viewed the social-imperialist Soviet Union as the "main danger" faced by the Chinese revolution externally.(2) Mao decided this based on political economy before meeting with Nixon; it was not an accomplishment of Nixon's! In that case, what is the effect of Mao bringing it "all to the surface"? It communicates to the Soviet Union that China has less to fear from the United States, and therefore warns off the social-imperialists.

If you believe that China was turned against Soviet social-imperialism by the brilliance of Kissinger's diplomatic maneuverings, then we don't have much to talk about, because you have thrown political economy out the window. Do you agree that the ex-USSR was state capitalist and social-imperialist? If not, we are having the wrong argument! If so, how could Nixon have engineered a split without genuine-socialist China first realizing its differences with phoney-socialist and social-imperialist USSR?

MIM has previously written: "China, as a socialist state, had an internationalist duty to weaken its principal enemy. The Soviet Union was China's principal enemy at the time; it was actively threatening socialist China's borders."(3) In 1970, after the U.S. bombing of Cambodia, Mao spoke of "Nixon's fascist atrocities" and declared: "People of the world, unite and defeat the U.S. aggressors and all their running

dogs!"(4) How is it possible that he would then meet with Nixon? Were they both fools? No. Both sides were practicing diplomacy.

An article published in People's Daily under Maoist control in 1971 - after the announcement of Nixon's impending visit the next year - publicly explained the policy by referring back to a 1940 essay by Mao called "On Policy," in which Mao "clearly set forth the important tactical principle in struggling against the enemy: 'To make use of contradictions, win over the many, oppose the few and crush our enemies one by one.'" In particular, Mao made reference to the need to "turn to good all such fights, rifts and contradictions in the enemy camp and turn them against our present main enemy." In 1971, the article explained, "U.S. imperialism and social-imperialism are colluding and contending with each other and they are stepping up the expansion of their aggressive forces in the vast intermediate zones trying to redivide the world ... to satisfy their own imperialist interests, they are in bitter contention."(5) Thus, according to the Maoist lesson of "firm principle and high flexibility," and given

the dual situation of (a) the USSR as China's "main danger" externally, and (b) the conflict between the USA and the USSR, Mao's meeting with Nixon was seen as an opportunity to turn the conflict between enemies against the main enemy.

In MIM Theory 6, we suggested two interpretations of this view of Mao's. One might say that Mao was wrong, because in fact the USSR collapsed before the USA did, so he was wrong about the "main danger." On the other hand, you might say that Mao's strategy helped undermine the Soviet social-imperialists, leaving the USA as the hegemonic imperialism and calling for a new strategy for the new balance of forces. Neither of these interpretations supports the idea that Mao's diplomacy weakened socialism in China or helped the capitalist-roaders gain power in 1976. On the contrary, had the Maoists decided to direct equal blows against both the USSR and China, it is quite possible that this would have strengthened the USSR's hand against China, with possibly devastating military ramifications for the leading socialist state in the world.(6)



Maoist Sojourner

A monthly publication by and for Third World Maoist exiles, led by MIM. The goal of Maoist Sojourner is to disseminate news and analysis from Maoists in the Third World, in their own words whenever possible. Also includes MIM's analysis of international news. Individual subscriptions are \$12 for 12 monthly issues, domestic. Overseas as \$36. Bundles of 250 are \$20 domestic. Send cash or check:

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You may also be confused about the Cultural Revolution, which lasted until 1976, so the meeting with Nixon was not "after" the CR. But more to the point, perhaps, MIM does not buy into the shallow reasoning that says Mao shaking Nixon's hand undermined the Cultural Revolution or socialism itself. In high-stakes diplomacy, it is OK to lie to your enemies. A revolutionary movement and society must be strong enough to understand that reality - and it was publicly debated and explained. A more sympathetic criticism of Mao on the Nixon case would be that shaking Nixon's hand undermined the revolutionary morale of the Chinese people by exposing Mao as a hypocrite pandering to imperialism - that is a purist criticism, but could be well-intentioned. However, the Cultural Revolution went on to its greatest achievements around the time of the Nixon meeting and in the few years that followed until 1976. Where is the weakening of the revolutionary movement? The Maoists were eventually defeated for other reasons, but we find no evidence to suggest that this was the result

of the Nixon meeting.

Unless you can demonstrate why the meeting with Nixon was harmful, your argument is reduced to a purism or idealism that disregards the hard realities of the time in favor of an easy criticism of the people's leaders. We await your response.

Notes:

1. MIM Theory 8, 1995, p. 97
2. MIM Theory 6, 1994, p. 76-78.
3. MIM Theory 8, 1995, p. 98.
4. *People's China*, Franz Schurmann (ed.). Vintage Books: NY, 1974, pp. 420-1.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 428-9.
6. MIM Theory 6, 1994, pp. 77-8.

What is Revolutionary Power?

Revolutionary Power is neither taken nor given - it is *built and manufactured* by the oppressed in opposition to the established reactionary state power. When revolutionary power reaches such

a stage that it becomes an acute threat to the established reactionary state power the reactionary state unleashes its repressive forces in order to violently crush the people's Revolutionary Power from growing and developing. This is when the people must oppose this aggressiveness with violence in order to protect their Revolutionary Power and at the same time negate the reactionary power with Revolutionary Power.

This is the transitional period we called armed struggle. But before we enter the stage of armed struggle we must take the necessary steps in order to get there. In order to get to the top floor of a building we must go floor by floor. In order to build a brick wall we must start with a single brick and build the wall brick by brick, stage by stage, step by step. In order for a brick wall to be firm, we also need mortar for without mortar a brick wall will fall with the lightest wind. So it is with Revolution also, we build independent institutions and raise the political consciousness of the people.

We must make Marxism-Leninism-Maoism our mortar. We must be prudent and have revolutionary patience. We cannot only have five bricks and some cheap mortar and think that our wall is capable of withstanding and resisting strong winds nor can we have several armed adventurist focoist units that think they can defeat a more powerful, organized and disciplined state such as the U.S. empire. We must not build in order to be martyrs or Rambos that seek the limelight of the media.

We must build to win and that means having the necessary revolutionary patience, discipline and obedience in order to build genuine, independent (not dependent upon the state) Revolutionary Power for the real emancipation of the oppressed in opposition to the reactionary state.

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the key and tool for those who don't fear freedom!

— A New York Prisoner
April 1996

Clarifications

MISSING AUTHOR

The letter "Open Reply to 'Not the Best' of Anarchists" which ran in MIM Theory #11, pp. 8-10, was written by a Texas prisoner.

"LABOR ARISTOCRACY" AND "SEMI-PROLETARIAT"

In MT11, on p. 16, MIM wrote: "the labor aristocracy is a minority of the white nation ... it is outnumbered by the petit-bourgeoisie and semi-proletariat, more so today than in Dutt's day." What MIM meant to say was that within the white nation, white-collar workers outnumber blue-collar (industrial) workers. The term "labor aristocracy," however, is not interchangeable with the terms "blue-collar workers" or "industrial workers." The labor aristocracy is the non-proletarian component of the working class (i.e., the component which is not exploited; not paid less than the value of its labor). The working class is that class of exploited and non-exploited people who are forced to work for the capitalist class in order to live because they do not own their own means of production.

The Comintern of Lenin's time referred to office workers, white-collar workers, the middle- and lower-ranking civil servants and the intelligentsia as "semi-proletarian" (see MIM Theory 10, p. 26.). This definition almost precisely matches MIM's understanding of the components of the labor aristocracy, with one exception: the labor aristocracy includes all of these strata plus those blue-collar workers who are not exploited. In general, then, MIM will use the terms "labor aristocracy" and "semi-proletariat" interchangeably.

Taliban and Thanksgiving

Dear MIM,

To bring up a matter of current events relevant to world struggle, as you know the Taliban have won at least a temporary victory in having secured for the past month control of the capital city of Afghanistan, Kabul. The Taliban were a large group in the resistance against President Najibullah's government and its Soviet allies, and as one of their first acts in taking Kabul, they have executed former President Jajibullah. I am aware that MIM and RAIL regard the Soviet assistance to President Najibullah's government during the 1980s as an act of social-imperialism (though I disagree with this assessment)... Do you think Afghans are better off governed by the Taliban than governed by President Najibullah?

[Continuing discussion of genocide against natives in North America -ed.]

It is all very well to talk of land as being a special means of production, but its value is determined in the same manner as any other means of production—by the amount of human labour used to make it what it is... If you think pristine land has a necessary value, then quantify it for me and justify your quantification. If you can, (Sakai clearly can't.) for nowhere in his/her book does s/he quantify how many person-hours of labour obtained by early attempts to enslave First Nations (a tiny quantity compared to that put out by free white peasants over the history of North America), and s/he can approximate the dead labour obtained by modern imperialist trade with the Third World, but nowhere can he quantify how many person-hours whites received by slaughtering First Nations people and driving the survivors from their land...

Without quantification there can be no

rational or materialist analysis, and until and unless you are able to quantify the person-hour enhancement of North American labour by land stolen from First Nations peoples, it is useless to discuss this land when discussing whether or not there is a significant white proletariat. If you can't quantify the loss, it is also useless to talk of reparations...

You say the wealth of settlers is handed down through generations. So what? The wealth of any society, even Third World ones, is handed down through generations. That does not explain land distribution, and the Homestead Act is a particularly poor explanation. The small plots of land upon which labour aristocrats have single-family detached houses are rarely connected in any direct sequence to the Homestead Act. There may be a few cases of Americans living on the same land their great-great-grandparents received as stolen property from the government, but in most cases this is not so... Farmers were driven off the land by the vicious cycle of technological improvements, overproduction, lowered wholesale food prices, and foreclosures, which peaked in the 1890s, the 1930s and to a lesser extent in the 1980s, not in times of prosperity. If most of these farmers and their descendants eventually became labour aristocracy, it was in spite of their separation from the land, not because of any wealth they gained by having their land foreclosed.

You ask me, "What is the difference between the evils perpetrated by whites and the evils perpetrated by Jews?" ... When I criticize Jews, I criticize a line, a set of ideologies, and a set of practices, not who one's ancestors were. It is no different than when I criticize Baptists, Pentecostals, environmentalists, New Age scum, pacifists, anarchists, and other elements...

As regards your other questions, they are based upon the false premise that Amerikan imperialism and Zionist imperialism are separate entities, when in fact, the same gutter religion controls both. Zionism would not have the support it has here if Jews didn't control the media and our senators and congress-

people were not bought and paid for by AIPAC (American-Israeli Political Action Committee). We cannot relegate Zionism as just the problem of the Arabs. The New York-Jerusalem axis must be broken at both ends...

1. Judaism is a religion, not a race, ethnic group, or nationality.

2. Criticism of Jews is not racism, national chauvinism or anti-Semitism; it is criticism of a religion, ideology, and line.

—Western reader
October 24, 1996

MCS replies: The above writer claims to uphold Stalin while being interested in Mao.

The choice between the Taliban and the ex-Soviet puppets is false. One was for religious feudalism. The other was for Soviet neo-colonial feudalism.

If it were a question of hair-splitting, see our article on Tibet in MT. There we say if there are no real Maoists in Tibet, then it would be better to be under fascist capitalist Deng Xiaoping than slave-master Dali Lama. Deng Xiaoping at least represents a more advanced mode of production.

In the case of Afghanistan there is definitely a Maoist organization, so there is no need to be making false pragmatist "lesser evil" choices.

With regard to land, in class society, land is associated with its own special "returns." Marx talks about that in Capital and the Four talked about it in the *Fundamentals of Political Economy*, the Cultural Revolution economics text. The letter-writer is simply wrong in how we view land and to quantify the reparations would be easy: it's the entirety of the North American continent. We must give it back and then see if the First Nations still want the other peoples here.

In discussing foreclosures against white farmers, the author misses some basic exchanges going on. Certainly the foreclosures in the 1930s were a major impetus for the New Deal for the Euro-American labor aristocracy. The imperialists did not want to create revolutionaries out of the dispossessed farmers. They

simply offered that class cream of super-exploitation soup in other more industrial areas in exchange for getting off the land. Such a deal is possible thanks in large part to the wealth in land stolen from the natives. The same deal with the imperialists is in effect in more modern forms in the 1980s: whites aren't supposed to farm anymore; they are supposed to take the jobs in paper and electron-shuffling. A majority of whites does take that deal.

The real problem here is linked to the Jewish question too — the one of class analysis versus lifestyle analysis: "The small plots of land on which labour aristocracy houses have single-family detached houses are rarely connected in any direct sequence to the Homestead Act. There may be a few cases of Americans living on the same land their great-great grandparents received as stolen property from the government, but in most cases this is not so."

The above is an argument we expect from the bourgeoisie, but we are Marxists and we don't care about the individual lineages of property-owners. We care about *classes* and *nations*. As a class the white workers have inherited stolen land. Whether one individual trades his/her share for another's share of stolen land hardly matters. The class as a whole still owns the stolen land. As MIM Notes has explained in the past, half of all wealth is real estate in the United States, and the vast majority of that is owned by the middle and bottom 90%, not the bourgeoisie.

The Soviet bosses made the same argument apologizing for their capitalism. They said that since sons and daughters of factory directors running production for profit do not inherit their parents' jobs (also somewhat false but we'll grant it for argument's sake), there is no capitalism in the Soviet Union. Hello! Capitalism is not a system of individual inheritance. It is CLASS rule of those appropriating the labor of commodified labor-power.

Back to the Jews — we never said Jews were not whites. As the writer knows, our stress is that Jews today are

whites. It was the writer's focus on Jews that evades Stalin and Mao on the candidates for the principal contradiction. Religion is not a candidate for principal contradiction. What the Western reader should be saying about Jews and Israel should be dovetailing with the efforts we make with regard to the principal contradiction.

Of course party members are atheists. We didn't see the writer raving about Christians, Buddhists and Moslems. It's like s/he bought the New York Times view of communists these days, that they are anti-Semitic.

The view that "the same gutter religion controls both" [U.S. and Zionist imperialism] is a simple Nazi myth. Sure it is easier to take action with such simple ideas, but what action, and where will that action lead? Fascism is unscientific and hence incapable of bringing progress through ruthless struggle. If one reads the Nazi lit carefully one will find it always glorifies the emotional and trails off into the fog of Christianity. In contrast, some people in our circles and our friends may do that too, but they will not be led to do so by the party. No, the party must be the vanguard of scientific progress.

As for Judaism as religion or people, Stalin and Molotov disagreed. Jews are now a nation. Should they occupy Palestine is a different question. We disagree with that, but since Stalin after the war, Jews have been a nation from our perspective. That's not a major point and in many cases it will be appropriate to point out that Judaism is a religion not a race. That's Western reader's point 1.

Point 2 is devoid of historical context and hence idealist: "Criticism of Jews is not racism..." As we have said before, the Nazi ideas of race are false, but they were racist ideas. Race is false, but racism is real. The writer's letters to us show that Nazi influence in that the Nazis have essentially succeeded in deflecting criticism of the Euro-American people into criticism of Jews. The Nazis said the Jews were parasites and unpatriotic — "rootless" — when in fact a majority of all whites in the major

imperialist countries were parasites benefiting from the rootless expansion of their countries' multinational corporations. The Nazis attacked the Jews at the business place as shop-keepers and financiers. They succeeded in pushing the evils of imperialism onto just the Jews when in fact according to Lenin, a majority of Germans — not just Jews — were already parasites back then. The Nazis couldn't face up to the whole truth that parasitism enveloped all of the major imperialist countries and their peoples, so they came up with a clever concession to the proletarian sentiments remaining in Germany and diverted all hatred of parasitism against the Jews. Today when the vast majority of parasitism's gravy for no work goes to stockholders, bondholders and home-owners of the imperialists, petty-bourgeoisie and labor aristocracy, the fascists are pointing to the puny parasitism of the people on welfare, when if all that welfare were abolished completely, the government would still have a deficit — going to hand-outs to the military, agri-business and energy companies in particular.

On occasion we also hear from some would-be Arab compradors the same reasoning — that Jews run u.s. imperialism, as if AIPAC were the only lobbying group renting Congress. The real mission of these wannabe compradors is to cut a special deal with Christian capital to be the favored ruling class puppets of the Middle East. That's why we don't hear from this reactionary section of the Arab bourgeoisie about the other oppressions carried out by u.s. imperialism. They are just trying to cut a special deal for their oppressed people and they don't want to overthrow u.s. imperialism as a whole as a contingent of the oppressed nations in the world. That is just another reason that all struggles of the oppressed must be led by vanguard parties that have the vantage-point of the entire Third World proletariat, not just one of its national sections.

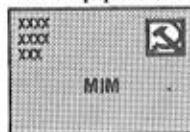
We link together the writer's middling position on the labor aristocracy, his/her Protestant political economy of settlerism and his/her focus on Judaism as

all just one neo-Nazi view. If it were factually true that Jews controlled both u.s. imperialism and Israeli imperialism, then we would have to agree that at this time criticism of Jews is not racism, chauvinism or anti-Semitism. However, it is just very far from the truth that Jews control u.s. imperialism. Such politics cover up for Christian capital. Hitler in his grave salutes.

MIM makes headlines in Finland

Dear MIM,

I send you a copy of an article in the Finnish paper AAMULEHTI (second



largest in Finland) that is written about your Stalin Issue of MIM Theory [MIM Theory 6

-ed.]. The title is "Stalin still has buddies" and continues:

"Although Moscow builds churches, you shouldn't think that Josif Stalin has lost all his friends. Supporters can be found in odd places, outside Russia, special little groups in surprise places.

"One of the true friends is a maoist underground party in the U.S.A. It denies that marxism-leninism-maoism is in any kind of crisis. That spirit shows in the party's theoretical journal MIM Theory, in it's large Stalin number. Yankee Comrades write in pseudonyms that Stalin was correct in 70 percent. Mao himself was of that opinion, in his time. After that number the journal concentrates upon counting Stalin's merits and to correct his common dark image. The Man was in high principles, all luxury avoiding asceticism.

"It's also clear that Stalin was not guilty of the murder of Kirov, the party boss of Leningrad. It was in fact the simple jealousy murder. The Journal is willing to believe that Molotov's memoirs

are correct. Molotov said that in purge trials the majority of the accused were real agents, so their destiny was well deserved.

"Also the violent collectivization is understandable. Industrialization has been always and everywhere a brutality. The Westeuropean countries plundered their colonies and made huge holocausts. In the U.S.A. they shiploaded slaves.

"Without Stalin's 'Great Terror' there had been a Fifth column in the Soviet Union and Hitler would have been the winner: Europe would be in Nazis' hands now. Maybe the U.S.A. would have shared the same destiny.

"The Journal says last that morality is not an absolute standard. The end justifies the means." (September 9, 1995? 1996?)

In my own opinion the Stalin issue is a great analysis. I have studied it many times. I think it's the best Stalin comment I have ever read. I have sent you money for my own copy of MIM Theory and MIM Notes. I hope you get it.

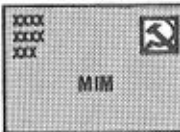
—Finnish reader
November, 1996

Nakived from Florida reads Sakai

[The writer previously explained in detail how s/he is a dialectical materialist who places more emphasis on biology than most. -ed.]

Dear MIM,

We are NOT tenacious at all because we have inner JOY and yes, sure, give us a PIECE and we stop struggling. OF COURSE. Sakai is wrong to criticize this. Sakai criticizes NATURE in criticizing this. Does Sakai have a pet, say a dog? Feed a dog and it will BE your pet. Do not feed



a dog and it will be a wild dog feeding itself-and-competing-with-you-for food. Yet you have to WORK to feed the dog that becomes your pet. One way or the other. Feed me and I'll stop looking for food. I'd have no biological URGE to go looking for food! Sakai gets ALL OVER the CPUSA's members for falling out of the party because they got their little piece of peace and joy. Sakai doesn't understand what the GENIUSES of Communism clearly understood: HUMAN NATURE. You can't go against it! You have to FLOW WITH it. In order to have revolution you have to MAKE the conditions for it which, in turn, URGE people to REVOLT OR DIE.

We have to struggle WITH the flow, not against it, keep an eye out on where they leave holes and then seep in like water. Sakai points out something and misses his/her own point. The Mexican workers on the border working for \$1 an hour making Americans rich: they are still getting paid MORE than if they worked in Mexico, Sakai states. But doesn't he/she see? That's the POINT of it. People go for two pieces of bread instead of one when they are hungry. OK, they have the MEANS OF THE POWER to stop it in its tracks: but they'd have to have NO BREAD AT ALL for awhile to do this. These slave-wage workers who are still making BETTER money on imperial wages than they'd make normally, they'd have to STOP WORKING and everyone else would have to REFUSE TO WORK. Grind the monstium to a HALT. Hey - we tried! There is no more USSR or China to give them some food while they STRIKE like that and the imperialists pretty much ran the 2 powers broke.

They turn on us like angry dogs saying "I have to eat, I have to feed my family" and no - they DO NOT CARE if this would end the CYCLE of slavery in the future because they have survival instincts that work contrary to revolutionary ideas of this type! They are hungry NOW. The oppressors are offering work NOW that is better than any other work they can get. I have NOTHING to

offer them except WORDS, Comrades! WORDS. IDEAS. PROMISES! No more China or USSR to sustain them while they prepare. So we have words to offer them, not food. NOT GOOD.

—Nakived
November, 1996

MIM replies: In the Third World, the strategy of seizing the means of agriculture production by force and then defending them by force allows for a situation of not starving while making revolution. Mao believed that urban peoples in China were not able to launch successful insurrection until relatively late in the process, after a process of protracted rural warfare. The urban poor in such circumstances could fight for reforms or small concessions to stay alive; MIM does not oppose that in the situation where people are truly exploited.

With regard to the many pleasures and necessities of life, MIM does not oppose people having sex, eating, drinking or even taking drugs intrinsically speaking. It is important to say that to our biologically-minded materialist friend Nakived. At our recent Congress we voted for pushing the age of sexual consent down to 13 and making it an objective to keep lowering when we start making steps toward communism. We oppose drugs mostly because of the law and the fact that we get arrested enough as it is. People who can control their escapism through drugs or other means are not evil.

The difficulty arises when one's revolutionary strategy becomes associated with fulfilling these pleasures. Nakived describes helping a womyn find a good fuck after about 10 different inept men. Nakived also tells us of three wimmin who changed their lives completely after finding new mates who could make love with great skill. However, while a certain fraction can become newly adjusted and happy with the patriarchy, another fraction or portion of wimmin becomes maladjusted. If we approach change on the level of finding the good fuck, we become psychotherapists — props of the status quo.

Instead, we want to look at sex and power scientifically across-the-board. If people find the good fuck, fine. If they don't, fine. Both the sexually satisfied and the sexually dissatisfied should understand that we live in a patriarchal system. It could be that everyone will have good sex when we reach communism or it could be that once we abolish class society, no one has sexual desire anymore. What may be a biological urge now may not be later once we have had revolutionary social transformation. Today we already see that one could easily mistake anorexia nervosa as a permanently biologically hard-wired disease, until one looks at its social and geographic distribution.

Nakived says we cannot have a revolution through altruism. That is true. It will have to be imposed by those who have the greatest self-interest in revolution, mostly people of the Third World. There are some self-interests in the imperialist countries that we also want to remind people of concerning war and the environment. The youth have the greatest self-interest in socialism because of war and the environment. If we base ourselves in the social groups with the greatest self-satisfaction whether economic or biological, we ourselves will become impediments to change like most of the organizations calling themselves "Marxist."

Nakived is correct; we should not preach asceticism for its own sake. Anyone reading MIM misunderstands MIM if s/he thinks MIM is advocating some code of lifestyle as intrinsically worthwhile. MIM is only criticizing the self-interests of certain groups of people that are props of the system. When it comes to prioritizing the progressive self-interests of the most-privileged peoples in the world MIM answers firmly opposing war first, saving the environment second.

Thus far in class-divided history our species has shown a willingness to go to all-out war every time new weapons of domination arise. If we cut back on our escapist pleasures, our sex etc., it is only because we see everything potentially

wasted through war and soon. That is a matter of self-interest.

If the nukes are dropping around you, you might as well shoot up heroin with your last dying breath if that's what you want. If, however, you have a shot at preventing catastrophe, it would be in your interest to put aside many pleasures in order to obtain the prospect of longer life or at least the sense of belonging to a culture that is going to survive and be worth contributing to. If MIM comes across as altruistic or ascetic sometimes, that is true only in a limited way. One must learn internationalism only because to survive we as a species must learn it. Those of us from the most privileged backgrounds have at least that much concrete to gain from revolution. We are definitely not asking people to make sacrifices for revolution in order to gain the Afterlife or some other such religious goal.

MLPD raises Theoretical Struggle

Dear Comrades,

Your letter is raising an important question: the size of the stratum of the petty bourgeoisie, its social importance and its influence.

In 1995 we have dealt extensively with these questions and edited a study on "The Struggle over the Mode of Thinking in the Working Class Movement." The book, which is also an issue of MLPD's theoretical organ REVOLUTIONAERER WEG (=Revolutionary Way), is now also available in an English version. We recommend this study for your inspection, and we would be very honored if you could let us know your opinions on the book.

Among other things the book explains how already in the 19th century with the growth of capitalism and the organization of the workers' movement petty-bourgeois elements developed even in the working class. Today it is above all the modern mass media and bourgeois

mass culture, which function as chief means of spreading the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking among the masses, especially among the working class.

The study identifies the dependent intelligentsia as the main carrier of the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking in state-monopoly capitalism. The petty-bourgeois intermediate strata have changed their structure.

Already in 1993 the dependent intelligentsia in Germany as a whole counted for a percentage of 11.8 (4,272,000) of the gainfully employed persons.

The changes in class structure have led to the interpenetration of working-class life with the life of the growing intermediate stratum of the dependent intelligentsia, and have blurred the class boundaries between the working class and the petty bourgeoisie.

The growing masses of the petty bourgeoisie possess no class standpoint of their own in capitalism. So an ever growing number of people are developing forms of consciousness representing a mixture of the class interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

At the very top, the dependent intelligentsia extends into the ranks of monopoly capital; at the bottom, into the rank of the working class. In modern lean production, blue-collar workers work together on a more or less equal basis: The transition between the petty bourgeoisie and the working class has become more fluid.

Even under today's changed conditions of class society do these facts point towards the importance for the revolutionary proletariat and its party of preparing the alliance with the petty bourgeoisie. This task and its importance for the revolution is expressed splendidly in the passage you quoted from: "Theses on Tactics" of the IIIrd World Congress of the Communist International (July 1921). Nevertheless we assume that today the stratum of the dependent intelligentsia as part of the

petty-bourgeoisie has taken the position of the most important ally of the proletariat and has displaced from this function the stratum of the peasantry, the size of which has diminished more and more, not only in Germany but also in other state-monopoly capitalist countries.

With revolutionary greetings,
Stefan Engel, MLPD

It is our fault that we have not written back sooner. We had prepared a lengthy review of the MLPD's literature in English, but it was completely destroyed in a computer mishap. We will put forward our review at a later date. In the meantime, we have a few words to say about the material situation in the oppressor nations—ed.

MCS replies: We believe that since Lenin's day, the semi-proletariat of the imperialist countries mentioned in "Theses on Tactics" has had too much political and economic stability and has grown in scope and proportion in the imperialist countries. For this reason, it is not liable to the pull of the proletariat as much as in 1921 especially in Eastern and Central Europe.

Today it is the youth of the imperialist countries as a stratum that is the principal ally of the proletariat. While the imperialists have won a few rounds of the class war this century, and the parasitic classes have grown to dwarf the workers in productive sectors, the imperialists still rely on world war as the concentrated politics of their cut-throat system and in fact they have accelerated environmental degradation. It is the youth that have the most to lose of their lifespans in war and environmental degradation and they have replaced the semi-proletariat—which is no longer in the economic crisis the 1921 theses mentioned—as the principal ally. At the same time, we do believe we must hone our message on the environment, education and other subjects where we can be effective in an appeal to the middle-classes and we have asked international input on that question.

Here is what the so-called Communist Party U.S.A. has to say about our thesis.

"Now some ultra-left groups in the United States charge that the bulk of U.S. white workers constitute such a 'labor aristocracy,' a view that has gained some currency in student and professional circles."(1)

At the same time, Perlo also quoted Lenin: "The export of capital, one of the most essential economic bases of imperialism, still more completely isolates the rentiers from production and sets the seal of parasitism on the whole country that lives by exploiting the labour of several overseas countries and colonies."(2)

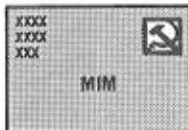
We found it ironic that Perlo attacked our line and the very idea of labor aristocracy by putting it in quotes, and yet he quoted from Lenin extensively on the labor aristocracy. We prefer Lenin in the original to Perlo's watered down politics.

Here is Lenin again:

"The conduct of the leaders of the German Social Democratic party, the strongest and most influential party belonging to the Second International (1889-1914), which voted for the military appropriations and which repeated the bourgeois chauvinist phrases of the Prussian Junkers and the bourgeoisie, is a direct betrayal of socialism. Under no circumstances, even assuming the absolute weakness of the party and the necessity of its submitting to the will of the bourgeois majority of the nation, can the conduct of the leaders of the German Social Democratic party be justified. This party has in fact adopted a national-liberal policy."(3)

At the same time that Lenin called a majority of Germany "bourgeois," Zinoviev was also speaking as representative of the Central Committee during World War I on how a vast majority of German cities were also bourgeois, and hence willing material for the social-democrats.

We are heartened by your stance on the petty-bourgeoisie and its expanded role and influence. We believe the bourgeoisie workers, the petty-bourgeoisie



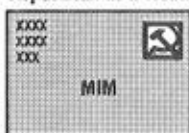
and bourgeois proper constitute the majority in the oppressor nations of imperialism and that as Lenin also said, entire nations (a handful and only constituting a minority of the world population) are parasites.

Notes:

1. Communist Party-USA's Victor Perlo, *Super Profits and Crises: Modern U.S. Capitalism* (NY: International Publishers, 1988), pp. 95-6.
2. Lenin *Collected Works*, cited by Perlo, *Ibid.*, p. 353.
3. Excerpted in *International Communism in the Era of Lenin: A Documentary History* by Helmut Gruber, NY: Fawcett World Library, 1967, p. 59.

Republican Sounds off at MIM

I am a devout conservative Republican as a result you may imagine



I disagree with you vehemently on numerous points. Before I address these points let me

point out it is possible to believe in a party line and still maintain free thought.

Now here are my two primary points of contention with your prescribed political and socio-economic system known as communism. Communism was designed to ensure freedom via equality for all people regardless of identity or character. In order to provide for these means all people must be considered equal. I believe this simply is not possible. Your page states true communism was lost in the former Soviet Union with the loss of Stalin. Prior to this point was there truly equality in that nation? First Stalin was of a higher position in the party and was able to murder millions of people with a motion of his finger. On the other end, the proletariat (I pray this was spelled correctly!) was powerless to oust this man despite his crimes against humanity. As a result the populace of Russia was forced to live under a tyrant.

I fail to see any level of equality in this arrangement. Basically what winds up occurring in a Communist state is a few become "more equal" than the masses. The result is the few have the power and authority to truly abuse and exploit the masses. The masses are left with no means to check the power of such a person and no democratic means by which to remove this person short of a violent revolution and ousting. Capitalism with its natural base in freedom of choice politically prevents such an occurrence from ever happening. As a result we have never met with a true tyrant as a leader of our nation. Never a man with the power to destroy millions of Americans, or anyone short of war.

My second contention with you is the lack of competitive spirit leading to the minimization of the productivity of the society as a whole. Whether you believe it to [be] a positive characteristic or not, people will not work for free. Look at yourself individually, would you allow a corporation or firm of any size to exploit your talents without compensation, of

course not, this would be slavery. However in a communist system all people are required to receive the same compensation as their peers. Should one member of the society receive more compensation than another, the fundamental concept of absolute equality that is the basis for Communism has been severely undermined. The results are clear, John and Joe are both building chairs in a factory adjacent to Red Square. The going labor rate is 30 rubles per week. Both men receive this pay and both

men receive raises and benefits equally. However John works much harder than Joe, the quality of the chair John produces is vastly superior to that of Joe. However John receives no additional compensation for the extra effort he is making. One day John is sitting on the line, sweating terribly and quite tired. He glances over at Joe and takes in the view of laziness and apathy at its finest. John realizes he could make his life as easy as Joe's and still receive the same pay he is working at a breakneck pace. He decides to become as much of a slouch as Joe. Now instead of having one good product and one bad product in a system such as capitalism that seeks to reward achievement, you are faced with two bad products in a system that refuses to recognize achievement.

Well this has become quite long so I will take no more of your time. Furthermore I realize I will never change your mind and likewise you will never change mine. However I would like to hear your thoughts on the above and possibly have a correspondence, we both

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"At the expense of the plundered colonial peoples capital corrupted its wage slaves, created a community of interest between the exploited and the exploiters as against the oppressed colonies — the yellow, black, and red colonial peoples — and chained the European and American working class to the imperialist 'fatherland.'"
— Comintern statement, March 1919

IN THIS... Learn How Capitalism - While Making Our Lives Better - Pushes Poor People Into a Hellish History

Photo: Zedkov from the 1930s; Photos: Andrews and Jones 1990

could learn much from one another.

MC12 responds: Thanks for your letter. We respond for the benefit of readers who are willing to consider new ideas and won't rule out ever changing their minds. Your first point is a very typical criticism of "communism." Communism is worse than capitalism, you say, because it has failed to reach utopian perfection. It doesn't bother you that capitalism is responsible for world wars and wars of conquest that have taken hundreds of millions of lives; that it is responsible for environmental destruction that is destroying the lives of hundreds of millions more; that it grew out of chattel slavery and today maintains a majority of the world's population - including millions of children - in coerced conditions labor conditions, and so on. No, what bothers you is that "communism" failed to achieve utopian perfection over several generations in a small handful of countries.

Your response also shows an application of "common sense" (i.e., capitalist ideology) instead of a careful reading and study. Incorrectly, you quote us as saying that "true communism was lost" in the USSR with the death of Stalin. No communist has ever claimed that any country has reached "true communism." In fact, as long as there is the kind of inequality you (again inaccurately) speak of, a system cannot by definition be communist. In the USSR before the death of Stalin, just as in China before the death of Mao, power remained concentrated to some extent. In fact, in the USSR at some times there was an increase, not a decrease, in the concentration of power. Stalin had a lot of power (though not as much as you indicate). Inequality existed in all "socialist" societies.

Some people mistakenly believe that under socialism there is a gradual, inevitable decrease in inequality. In fact, however, as Maoists have discovered, the struggle to move from socialism to communism - a system without power of groups over other groups - is a long and difficult process: it is a revolution made

up of a series of revolutions. This is the lesson of the Cultural Revolution in China (1966-1976).

In your second point you again argue the TV-news position, which is that under "communism," which usually means in the state-capitalist era of the Soviet Union or its satellite countries, there is a lack of "motivation" because everyone is paid whether they try hard or not. This is a particularly brilliant ideological fabrication because it covers up the truth with the exact opposite of the truth. The fact is that under capitalism the people who work the hardest get paid the least, and the people that work the least get paid the most. Sure, you can find individual corporate lawyers who appear to "get ahead" of other lawyers at their firms by working longer hours, but do any of them work as hard as a Filipino peasant farmer? Never. In fact, the richest people in the world can make more money than anyone else without doing any work at all, and their children will never have to lift a finger as long as this stinking system remains in place.

Your confusion here is very common. You say, "Whether you believe it to [be] a positive characteristic or not, people will not work for free." Yet, who is being asked to work for free? In the capitalist world (which now includes China and the USSR), hundreds of millions of people work for pennies a day - almost for "free"! Fortunately, they will not do that forever, because such exploitation leads inevitably to social revolution, as history has clearly shown. However, in a communist system, no one will work for nothing. Everyone will benefit from their work as their needs and desires are met by the work they and others do.

You say, "in a communist system all people are required to receive the same compensation as their peers." As we already said, there have been no communist societies. However, in China, for example, which was socialist from 1949 to 1976, they established the principle of pay according to work. In the commune system, not everyone was paid the same amount; people were paid according to how much they worked, and pay was

determined by a democratic process of allocating work points. No one ever claimed this system worked perfectly, but the principles were established and millions of people dedicated their lives to making it work. (When we hear on the news that someone has turned an immigrant domestic worker into a slave, no one says that means capitalism doesn't work, but when we hear that in China the work-points system was sometimes abused, capitalist ideologues all conclude that socialism is a failure!)

In conclusion, MIM spends a lot of time talking about the materialist method. That means we don't compare reality to abstractions, social life to ideals. We compare realities with realities. The reality of socialism and the reality of capitalism. From there, rather than from the idealist vantage point that always finds fault in reality compared with ideals, we can determine where best to direct our efforts in the quest for human liberation.

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Environment, Society Revolution

This section features MIM's advancement of revolutionary environmentalism. We begin with an overview essay by MIM. That is followed by three essays submitted to MIM by a member of the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League (RAIL), an organization led by MIM: "A Rail Comrade's Proposal for MIM Line," "First Nations and the Environment," and "Dialectical Environmentalism." MIM has fundamental disagreements with this comrade, but we appreciate the attempt to draw out MIM's line on environmentalism. Each of these is followed by a MIM response. Subsequent articles and reviews develop the major points raised here. This section also includes a collection of articles on imperialist population control that was originally published in MIM Notes.

On Capitalism And the Environment

by a comrade

March 1996

I. ROOT PROBLEMS

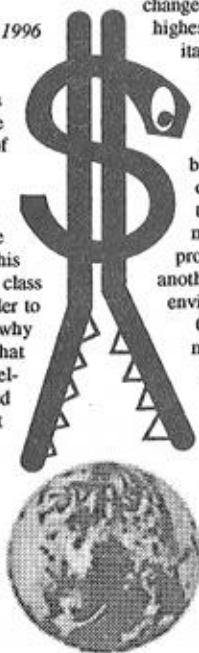
The root cause of environmental problems is capitalism, the private ownership of the means of production by a relative handful of people. This essence of capitalism is one reason why capitalism creates environmental problems: while the majority of the world's people have a material interest in maintaining a healthy planet, the small capitalist ruling class is not accountable to this majority, except in the indirect sense that the ruling class seeks to co-opt the demands of the majority in order to maintain the capitalist system. A second reason why capitalism creates environmental problems is that although the world's resources are controlled by a relative handful of people, planning is not centralized under capitalism. Instead, production is anarchic; it is centered around making profits, not around meeting basic human needs in the short or long runs. Much of what is produced by the capitalist system is unnecessary and wasteful, and the system is not fundamentally capable of incorporating long-term human survival as a need. Finally, the capitalist system does not distribute resources equitably. Under capitalism, many people do not have adequate resources for survival. Many environmental problems stem from this root problem.

Furthermore, capitalism is not static. It has

changed since Marx's day. Today, it has developed to its highest stage: imperialism.⁽¹⁾ Under imperialism, the capitalists carve and recarve the world. The unequal distribution of resources takes on a distinctly national flavor, with a division of the world into imperialist countries on the one hand and colonies and neocolonies on the other hand. Imperialism exploits both the natural and the human resources of its colonies and neocolonies. In their attempts to recarve the world, the imperialists invest heavily in ever-more-powerful weapons of mass destruction. The production, testing, and use of these weapons is yet another way in which capitalism wreaks havoc on the environment.

Capitalism does not just dominate in the economic, military, and political spheres. It also propagates its own ideology and culture. Capitalism promotes individualism, an ideology that values individuals and small groups (romantic couples and nuclear families in particular) over larger collectives of people, let alone the majority of humanity. This ideology, too, is harmful to the environment.

"Since the '70s, the imperialists and their retinue of bourgeois scientists, ideologues and publicists have adopted environmentalism to [accomplish various aims including] to make the people in the industrial capitalist countries think of clean air and clean water and good health in a self-indulgent way."⁽²⁾



II. SURFACE MANIFESTATIONS OF THE ROOT PROBLEMS

The capitalist system of production for profit creates a number of environmental problems which are often understood and discussed in isolation from their root causes. Key among these is pollution of air, water and land. Pollution, like all else under capitalism, is unequally distributed. On a world scale, waste from the imperialist countries is dumped in the neocolonies. A leaked internal memo written by Lawrence Summers, the chief economist of the World Bank at the time and a spokesperson for all imperialists, reveals the dumping of imperialist-country waste on neocolonized land to be conscious imperialist strategy. The memo, which also reveals the crass nature of the reasoning behind production-for-profit, read:

"Just between you and me, shouldn't the World Bank be encouraging more migration of the dirty industries to the LDCs [Less-Developed Countries]? I can think of three reasons:

"(1) The measurement of the costs of health-impairing pollution depends on the forgone earnings from increased morbidity and mortality. From this point of view a given amount of health-impairing pollution should be done in the country with the lowest cost, which will be the country with the lowest wages. I think the economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste in the lowest-wage country is impeccable and we should face up to that.

"(2) The costs of pollution are likely to be non-linear as the initial increments of pollution probably have very low cost. I've always thought that under-populated countries in Africa are vastly under-polluted; their air quality is probably vastly inefficiently low compared to Los Angeles or Mexico City. Only the lamentable fact that so much pollution is generated by non-tradable industries (transport, electrical generation) and that the unit costs of solid waste are so high prevent world-welfare-enhancing trade in air pollution and waste.

"(3) The demand for a clean environment for aesthetic and health reasons is likely to have very high income-elasticity. The concern over an agent that causes a one-in-a-million change in the odds of prostate cancer is obviously going to be much higher in a country where people survive to get prostate cancer than in a country where under-5 mortality is 200 per thousand. Also, much of the concern over industrial atmospheric discharge is about visibility-impairing particulates. These discharges may have very little direct health impact. Clearly trade in goods that embody aesthetic pollution concerns could be welfare-enhancing. While production is mobile the consumption of pretty air is a non-tradable.

"The problem with the arguments

against all of these proposals for more pollution in LDCs (intrinsic rights to certain goods, moral reasons, social concerns, lack of adequate markets, etc.) could be turned around and used more or less effectively against every Bank proposal for liberalisation."(3)

Note that the first line of Summers' memo acknowledges that his proposal for "more" dumping on the neocolonies would only be an escalation of current policy. Other reports confirm this. One from India reads: "India has become a major dumping ground for rich countries' wastes. In 1993 alone, India imported 74,000 kgs of plastic waste. US dumped 7.8 million kg of lead ash and 14,500 kg of lead-acid batteries. UK shipped 2.5 million kg of lead waste. Canada sent 96,000 kg of copper waste, 1.2m kg of ash, 1m kg lead waste and 106m kg ferrous waste. Germany dumped 2m kg metal waste. Every year this dumping is increasing."(4)

The situation in the Philippines is similar:

"In a recent published report, Ibon Databank, Philippines, a local research agency, says TNCs [trans-national corporations] have always been the top contributors in the production of toxic and hazardous wastes in the country. The Philippines produces about 80-150 million tons of hazardous waste per year, the primary sources of which are industrial and manufacturing plants."(5)

Additionally, chemicals which are considered too harmful to the ecology, human health, or both for use in the First World are foisted upon the neocolonies. "Out of the 145 banned pesticides listed in the UN's 'Consolidated list of products whose consumption or sale have been banned, withdrawn, severely restricted or not approved by governments,' the production of 103 of them has gone up now!"(6)

The 1984 Union Carbide Corporation gas leak in Bhopal, India is yet another example of the environmental effect of imperialism on the people of the neocolonies. This pesticide formulation unit's gas leak killed 16,000 people, and affected hundreds of thousands more.(7) Due to the nature of the system of production for profit, Union Carbide did not warn the people of Bhopal about the dangers of the chemical plant in their city, and continued to repress the information after the disaster. When doctors called the plant medical officer for advice the following morning, he informed them that the leaked gases were similar to tear gas and that all the exposed people needed to do was wash their eyes out with water. In fact, the gas was much more threatening.(8)

Within U.S. borders, the indigenous

World Bank proposals for more dumping on the neocolonies would only be an escalation of current policy

peoples of the First Nations are subjected to the effects of radioactive contamination. The Lakota Nation is subjected to radioactive waste dumped by uranium mining corporations.(9) The Western Shoshone Nation is subjected to the effects of U.S. nuclear weapons testing at the Nevada Test Site on their land. Waste incinerators are often located in Black and Latino-populated ghettos and barrios where the people are relatively disenfranchised politically, and less prepared than wealthy white communities to prevent incinerator construction.

Another surface manifestation of the underlying problems of the capitalist system is the overconsumption of resources by the world's privileged classes and nations. The 20% of the world's population from the U.S. and Europe consumes 80% of the world's resources. This is related to the fact that this top 20% receives 83% of world income.(10) The combination of excessive wealth and the capitalist culture of self-centered individualism leads to overconsumption by the people of the imperialist countries. This overconsumption brings destruction to natural habitats and their inhabitants, and thus to the world's biodiversity. Deforestation in particular has these effects and one more: it contributes to global warming. Often this question of dwindling resources is presented as a problem of "overpopulation." On behalf of imperialism, the World Bank and the United Nations have promoted this notion as a way to further shift the burden for First World overconsumption onto the people of the neocolonies.(11)

Another phenomenon which is often not recognized as preventable is "natural" disasters, such as floods, volcano eruptions, and earthquakes. Sure, these are "natural," but why are they disasters? The answer in many cases is that the majority of the world does not have the resources to deal effectively with nature's surprises. Many communities cannot be warned to evacuate when necessary, because they do not have television sets or radios. Once such communities are destroyed by natural events, the neocolonies' poverty prevents the reconstruction of the infrastructure – if there was an infrastructure to speak of in the first place.

Some disasters were never actually "natural" in their origins: "Negros Occidental in central Philippines was hit by a flash flood on Oct. 30 due to the overflowing of two major rivers in the wake of typhoon Pepang which hit the Philippines in mid-October. The flood claimed six lives with 10 others missing. Flood-waters also washed away 404 houses, rendering thousands homeless. Government officials blame deforestation and the obstruction of river mouths by prawn farms for the flood. The National Federation of Sugar Workers said that landlords

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and the capitalist
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self-centered
individualism
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overconsumption
by the people
of the
imperialist
countries.**

must be held responsible for the 'anti-environment and anti-ecology plunder and devastation of natural resources in the province.'"(12)

III. FALSE SOLUTIONS

There are numerous mistaken ideas about how to solve environmental problems. The most blatantly mistaken is the solution put forward by those who represent the imperialist system which is responsible for many of the problems in the first place. The World Bank and the United Nations take an approach based on the notion that Third World "overpopulation," not First World overconsumption, is responsible for resource depletion. Their prescription sounds innocent on the surface, because they call it "sustainable development." However, not far behind the noble-sounding rhetoric lies the imperialist agenda:

"The WCED [World Commission on Environment and Development, which was set up by the U.N. General Assembly in the mid-1980s] report said: 'If needs are to be met on a sustainable basis, the earth's natural resources must be conserved and enhanced.' This statement is not so innocent as it appears, for it conceals an overriding concern for population growth in the poor countries that may curtail the reckless use of global resources by the imperialist powers. It also keeps silent on the existing non-viable socio-political structures and the 'non-sustainable' resource use by the world's capitalist powers. To be precise, the very idea of sustainable development is put forward to ensure the sources of raw-materials and an expanding market for MNCs [multinational corporations] on a continuous basis thereby expanding the neocolonial global order as it is.'"(13)

Like "sustainable development," the "green revolution" has in practice been an ideological smokescreen for Western dominance over the neocolonies. The "green revolution" succeeded in increasing food production in the Third World. At the same time, it did nothing to increase food consumption in the Third World, as the new food surplus was grown for export to the imperialist countries. Furthermore, the "green revolution" has greatly reduced the diversity of crops planted. This is a likely recipe for future famine. The "green revolution" also depends heavily on chemical fertilizers and pesticides.(14) The "green" revolution is in fact highly toxic.

Another mistaken approach to solving the problems of environmentalism is the backward-looking neo-Luddite approach favored by Mohandas Gandhi, Murray Bookchin, the Unabomber, and many other utopian types. Many neocolonized people, however, do not wish to abandon the project of

self-reliant development, as the Communist Party of the Philippines declares:

"The worst propaganda of the pro-imperialist environmentalists idealize[s] underdevelopment as the healthy preservation of the natural environment and obscure[s] the unhealthy conditions and consequences of underdevelopment and poverty as well as the vulnerability of the underdeveloped and poor countries to imperialist plunder and pollution."(15)

Opposing industrialism per se falls into the neo-Luddite category. Those who take such a position have to explain how non-industrialized economies will defeat imperialists in wars – as well as provide desperately needed improvements in health-care and other living standards. If imperialists can march right in and take over non-industrialized utopian communities, these communities will have failed in their liberation struggles. And if there are no medical supplies, tools, electricity, or other necessities for survival, then the "victory" of liberation will be just as bankrupt. Unlike imperialists, socialists will not override national sovereignty for purposes of industrial development. But they will struggle for the correct line to prevail if that issue arises. And contrary to the essentialized notions of some idealists, we believe most indigenous peoples will welcome industrial development that serves rather than undermines the people's needs and interests; in the Americas, at least, such an option has never been presented.

Another incorrect approach to the environmental problems is the liberal strategy of reformism. This comes in many guises. There is the straightforward approach of Ralph Nader's Public Interest Research Group (PIRG), which suggests that people should lobby capitalist politicians for environmental reforms. There is the militant reformist approach of Greenpeace and the Sea Shepard Society, which suggests that civil disobedience will help to pressure capitalist politicians for reforms. Then there is the consciousness-raising approach put forward by ecofeminists, New Age "deep ecology" types, and others. This typical reformist approach suggests that individuals should spread environmental (or feminist, or spiritual, depending on the version) ideas to other individuals. This approach has the problem of assuming that the attitudes of average individuals are the problem, not the practices of multinational corporations and imperialist states. For this reason, in addition to the well-meaning liberals, multinational corporations like to spread the idea that "everyone is responsible" for

environmental degradation. One manifestation of this is to push to get everyone to recycle. Another manifestation is the corporate-sponsored Earth Day events which push the individualist reformist theme. The reformist approach also fails to address the problem that it is material interest, not a lack of consciousness, which causes imperialists to carve up the planet and its resources. Lawrence Summers, the World Bank chief economist quoted above, was aware of the "moral reason [and] social concerns" against his proposals, but this didn't stop him from proposing them.

IV. REAL SOLUTIONS

The best way forward for the environment is socialist revolution. The capitalist system of production for profit clearly needs to be replaced by the socialist system of production for human needs. This will eliminate the motive for overproduction, overconsumption, and socially-destructive production. Genuine socialism cannot be brought about through reform because the capitalists will not give up their power voluntarily; they will defend their power by any and all means necessary including military means. Genuine socialism is less detrimental to the environment, since the absence of the profit motive under socialism eliminates the need to produce many useless products, and since centralized planning eliminates the need for overproduction. Note, however, that to measure the environmental impact of capitalism versus socialism we have to look at total pollution, not just local pollution. Even if a Chinese city had more smog than a U.S. city, for example

Chinese socialism was still better for the environment than American imperialism which (as seen above) causes pollution and degradation all over the world at once. Likewise, evidence for the environmental destruction of the Soviet socialist imperialist empire (1954-1991) tends to show that the worst pollution was in the satellite states of the empire rather than in the empire's core.

At the same time, although socialist revolution is necessary, it is not sufficient. The genuine socialist states which existed prior to 1976 existed in a world which for the most part had not been influenced by the modern environmentalist movement, which got off the ground around 1970. So the historical socialist models may not provide the penultimate examples of socialist environmentalism in practice. Since no country since 1976 has been genuinely socialist, we must look at a socialist movement which does not yet hold state power to get an idea of what self-consciously environmentalist socialism looks like in practice.

The genuine socialist states that existed prior to 1976 existed in a world which for the most part had not been influenced by the modern environmentalist movement.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) is a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist party which leads a broad anti-imperialist movement for National Democracy. This movement encompasses many organizations, some legal, and some underground. Chief among the underground organizations are the CPP, the National Democratic Front (NDF), and the New People's Army (NPA). The CPP has issued a statement on the environment that not only articulates a position, but sums up a practice which, among other successes, has been successful in stopping the destruction of rainforests in the Philippines, despite being implemented by forces which do even not hold state power:

"In areas and roads under their control, the revolutionary forces have enforced the law of the people's democratic government. They require mining companies to adopt antipollution measures and pay social compensation for damage they have caused or else close down. They have combated the landgrabbing operations of agri-corporations and real estate speculators and have scuttled several hydroelectric and other power generation projects which deprive the peasants and indigenous people of land without sufficient compensation and without provision for alternative sources of livelihood:

"In recent times, the most outstanding policy adopted by the CPP is to impose a 25-year complete ban on logging for export. At the same time, this policy allows in certain areas limited logging, provided the logs are for domestic housing and other end uses and local processing (including furniture making, plywood manufacturing, pulp and paper manufacturing). A campaign is now being undertaken to confiscate and prevent the use of logging equipment and facilities by the log exporting firms. At the same time, the revolutionary forces promote reforestation and the development of livelihood projects to improve the social conditions of the people and provide alternative sources of livelihood for the logging workers displaced by the log ban." (16)

The documentary video "Green Guerrillas: The Fight for the Philippines' Rain Forest," directed by Rod Prosser, covers the work of the New People's Army among the indigenous people of Mindanao and how the people's guerrillas work hand in hand with the indigenous people to protect their environment. (17)

CONCLUSION

In sum, capitalism is the root cause of the world's environmental problems. Environmental "solutions" which leave capitalism intact cannot be expected to resolve the problem of environmental degradation. Socialist revolution is needed throughout the world to rid the world of the root causes of pollution and overconsumption. However, even more than that is needed. The people who make the socialist revolutions must also struggle to ensure that revolutionary environmentalism is incorporated into the socialist struggle. The Communist Party of the Philippines and its allied organizations serve as a model

in this regard.

Notes:

1. See V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*.
2. International Department, Central Committee, Communist Party of the Philippines, "On the Issue of the Environment in the World and in the Philippines," 31 March 1995, p. 1.
3. The Economist, 8 February 1992, p. 66. The Economist's response was similarly disturbing: "The language is crass, even for an internal memo. But look at it another way: Mr. Summers is asking questions that the World Bank would rather ignore - and, on the economics, his points are hard to answer. The Bank should make this debate public."
4. Red Star: Platform for Communist Revolutionaries, March 1996, p. 5.
5. Organ of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Red Flag. Available from Red Star, Thakkattussery PO, Thrissur 680 322 Kerala, India.
5. Liberation International, May-June 1994, p. 5. A publication of the International Office of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. Available from the NDF International Office, Postbus 19195, 3501 DD, Utrecht, The Netherlands.
6. Red Star, March 1996, p. 5.
7. "Anniversary Notes," published by Bhopal Gas Peedit Sangharsh Sahayog Samiti (BGPSSS) and Bhopal Group for Information and Action (BGIA), p. 5.
8. Ibid, p. 21.
9. Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement, South End Press, Boston, 1990, p. 129.
10. Red Star, March 1996, p. 5.
11. On the "overpopulation" myth, see Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins, *World Hunger: Twelve Myths*, Grove Weidenfeld, New York, 1986; Red Star, October 1994, pp. 17-19; Red Star, November 1994, pp. 7-9; Betsy Hartmann, *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs*, Harper & Row, New York, 1987; Betsy Hartmann, "Population Control as Foreign Policy," Covert Action Information Bulletin, #39, Winter 1991-1992, pp. 26-30; New Internationalist, October 1987, pp. 8-9, 16-17; Vandana Shiva, "Population growth wrongly blamed for ecology problems," Third World Resurgence #16; Joseph Hansen, "Too Many Babies?: The Myth of the Population Explosion" (pamphlet), Pathfinder Press, New York, 1987.
12. Liberation International, Nov-Dec 1995, p. 8.
13. P. J. James, *Non-Governmental Voluntary Organisations: The True Mission*, Mass Line Publications, TKMC (P.O.), Kollam 691005, Kerala, India, 1995. (U.S. \$5)
14. Lappe and Collins, op. cit., pp. 47-66
15. International Department, Central Committee, Communist Party of the Philippines, op. cit., pp. 1-2.
16. Ibid, p. 5.
17. The film is available from the NDF International Office, Postbus 19195, 3501 DD, Utrecht, The Netherlands. Also available from this address is the NDF pamphlet, "On the issue of the Environment in the World and in the Philippines." (U.S. \$1.50).

RC Polemic I

A Proposal for MIM Line

This document came out of debates between the RC and MIM comrades. MIM agrees with some of this; our comments follow. Comments in [brackets] are inserted by MIM.

The following document is a [proposed] rough draft for MIM's environmental line. The crux is anti-imperialist revolutionary nationalism, socialism and environmentalism. The basic Marxist line is you have to resolve contradictions between groups of people in order to resolve contradictions between people and nature.

I. SMASH IMPERIALISM!

We affirm that imperialism — the struggle between oppressed and oppressor nations — is the principal contradiction in the world today. There is no acceptable solution to the global environmental crisis that doesn't require smashing imperialism first.

We oppose toxic colonialism in North America and abroad. Oppressed nations suffer much more than privileged First Worlders from environmental destruction. The problem is not "environmental racism" but toxic colonialism in the context of world imperialism. In all First World countries we oppose "national parkism," the pseudo-environmentalist strategy of saving wildlife reserves for First World recreation and survival at the expense of Third World resources which are clear-cut and mined for imperialist consumption. We do realize however that the youth of imperialist countries have a big stake in preserving the environment and that the environmental movement — when it is internationalist — is objectively on the side of anti-imperialism and socialism.

In North America, we recognize that the entire continent is occupied territory and affirm the American Indian Movement slogan "US Out of North America" and the New Afrikan Independence Movement slogan "Free the Land." As revolutionaries who are fighting for the liberation of North America by the various oppressed nations, we support environmentalists — even environmental reformists — that seek to prevent the destruction of forests, soil, air quality, etc. on the occupied terri-

ories. We seek to lead environmental struggles on the basis of anti-imperialist national self-determination and socialism.

2. BUILD A GLORIOUS SOCIALIST FUTURE!

Socialism is a necessary but not sufficient step to stop environmental destruction. Past socialist experiments have been as bad or worse as the capitalist countries at protecting the environment. Socialism is better than capitalism for several reasons. In the "free" market:

- Individuals can profit from industries that pollute or even from trafficking in pollution itself.
- Unemployment makes polluting industries the only job option in some communities.
- Monopolies sit on patents like non-fossil fuel energy sources and electric cars in order to maximize their profits.
- Individuals own land and can pollute it for profit as their right.
- Lack of central planning makes it impossible to coordinate relatively large conservation techniques like forest windbreaks and terracing.
- Population control always takes the form of coercive white supremacist or anti-proletarian people control, and not something done for the benefit of the entire society.

• Education is a drain on corporate profits, and the benefits of literacy and widespread higher education — from lower birth rates to higher quality of life — go unrealized.

• The privileged class does not have to reap what it sows in terms of air pollution, water pollution, nuclear waste, etc. The bourgeoisie (and under imperialism, First World workers) can get bottled water, fresh air from air conditioning, oxygen booths or by moving somewhere clean, good medical care or simply the benefits of not having to work in poisonous industry.

• Environmental damage is an "externality" not considered in cost/benefit analyses; socialism can "internalize the externality."

On the other hand, it is imperative that the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat unleash the sustainable technologies and survival techniques that will allow us

'The democratic dictatorship of the proletariat must unleash the sustainable technologies and survival techniques that will allow us to build self-reliant, green socialism.'

to build self-reliant, green socialism. We must study sustainable agriculture, permaculture, indigenous practices and alternative, appropriate technology in order to take care of the needs of the nation without exceeding the carrying capacity of the bioregion. Part of the Cultural Revolution requires that we learn to live more simply and replace material goods with spiritual goods (art, relationships, scientific knowledge, etc.). We will eliminate scarcity not only by producing more, but also consuming less. (This is a First World issue, Third World peoples will not consume less but redirect their production away from exportable luxuries and toward internally consumable necessities.)

It's important to sum up the mistakes of past socialist societies. Without being opportunistic and criticizing on the basis of knowledge that Soviet and Maoist leaders didn't have, we can point to certain "grand plans" and consumeristic visions — like an electric can opener in every house — that come from capitalist myopia not communist vision. We can also criticize our forebears for spending too much time playing catch-up and "let's beat the imperialists." It's one thing to increase production for the defense effort or to give support to revolutionary struggles around the world, it's another thing to try and beat out the U.S. or Britain in terms of GNP. That's letting the imperialists dictate our goals.

3. RESOLVING CONTRADICTIONS

Centralism-decentralism: As communists we want decentralism. We want local control and societies functioning at a humanly surveyable scale, i.e. where everybody can understand and meaningfully take part in the community democratically. We want this both because it's less alienating and fulfills human needs, and because it's ecological and helps resolve the humanity-nature contradiction. Smashing imperialism and recognizing the self-determination of nations — no matter what their size — is a huge step forward already. However, some anarchists — green or not — want more than that, faster. As soon as we smash imperialism they want us to go directly to decentralized local control. This is foolhardy and counterproductive. If you genuinely want decentralism, you have to fight for centralism (though smashing imperialism is already less centralism than before). You have to fight for centralism in order to put down counterrevolution and external imperialist aggression. You have to fight for centralism in order to clean up massive environmental damage caused by imperialism. You have to fight for centralism in order to educate every community about environmentalism and communism. This doesn't mean international centralism like the World Bank or the Trotskyites want, it doesn't even mean continental centralism like the U.S. "isolationists" and RCP want; it means national centralism in order to protect self-determination rights and protect the environment. Centralism is important for genuine decentralism.

Industrialization-deindustrialization: As communists we want to end large-scale "smokestack" industry. We want small,

locally-controlled, ecological modes of production. We want deindustrialization. We want deindustrialization because it's less alienating and more ecological. However, unlike some anarchists who want to deindustrialize before the revolution is on strong footing, we communists want deindustrialization to last. Therefore we industrialize as much as is necessary to fight off the imperialists and counterrevolutionaries. Of course, we industrialize in as sustainable a manner as possible, and our industrialization is certainly better than the imperialists'. We follow the policy of "chopping down some trees to save the whole forest." That is the big difference. The imperialists don't want to save the forests, they are happy with a few trees in their backyards. The anarchists want to save the forests but not enough to sacrifice some trees in order to actually save more. We communists want to save the whole forest but realize we have to cut down some trees to do so. We communists will save the most forest and liberate all of humanity too!

4. ANIMAL LIBERATION: PAIN IS NOT PROFIT

The capitalists make money from torturing animals. It is not surprising that they torture animals because they torture people too. Communists oppose both the torture of people and the torture of animals. Factory farms are a form of torture. They are also bad for human health. We will abolish factory farms. Even if factory farms didn't harm people's health we would abolish them. Communists oppose pain for profit — even if the profit goes to many classes of people. Medical testing on animals is often torture. It is also often perpetrated for make-up and shampoo and other products that we already know how to make. It is only because capitalists continue to produce new products, no different from the old ones, to make money that more testing occurs. Immediately following liberation, we will ban animal testing that is torture. During socialism, we will work hard to find alternatives to animal experimentation.

Some animal liberationists say "Meat is murder" and want everybody to be vegetarians. It is fine for people to be vegetarians themselves, but it is wrong to impose vegetarianism on the whole world. Many traditional societies could not survive in their bioregion without eating meat. For instance, in places where it is too cold to grow many crops, indigenous people have to eat meat — even cute little seals! It is fine to try and convince them not to eat meat, but it would be imperialistic to impose any rule like that on them. It is especially backward because their societies have been living in ecobalance for thousands of years while the animal liberationists are a relatively new phenomenon (though vegetarianism also dates back thousands of years). People who really want to reduce the net torture and eating of animals should join MIM. Smashing imperialism and building socialism is the only way to drastically reduce animal torture. The animal liberation fight will continue on into socialism, and its activists should struggle to be heard but not make meat-eating a dividing line question now. MIM Theory will continue to be a platform for anti-imperialist and communist animal liberationists.

MC12 RESPONDS:

MIM welcomes this proposal and accepts some of its principles. We have a number of disagreements here, some large and some small. These are our disagreements.

SOCIALISM AND CAPITALISM: FALSE COMPARISONS

The writer says: "Past socialist experiments have been as bad or worse as the capitalist countries at protecting the environment." MIM opposes this reductionist logic and unproved charge. How is this comparison arrived at? No socialist society has achieved the level of per capita energy consumption of the imperialist countries, for example, even if their power plants polluted more per ton of coal burned. Further, imperialist countries pollute the whole world to satisfy the consumption of First World peoples, and no socialist country has done that. First World countries have in fact very significantly reduced their output of some airborne pollutants such as lead, and the export of heavy industry to Third World locations means there will be more of this. Is this further evidence that capitalism is no worse than socialism in terms of the environment? Finally, by collectivizing production, socialism took the first steps necessary to stop environmental destruction by making it possible to "internalize the externality." That socialist countries — of which there are currently none — did not complete this course does not undermine this central fact.

The RAIL comrade also says we should "criticize our [socialist] forebears for spending too much time playing catch-up and 'let's beat the imperialists.' It's one thing to increase production for the defense effort or to give support to revolutionary struggles around the world, it's another thing to try and beat out the U.S. or Britain in terms of GNP. That's letting the imperialists dictate our goals." In this, the RAIL comrade makes a false distinction. The fact that the Soviet economy grew much faster than the imperialist economies prior to World War II "in terms of GNP" cannot be distinguished from the "defense effort" or the "support [for] revolutionary struggles around the world." Historically, these projects are inseparable.

Further, when the comrade says communists "industrialize as much as is necessary to fight off the imperialists and counterrevolutionaries," s/he omits the need for industrialization to meet current human needs. There is no reason why, for example, burning fossil fuels to being electric power to rural areas to improve quality of life is bad even if we prefer wind- or water-power, cold fusion, or whatever. So industrialization is not just a necessary "evil" because of the threat of war. It is also necessary in many areas to meet and advance human

**No socialist
country
ever
polluted
the whole
world for
its own
consumption.**

needs. The era of such "smokestack" industries may be relatively short in some areas, if we can get beyond them. But we will not start out with an agenda that denies basic needs to humans.

POPULATION

The RAIL comrade writes "Population control always takes the form of coercive white supremacist or anti-proletarian people control, and not something done for the benefit of the entire society." But MIM does not believe that population control is itself an important goal. The very idea that population is a problem is a construction of genocidal imperialists and their intellectual apologists. Societies where needs are met do not have population problems, and they also have much less population growth in the long run.

Population size may be an important issue at some times in some places, but it is not now. We do not criticize imperialists for the *form* of their population control, but for the *fact* of their population control.

DEMOCRACY

The writer says that under communism societies will be small enough so that "everybody can understand and meaningfully take part in the community democratically." We take this opportunity to reiterate our comment on democracy from MIM Theory 6 (p. 88). Although democracy is a crucial part of socialism, when there are still classes and class struggle, "Complete freedom, complete equality, the end of oppression and coercion — all that will be strived for under communism, when democracy itself will no longer be necessary to mediate the relationships between classes, because class themselves, along with national and gender inequality, will no longer exist. In a literal sense that will mean the realization of 'true democracy' — rule by the people — but it will not make sense to call it democracy because it will mean so much more than that historically-specific term was every meant to imply."

INDIGENOUS ESSENTIALIZING

Finally, the writer speaks of "societies [that] have been living in ecobilibrium for thousands of years." If, to use a dictionary definition, *equilibrium* is "a state of rest or balance due to the equal action of opposing forces," then *ecobilibrium* presumably means a state of rest or balance between humanity and ecology. We have two problems with that.

First, this fits into the historical tendency to essentialize "indigenous" peoples by describing them as effectively unchanging, so perfect were their social arrangements. In fact, however, although certain of their practices have lasted much longer than those of the colonial or imperialist societies, there

is no reason to think things were really staying the same or were going to stay the same without the outside intervention of the settler societies.

Second, everything changes, period. A relative state of balance may last for varying amounts of time in different respects. For example, the predator/prey relationship between people and the fish they eat may be sustainable for a long time, but nothing will make that last forever. As the predator/prey relationship develops over time it inevitably changes, and this change is not the result of industrial societies alone; such changes clearly predate industrialism.

Consider two examples. First:

"Perhaps the most dramatic illustration of technological changes leading to unsustainability are reflected in the early Americans [in the continental sense of "America" -ed.]. Arriving in America about 12,000 years ago, the technological advances associated with fire, stone tools and probably changing social organization raised the efficiency of harvesting the large herbivorous mammals that for thousands of years had made the grasslands of the Americas look much like Africa. While it is still a debatable interpretation, most anthropologists now agree that the hunting activities of the early Americans drove the large mammals to extinction."⁽¹⁾

This tells us that although industrialism and imperialism have increased the capacity and drive for human-perpetrated ecological destruction, even non-smokestack forms of technological and social development change the conditions between human and non-human life in potentially lethal ways.

Second: not even animals live in "ecolubrium." When the Isthmus arose between North and South American, invading mammals from the north decimated many species of mammals living in the south. These southern mammals had been living in relative isolation when their continent was an island, which may have made them more vulnerable.⁽²⁾

Our point with these examples is *not* that "animals" are as bad as people, or that First Nations are as destructive as Euro-Americans. Rather, the point is to dispel the myth of an unchanging "natural" order conjured up by the term "ecolubrium," and call out the essentializing idealist approaches to "indigenous" peoples. Change is inevitable, and going back is impossible. The question is what lies ahead, and what revolutionaries must do to shape future societies.

Notes:

1. John Vandermeer, *Reconstructing Biology: Genetics and Ecology in the New World Order*, New York: Wiley, 1996. p. 312. MIM recommends this progressive textbook as a good basic source on environmental matters.
2. Stephen Jay Gould, *The Panda's Thumb*, New York: Norton, 1980. Ch. 28.

RC Polemic II

First Nations and the Environment

This essay was written by a member of RAIL for publication in MIM Theory and debate among the Party and its circles. MIM agrees with much but not all of its content. Our comments follow. -ed.

by a RAIL Comrade

"Even the most progressive elements of the North American immigrant population share a perceived commonality of interest with the more reactionary segments. This takes the form of a mutual insistence upon an imagined "right" to possess native property, merely because they are here, and because they desire it. The Great Fear is, within any settler state, that if indigenous land rights are ever openly acknowledged, and native people therefore begin to recover some significant portion of their land, the immigrants will correspondingly be dispossessed of what they've come to consider 'theirs,' most notably, individually held homes, small farms and ranches, and the like."⁽¹⁾

"Let me say that the pervasive and near-total silence of the [settler] Left in this connection has been quite illuminating. Non-Indian activists, with only a handful of exceptions, persistently plead that they can't really take a coherent position on the matter of Indian land rights because, 'unfortunately,' they're 'not really conversant with the issues' (as if these were incredibly complex). Meanwhile, they do virtually nothing, generation after generation, to inform themselves on the topic of who actually owns the ground they're standing on."⁽²⁾

"Let's hypothesize for a moment that all of the various non-Indian movements concentrating on each of these issues were suddenly successful in accomplishing their objectives. Let's imagine that the United States as a whole were somehow transformed into an entity defined by the parity of its race, class and gender relations, its embrace of unrestricted sexual preference, its rejection of militarism in all forms, and its abiding concern with environmental protection. (I know, I know, this is a sheer impossibility but that's my point.) When all is said and done, the society resulting from

this scenario is still, first and foremost, a colonialist society, an imperialist society in the most fundamental possible sense. This is true because the scenario does nothing at all to address the fact that whatever is happening happens on someone else's land, not only without their consent, but through an adamant disregard for their rights to the land."⁽³⁾

I. REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY, USA (RCP) LIQUIDATES FIRST NATIONS

The RCP said:

"In un-doing this long-standing atrocity the proletariat will, through consultation with the masses of the Indian peoples, establish large areas of land where they can live and work and will provide special assistance to the Indian peoples in developing these areas. Here autonomy will be the policy of the proletarian state – the various Indian peoples will have the right to self-government within the larger socialist state, under certain overall guiding principles. The overall guiding principles referred to are that practices and customs must tend to promote equality, not inequality, unity not division, between different peoples, and eliminate, not foster, exploitation. The Indian peoples themselves will be mobilized and relied on to struggle through and enforce these principles. This will mean that policies related to local affairs as well as customs, culture and language will be under autonomous control, while at the same time the Indian peoples will be encouraged to take a full part in the overall affairs of society as a whole."⁽⁴⁾

The RCP's position is as chauvinist as it is absurd. While dramatically illustrating the importance of MIM's position that the white working class is not exploited and non-proletarian, as well as revealing the RCP's Trotskyite liquidation of nationalism and their overt white racism, the quote shockingly makes clear why oppressed nationals – particularly in the First Nations – are put off by settler "Marxism" and "Maoism." The RCP wants the Amerikan "proletariat," "through consultation with the masses of the Indian peoples," to determine what land belongs to the First Nations, give them development aid, and determine all questions (beside certain RCP-approved "cultural" questions) for the First Nations. Clearly the RCP has based its line on self-determination and national liberation on South African bantustans and Israel's plan for Palestinian "autonomy." The RCP has learned about "special assistance" from the World Bank and Bureau of Indian Affairs, decided that white settlers should make sure that the First Nations masses are "mobilized", and – much like the Christian missionaries before them – taken it upon themselves to determine what cultural practices are good for the 'poor backwards heathens.' Imagine, the parasitic, imperialist white worker-elite leading the First Nations to build socialism! They pass off all this white-supremacist, neocolonial shit as "Marxist science" when in fact it is the same reductionism, economic determin-

ism and "great nation chauvinism" that typifies Soviet and Chinese social-imperialism ("socialist in words but imperialist in action").

Russell Means, in the speech which had elicited much of the RCP's imperialist tripe, gave a good measuring stick for Euro-American revolutionary movements:

"You can't judge the real nature of a European revolutionary doctrine on the basis of the changes it proposes to make within the European power structure and society. You can only judge it by the effects it will have on non-European peoples. This is because every revolution in European history has served to reinforce Europe's tendencies and abilities to export destruction to other peoples, other cultures and the environment itself. I defy anyone to point out an example where this isn't true."⁽⁵⁾

While MIM would largely agree with Means, we would point to the USSR under Lenin and Stalin, and China under Mao (which is European in Means's sense of 'pro-industrialization'), as examples of revolutions that struck heavy blows against imperialism and thus decreased Europe's ability to "export destruction." In fact, any revolution that defeats U.S. imperialism, regardless of its stand on industrialization, objectively aids colonized peoples everywhere (and is simultaneously the greatest thing anyone could do for the environment). Part of recognizing U.S. imperialism as the principal contradiction (which Ward Churchill and Winona LaDuke consistently do), is critiquing other genuinely anti-imperialist movements from a position of strategic unity.

2. OVERCOMING EUROCENTRIC MARXISM

"So in order for us to really join forces with the Marxists, we Indians would have to accept the national sacrifice of our homeland; we'd have to commit cultural suicide and become industrialized, Europeanized, maybe even sanforized. Only the insane could consider this to be desirable to us."⁽⁶⁾

While the RCP and the majority of the settler left are firmly in the camp of the insane (though, along with Ward Churchill, we'd rather impute their "insanity" to material interests), the First Nations' critique of industrialization poses a big theoretical issue for serious non-imperialist revolutionaries. If traditional, reductionist Marxism equated "progress" with "industrialism," and "the advancement of productive forces" with "conquering nature," what does non-reductionist, non-Eurocentric Marxism have to say (or is that really an impossibility)?

First, we would want to make clear that, regardless of what MIM might think is best for the various liberated territories of the First Nations – or the liberated Aztlan, New Africa, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, etc. – self-determination means that what the sovereign nation says, goes. We can struggle with the other governments on theory, but never encroach on their sovereignty.

Second, we recognize that the Euro-American left is not the most advanced movement around. On the contrary, implicit in the call for an international receivership of the white nation [see MIM Theory 7 -ed.] is the knowledge that American society is parasitic and it will take time to reeducate Amerika. Unlike the RCP and other Trotskyites, MIM recognizes that the First World industrial working classes are the enemy, not the vehicle of revolution. We study Third World and indigenous struggles – and not just self-consciously Maoist ones – because their political line flows from the material conditions of oppression. As we advance our own practice, striking greater blows against Amerikkka, our political line advances too.

Third, we must make a clean break from the counterrevolutionary philosophies rampant in the settler left – and repeated throughout Marxist political economy textbooks – that indigenous societies are “primitive” and “backward” when compared to “modern” (read contemporary European) ones. This racist hogwash is part of the economic determinism and Eurocentrism that buttressed Trotsky’s disrespect for the peasantry and Europe’s colonization efforts in the first place.

Fourth, when other First Nations revolutionaries tell us to examine certain parts of our political line – like the environmental question – we better sit up and listen. (And its not just First Nations activists, see Huey Newton, the Filipino comrades, the Amazonians, etc.) While, as Marxists, we would want to avoid making absolute moral claims about the natural order (while recognizing that this is itself an advance of MIM’s – Marxists from Marx and Engels on have been reducing gender to class and making non-dialectical universalistic claims) or pretending that we can go back in time, we should seriously consider deindustrialization as part of the legacy of Mao’s “producer cities”; as well as evaluating the claim that indigenists have a “higher” or “more expansive” revolutionary vision than Marxists insofar as they recognize the interconnectedness of human and non-human life.

Fifth, and most importantly, MIM must make clear that it is the Euro-American settler population that has to commit cultural suicide, not the First Nations (it’s actually not suicide because we’re hardly expecting the Amerikans to initiate the process, and its as much economic and political as “cultural”). Revolution will end Amerikan parasitism and imperialism. The First Nations and all other oppressed nations will regain their national territories and, in many cases, the territories will in effect have to be created anew insofar as there are few clear boundaries. There will not be reservations or forced integration, but liberated national territory occupied by independent decolonized nations.

3. EVALUATING INDIGENIST ECOLOGISM

In addition to recognizing that the indigenist revolutionaries have what could be considered a “higher” moral ideal than traditional Marxist humanists (though materialism doesn’t really give us any way to evaluate claims that certain ideals are better

than others, it only tells us which seem to coincide with successful resistance movements), there’s an additional argument, based solely on the righteous land claims of the First Nations, that North American revolutionaries need to uphold ecological principles. According to Ward Churchill:

“It would be a violation of a fundament of traditional Indian law to supplant or eradicate another species, whether animal or plant, in order to make way for some greater number of humans, or to increase the level of material comfort available to those who already exist. Conversely, it is a fundamental requirement of traditional law that each human accept his or her primary responsibility, that of maintaining the balance and harmony of the natural order as it is encountered. One is essentially free to do anything one wants in an indigenous society so long as this cardinal rule is adhered to. The bottom line with regard to the maximum population of Indian Country as it has been sketched in this presentation is a very finite number. My best guess is that a couple of million people would be pushing the upper limit.”(7)

Thus, even if non-native North American revolutionaries reject ecologism, deindustrialization, or decreasing the human population as principles, and they see other ways to protect the environment – if only for the human population – as satisfactory, the First Nations’ rights to self-determination and cultural sovereignty includes the right to a restored habitat, limits on population growth and deindustrialization. Anything else would be more imperialism.

4. MAPPING OUT THE NATIONAL TERRITORIES

MIM is in no position to map out the national territories for any number of reasons. First of all, until the U.S. is actually out of North America, i.e. when the revolutionary nationalist and communist forces have overthrown the Amerikkkan government, the oppressed nations cannot “freely speak” their minds – no matter what bourgeois philosophy may say. Both speech and land “rights” are functions of power, and – like the plebiscite in Puerto Rico demonstrated – oppressed groups do not have the power to say exactly what they want. (If a ‘no’ doesn’t mean no, how could a ‘yes’ ever mean yes?) That said, given the record of the North American Left, it’s important to put out a few maps alongside our serious proclamations of solidarity with First Nations self-determination. The maps should give an indication of the future state of things, inspiring us to work harder to kick the U.S. out of North America!

5. DISAGREEMENTS WITH FIRST NATIONS REVOLUTIONARIES

While all revolutionary nationalists and genuine communists working to defeat the U.S. and end imperialism have strategic unity – and additionally, many First Nations activists share MIM’s analysis of the white working class and the principal contradiction – there are significant issues to be struggled over.

Probably the biggest one is over the kinds of organization that have won revolutions. MIM has examined the historical record and determined that the Leninist-Maoist party, applying democratic centralism, self-criticism, mass-line, protracted People's War and the philosophy of dialectical materialism, has been by far the most successful form of revolutionary organizing. The American Indian Movement (AIM) was influenced by the Black Panther Party, a Maoist vanguard, but neither AIM nor any other First Nation organization (that I know of) has taken up democratically-central parties. If the First Nations have a more effective method of organizing, they should share it. Otherwise (and this is true even if First Nations activists deny Marxism on principle), they should take up the Maoist party - adapted to their national conditions, of course - and smash the U.S.

MC12 RESPONDS:

Churchill's hypothetical situation reflects a misunderstanding of inequality and oppression, although we do agree with the gist of what he is trying to say. We have long maintained that it is possible, and from an imperialist stand-point probably even desirable, for the imperialists to reduce the amount of inequality among oppressor-nation members, and even to a lesser extent between Americans and some members of oppressed nations in North America. Churchill is wrong, however, to say that if there were "parity of ... race, class and gender relations" the U.S. would still be "first and foremost, a colonialist society, an imperialist society in the most fundamental possible sense." Frankly, it is not possible to have "parity" of "race," class, and gender, and still have those divisions exist! So the hypothetical cannot exist. To achieve "parity" would mean achieving communism, in which these concepts are meaningless.

In this, Churchill may be making the mistake of taking revisionists at their word. For example when revisionists say they want to end "classism," they have no answer to how that can be achieved without eliminating classes - and it cannot. So the revisionists and reformists in that case are really just making impossible demands that they know are not realistic - one of their many errors and crimes.

However, Churchill could be saying that there could be true communism in North America without ending imperialism over First Nations. While this is hypothetical and untestable, we see no reason to believe that by the time any society goes through the many revolutionary stages necessary to achieve communism that society could still be imperialist.

Of the quote from the RCP, the RAIL Comrade says, "the quote shockingly makes clear why oppressed nationals - particularly in the First Nations - are put off by settler "Marxism" and "Maoism." We want to underscore the RC's use of the modifier "settler" in the above phrase. We frequently receive a very positive response to real Maoism from First Nations members.

The RC also quotes Churchill as saying: "it is a fundamental

requirement of traditional law that each human accept his or her primary responsibility, that of maintaining the balance and harmony of the natural order as it is encountered (emphasis added)." Here MIM cannot agree with this mysticism and reification of the "natural order." No balance remains unchanged or lasts forever; the "natural" order doesn't exist except as an ideal; nothing is as it was "first" encountered. This statement is a simple expression of support for a fetishized pre-"encounter" status quo that does disservice to the people's need for revolution against imperialism, among other things. In one sense, we must of course maintain a balance between humanity, other life forms, and the resources that we use to sustain life. Without such a balance, we humans and other life forms will die. But that balance is never unchanged, and trying to keep it from changing undermines efforts at revolutionary change for the better.

This discussion extends to another comment from the RC, that, "the First Nations' rights to self-determination and cultural sovereignty includes the right to a restored habitat, limits on population growth and deindustrialization. Anything else would be more imperialism." National self-determination does indeed include these rights, as the RC says, but we take issue with the characterization, by Churchill and others, that anti-industrialization is the predominant view among First Nations members. In our experience of contact and struggle with First Nations members, reported extensively in MIM Notes, we find that a deep skepticism about the industrialization of the white man nevertheless frequently does not rule out the positive benefits of industrialization controlled by the people for progressive ends. Self-determination of nations is the only way to achieve national liberation and end imperialism, but we believe that in the struggle against imperialism, leading to its defeat, the people of the oppressed nations, including the First Nations, will probably opt to keep and/or develop the positive elements of industrialization for the benefit of the people.

Finally, the RC provided for discussion these "quotes from First Nations revolutionaries." MIM's comments follow each quote.

"The Marxist analysis of capitalism is a good beginning, at least in part; it is held in common and even expanded upon by a number of Native American militants and traditionalists. ... Where Indians and Marxists part company lies within the realm of conclusions to be drawn from analyses of what is wrong with the capitalist process; with a vision of an alternative society. Beyond redistribution of the products of capitalism itself, Indian critics see little differentiation between the two contending modes. And redistribution of the proceeds accruing from a systematic rape of the earth is, at best, an irrelevancy to American Indian tradition. ... Rhetorically at least, much of Marxism agrees much more profoundly with Dupont ("Better Living Through Chemistry") Chemicals and Philips ("we can make a well-head blend with any environment") Petroleum than with any of the Indian contributors."(8)

MIM: It is incorrect to consider socialism and communism to be the "redistribution of the products of capitalism itself." These are systems of production as well as distribution. Again, social democrats may talk about the redistribution of the benefits of capitalism, but this is not a communist's view. Further, we don't recognize "rape of the earth" as a concept outside of human perception. Coal mining is not more "rape of the earth" than eating corn. The difference is coal takes longer to form than corn, which is a quantitative difference. The point is, is the process sustainable for humanity and is it exploitative? We do not recognize the imperative to take care of the earth as a moral necessity outside of human culture and thought. Materialists find no moralities outside of human conception.

It is no more wrong for a human to dig up something useful from the earth than it is for a meteorite to strike a planet somewhere in space. The moral question is the question of human relations first. The idea that it is wrong to exploit, oppress and kill a human being is a human idea, and like all human ideas it occurs only on the basis of class and gender relations. From the oppression and exploitation of some humans by other humans, the oppressed and exploited have developed a morality that condemns this, and we develop a practice to end it. Future social relations will lead to new senses of morality, that we are not yet in a position to determine. Some people believe, for example, that the exploitation of animals by humans is the next frontier of morality, and MIM does not have reason to disagree with this. At the moment, however, we are not prepared to base our revolutionary practice on this conception of morality. Likewise, we do not at present believe there is a basis for calling the "destruction" of the Earth as a planet itself immoral, apart from its relation to humanity and, possibly, other life.

"If Marxists had ever come close to comprehending the universe in anything remotely resembling a truly relational sense, it seems utterly inconceivable to me that they could engage in perpetuating the arrogance of logic through which Europe has assigned to humanity a mystical place of inherent superiority among living things. It seems equally impossible that a relational world view could accommodate the rather stupid notion that the universe was somehow designed as the playground for human exploitation. Such examples could be continued at great length."(9)

MIM: In response to this comment from Frank Black Elk, MIM adds that we don't think humanity is "superior" to other living things. But we know that humanity is our reference. That is why we say that there is no morality outside of human morality - which means it's a class- and gender-dependent set of ideas. Does the earth have greater value than the moon in a moral sense? Why are living things more valuable than non-living things? Only because these are human constructions in the first place, and living things are more like human things. Outside of human - i.e., class and gender based - systems of thought there can be no morality from a materialist perspec-

ive. Any morality greater than humans is religion, and we think humans invented religion, and religious people obviously disagree. In fact, it seems strange to have this materialist view considered to be less "relational" than the view of absolute morality outside of human conceptions expressed by the quote. We also certainly don't subscribe to the "rather stupid notion that the universe was somehow designed as the playground for human exploitation," and we don't know any Marxists who do.

"The pattern of colonization prevalent in South America ... seems appropriate to conditions currently existing in the North as well. Internal colonialism - the colonization of indigenous peoples - is a prominent, if little discussed, fact of life within both the United States and Canada (and Mexico as well). The centrality of the issue of colonization of such Fourth World peoples to any reasonable strategy of global anti-imperialism appears much more evident in the North than in the South, not for moral reasons, but for pragmatic ones. North America, the United States in particular, is the seat of the most comprehensive system of imperialism ever witnessed by humanity. Increasingly, it is a system fueled by nuclear capabilities, fed by uranium. The relationship of the reservations to that uranium is clear. Likewise, the United States and Canada lead the world in "food production"; needless to say, they have a huge stake in maintaining this position of dominance. Again the relationship of the American Indian treaty lands to primary North American agricultural areas is readily observable. The same can be said relative to a range of crucial resources."(10)

MIM: We basically agree with this quote. On the concept of "Fourth World," we would only say that the colonization of First Nations has been as much a part of imperialism as the colonization of oppressed nations all over the world. There are differences, of course, separating those areas that the colonizers decided to settle in large numbers themselves from those areas that they merely colonized as labor and resource zones. We think the concept of Third World applies well to either, although we have no opposition to the term "Fourth World."

"Many anglo women try. I expect in all sincerity, to tell us that our most pressing problem is male supremacy. To this, I have to say, with all due respect, *bullshit*. Our problems are what they've been for the past several hundred years: white supremacy and colonialism. And that's a supremacy and a colonialism of which white feminists are still very much a part."(11)

MIM: We agree with Janet McCloud's statement in part, but if she is implying that there is not also a gender contradiction among First Nations would have to disagree, as we know of no society without some degree of gender oppression. This argument is therefore best had over what is the principal contradiction, which we believe is the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations at present. The main point of the statement, however, that we do agree with, is the assertion that attempting to turn oppressed-nation wimmin against the men

of their nations instead of against imperialism and national oppression is reactionary. This is the particularly insidious innovation of pseudo-feminists from oppressor nations.

"White women, most of them very middle class and, for whatever they think their personal oppression is, as a group they're obviously the material beneficiaries of the colonial exploitation their society has imposed on ours ... they come and they look at the deformity of our societies produced by colonization, and then they criticize the deformity. They tell us we have to move 'beyond' our culture in order to be 'liberated' like them. It's just amazing. ... They virtually demand that we give up our own traditions in favor of what they imagine their own to be, just like the missionaries and the government and the rest of the colonizers. It was being forced away from our own traditions that deformed us - that made the men sexist and things like that - in the first place. What we need to be is more not less Indian. But every time we try to explain this to our self-proclaimed "white sisters," we either get told we're missing the point - we're just dumb Indians, after all - or we're accused of "self-hatred" as women. A few experiences with that sort of arrogance and you start to get the idea maybe all this feminism business is just another extension of the same old racist, colonialist mentality."(12)

"It seems to me the feminist agenda is basically one of rearranging social relations within the society which is occupying our land and utilizing our resources for its own benefit. Nothing I've encountered in feminist theory addresses the fact of our colonization, or the wrongness of white women's stake in it. To the contrary, there seems to be a presumption among feminist writers that the colonization of Native America will, even should, exist permanently. At least there's no indication any feminist movement has actively advocated pulling out of Indian Country, should a "transformation of social relations" actually occur. Instead, feminists seem to share a presumption with the patriarchy they oppose, that they have some sort of inalienable right to go on occupying our land and exploiting our resources for as long as they like. Hence, I can only conclude that, like Marxism, which arrives at the same outcome through class rather than through gender theory, feminism is essentially a Euro-supremacist ideology and is therefore quite imperialist in its implications."(13)

MIM: If you substitute "pseudo-feminism" for "feminism," we agree with this statement for a critique of pseudo-feminism. However, because gender oppression is a part of all societies that we know of, we refuse to give up revolutionary feminism as a part of the struggle for communism. Revolutionary feminism as MIM has defined it does not perpetrate the crimes described in this passage. As far as Marxism, this passage again reflects the generations of revisionism masquerading as Marxism in the imperialist countries. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism does not "arriv[e] at the same outcome through class rather than gender theory," and it is not "a Euro-supremacist ideology [that is] quite imperialist in its implications."

Revisionists bear some of the responsibility for this misconception, but Pam Colorado is also guilty of criticizing all "Marxism" in this passage without paying attention to its pro- and anti-imperialist forms.

"The state called 'America,' on the other hand, is connected only to an independent settler society [unlike other imperialists that actually have a home territory of their own - RC]. It has no place of its own, nor did it ever. The economic power of the United States is losing its grip in much of the world, but in the end, to where might this state return? It is only a state, only a political entity, so its ideological base and its narrative must be absolute. If someone imagines otherwise, at the end of America's external empire it would follow there must be an actual place that is America. Would my country become free of the U.S. during this dissolution of empire? If so, where then is America? If not, how can it be that the empire has dissolved?"(14)

The RC adds: This passage is especially interesting. For one, it questions the appropriateness of settler revolutionaries calling themselves "mother country" revolutionaries. Since in fact, they too are on occupied territory. Second, it puts in philosophical language, the dilemma of non-native self-determination. Of course, we can imagine that the First Nations will give some land for the Black, White and non-native Latino nations to live in, but does that entail the same "rights" of self-determination as, say, the French in France. Here we return to the idea that nations inhabiting America might need to recognize the indigenous principle of ecology, for example.

In MIM Theory 7, "Proletarian Feminist Revolutionary Nationalism on the Communist Road," MIM argued for a receivership for the white nation after national liberation has been won for the oppressed nations of the American empire. We also recognize that the use of land and resources in North America for non-oppressing nations will need permission from First Nations. Unlike the RCP-USA, MIM does not presume to dictate the conditions for that use of First Nation land and resources. We will instead attempt to reach agreements for that use that make possible the self-determination of all oppressed nations and the responsible stewardship of the former oppressor nation until it is ready to enter the community of non-oppressors.

Notes:

1. Ward Churchill, "I Am Indigenist." *Struggle For the Land*. Common Courage Press, 1993, p. 416.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 416.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 417-8.
4. Excerpt from RCP New Programme and New Constitution in W. Churchill, ed., *Marxism and Native Americans*.
5. Russell Means in *ibid.* p. 24.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
7. *Struggle for the Land*, p. 434.
8. *Marxism*, p. 185-6.
9. Frank Black Elk in *Marxism and Native Americans*, p. 150.
10. W. Churchill and Winona LaDuke, "The Political Economy of Radioactive Colonialism," in *The State of Native America*. South End Press, 1992, p. 242-3.
11. Janet McCloud, *ibid.* p. 332.
12. Lorelei Means, *ibid.* p. 332.
13. Pam Colorado, *ibid.* p. 332.
14. Jimmie Durham, *ibid.* p. 427-8.

RC Polemic III

Dialectical Environmentalism

This is another document that reflects the efforts of one RAIL comrade to influence MIM's revolutionary environmentalist line, and it came out of debates between the comrade and MIM comrades on this question. MIM agrees with some of this; most of our comments are inserted in brackets or follow the essay. Our fundamental disagreement with this RAIL comrade is over a central tenet of Marxism — the importance of industrialization to the advancement of the mode of production, and the transition from pre-capitalism to socialism and communism. To be anti-industrialization, as this comrade is in this essay, is to be anti-Marxist. MIM does not romanticize pre-capitalist modes of production, and absolutely embraces technological advancement in both industry and agriculture. While we distinguish the Maoist "politics in command" line from the revisionist "technology in command" line, we understand that the promotion of technological advancement is squarely within the Maoist camp. We print this essay and our comments to demonstrate the importance and sometime difficulty of staying focused on the proletarian line in all theoretical and practical endeavors. Dialectical environmentalism is no exception.

The primary importance of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theory (MLM) to revolutionaries is as a tool for eliminating oppression. We say it is universal precisely because it can be used by every oppressed group — no matter what nation, gender, class or culture — as a strategy for liberation. The revolutionary core of MLM is a materialist assessment of the competing group interests in a society, an analysis of how capitalism and imperialism exploit the proletariat and oppressed nations, an historical summation of the most effective types of organization, tactics and strategy for overthrowing capitalism and patriarchy, a record of the victories and defeats of societies run according to MLM; and a prediction that the oppressed will eventually win. Its outlook is that of the international proletariat, though it can only be applied by smaller units; and its philosophical foundation is dialectical materialism, the idea that there is a reality *out there* that humans are a part of, that reality is not permanent but changing, that the biggest changes in society are tied to group struggles around oppression, and that the best way of changing society is by changing the relations between groups and their surroundings. Our philosophy flows from our outlook: Since we want to change the reality of our oppression, it's useful for us to think of reality as something more than *just in our heads*; since we want to end our oppression, naturally the historical

changes we're interested in mostly concern oppression; and since we're interested in the liberation of the entire proletariat — and not just looking for an individual out — the appropriate level of social intervention and analysis is the group.

Part of recognizing that human societies change, and therefore any theory involved in affecting human society must also change, is the continual development of MLM. Not only does MLM change in the sense that it takes into account particular national conditions, new forms of technology, and new strategies of oppression; it

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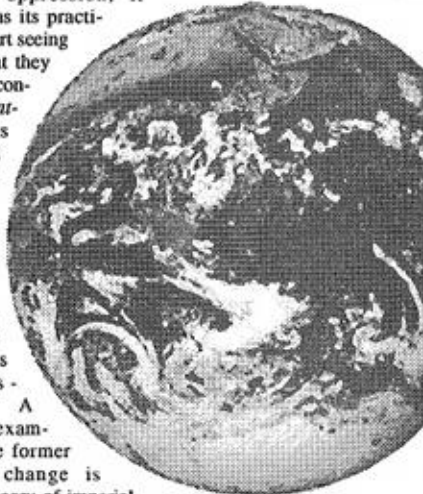
ple of the former

sort of change is

Lenin's theory of imperial-

ism, while an example of the latter is MIM's advancement of the gender line. The former, more *linear* adjustments of theory are easier to follow — though there are certainly plenty of Trotskyites who are looking at the world through glasses made in 1905. On the other hand, its easy to see that First World industrial workers are not exploited and Third World workers are, because you apply the same standard today that you did then. Capitalists took surplus value from the European factory workers in 1848, they take it from South Korea in 1996. While screaming for bread, European factory workers took over cities in 1848; today the food riots are in Brazil.

At the other side of the spectrum, there's a qualitative leap in Marxist theory in saying that "sex is rape," as MIM does. Where in heck did Marx talk about that? On the contrary, a



reading of Engels *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* will drive one nuts with chauvinist fantasies of free love, uncoerced sex under socialism, and the naturalness of heterosexuality. Not only is Engels' view of gender undialectical – insofar as he thought European heterosexual intercourse was natural – but it reflected his place in the gender hierarchy. We can separate out three aspects of his error. First, he forgot that *nothing is natural and everything is social construct*. Second, he let the limits of his cultural knowledge set the vision of a utopia that he projected on the entire world. Third, he theorized from a position as oppressor not as oppressed. As MIM comrades know only so well, these errors have not gone away (unbelievers can ask the nearest Spart, who will responds to the lifetime monogamy policy with "I don't get how you guys can be so anti-sex. You're repeating Victorian morals and repressing my sexuality." A good answer to this is: "We're repressing your sexuality? You sound like a capitalist saying 'You're repressing my right to private property.'")

One of the errors of the second type that is particularly rampant among Trots, but that has hung on to some Maoist sympathizers as well, is the provincialist utopian vision of one world economy with super hi-tech agriculture and industry, international division of labor, and continued industrialization past whatever is needed to defend socialist construction. This idea came from the particular 19th Century European setting in which Marx theorized and has become canonized, among the Trots, as "an iron law of historical development." It comes

from a period in Western culture where people idolized technology and looked to the World's Fair as a beacon of socialist optimism.(2) It is no more "an iron law of history" that we must have million acre cornfields and airplanes than that the revolution will be led by the European working class. Following the Maoists in China, MIM has already rejected the thesis of economic determinism and other "productivity-first" theories and we can elaborate on the consequences of this theoretical move even more.

Our concern as Maoists is to determine what a society needs to wage and win a national liberation struggle and socialist revolution. Maoists know from experience that you don't need highly industrialized late-capitalism to get to socialism. The crucial questions in terms of the level of productive forces are, "Can the society fight off imperialists externally and class-enemies internally?" and, "Can the society provide enough food, clothing, shelter, etc., to support everyone?" The answer to the second question is easiest. Non-industrial societies had been feeding, clothing, and sheltering their populations just fine until imperialism came long. Once a society is in control of its own land, resources and population, there's absolutely no reason to believe it needs Western style industrialization. The key is socialist productive relations.

The first question would seem somewhat more complicated because there would be a material basis for aggression as long as some nations have a higher level of military technology than others. On the other hand, as the success of national liberation struggles from China to Vietnam to Eritrea have shown, it

doesn't take much industrialization to win a war against even the most advanced imperialists *as long as the People are behind you*. Thus an independent Creek Nation could, if it wished, retain its relatively non-industrial traditional culture and – with perhaps a few shotgun factories – stand up to outside aggressors.(3) *This is the greatest testimonial to the power of proletarian leadership and Maoist organization*. Because, it's not really saying much if ending oppression means liquidating your culture. Some nations may not be willing even to compromise their traditional beliefs and adopt a Maoist form of organization or – like some leaders of the Hopi Nation have been quoted as saying – even take up arms against



outside aggressors.(4) However, for those nations that want to fight for national liberation, they can feel confident that their society won't be molded by any "iron laws of history" into a Europe clone.(5)

Of course, the instances of Marxist vision being embedded in 19th Century Europe aren't just limited to the examples of racism, gender-or-industrialization-MLM will continue to change as long as the existence of oppression necessitates a capable counter-friction. Every group that applies MLM in practice will expand the scope and power of its usefulness as a liberating theory. This follows from the description of MLM as science: every experiment brings new data which, in turn, changes the theory. This is what it means to be a dialectical science. This is also why revolutionaries rely on the experience of the party and the masses, not the Comintern, RIM, or any other "foreign body."

It's important to note that industrialization is buried much more deeply in Marxist thought than, say, the idea that gendered heterosexual intercourse is natural. There's an idea in Marxism that humanity as a whole progressively gets smarter as it "advances" technologically. Thus Mao can say:

"The dialectical world outlook emerged in ancient times both in China and in Europe. Ancient dialectics, however, had a somewhat spontaneous and naive character; in the social and historical conditions then prevailing, it was not yet able to form a theoretical system, hence it could not fully explain the world and was supplanted by metaphysics."⁽⁶⁾

MIM is not interested in fully explaining the world. We're interested in overthrowing imperialism, capitalism and patriarchy, and building societies where groups don't oppress groups. It's quite likely that explaining the world in the way that communists do is necessary for liberating humanity from oppression, but ignores lots of other aspects of human life like spirituality, expanded consciousness, etc. To say it another way, it's likely that the methodology Maoists embrace in order to achieve communism - i.e., dialectical materialism - is good at liberating groups of people, but bad at doing other things. That's okay, because we're not idealists that think ideas are god-given. We are proletarian revolutionaries that say overthrowing imperialism is the most important thing to do. We create ideas, in a particular cultural milieu, to get a job done. Moreover, we picked *that* job, and not another one (like finding salvation or being good lovers), because of the intolerable physical oppression afflicting ourselves and the majority of the world.

We also don't have any interest in saying that older, pre-capitalist world-views were naive, not fully developed, or in any other way inferior to our own. They had different ideas that probably served their purposes much as our own ideas serve our purposes. Moreover, as anthropologists from Levi-Strauss on have pointed out, non-industrialized, particularly indigenous peoples, had lots of scientific knowledge - not to mention

the spiritual knowledge which we may or may not be particularly interested in - that we could use happily. Saying that we're more advanced by virtue of our industrialization strikes one as particularly linear, non-dialectical and a racist carry-over from Manifest Destiny doctrine (which may explain why Zionist settlers felt so comfortable calling themselves socialist). It is part of the productivity-first doctrine that concerned itself more with technology than actual relations between people.

It's also important to remember that MIM is multinational at this stage in the struggle and that MIM plans to separate into national vanguards leading national struggles in the future. Those struggles will have the same enemy (U.S imperialism) and much strategic unity, as well as many of the same theories and organizational structures (like the Maoist party), but will have many differences as well. We are not Trotskyites dreaming of a world with one language and one culture. We are Maoists who want centralized power in order to do away with imperialist hegemony. *It's okay if the First Nations don't want to industrialize on a Western model.* It was bad (undialectical) Marxism to pretend that there was one human civilization bound by the same "iron laws of history." Eventually we will all get to decentralized, sustainable, egalitarian societies or else we'll be dead. As a multinational vanguard, MIM concentrates on - and hold as official party line - only those positions that are necessary for successful Maoist revolution. For example, the three dividing line questions and the analysis of patriarchy are necessary, but a vision of the world as a hi-tech concrete world with 15 billion people is not. Enjoying or not enjoying hi-technology, concrete and lots of people around are cultural differences that can be worked out among socialist societies (we keep our cement out of your national territory and don't breed beyond our borders). It's fine to talk about these questions now - like we do about artificial reproduction or technological utopias that do away with housekeeping (or houses) - but including them in the party's line of *what MIM comrades must defend as socialism* would be both divisive and imperialistic.

This eliminates the problem of deciding whether Maoists have to want to live in a non-oppressive Western industrialized society, or a non-oppressive Indigenous non-industrialized society. Neither will extract surplus value or superprofits, commodify and degrade women or set up class/gender/national hierarchies. Both will provide for the people and protect the natural environment. Indigenous societies might preserve more of the environment as they encountered it and have a more spiritual connection to the land, while Western societies pursue a test-tube baby, automated vision. Probably there will be some crossover and migration of visions as well as individuals. In any case, the point is to distance MLM, which is essentially a strategy for liberating people from oppression, from peculiarly Western notions of what civilization should be like and what a theory of the world should contain. Adopting this non-Eurocentric approach will do much to unite the oppressed proletariat in terms of theory and practice.

The irreducible core of MLM revolves around struggling against oppression and acknowledging the ubiquity of change. Our theory changes as our practice changes, and vice-versa. Our theory and practice change as national, international, environmental and technological conditions change. Maoism becomes revolutionary feminism as the women's liberation struggle develops. Catharine MacKinnon meets Chairman Mao and both walk away transformed. Marx reads *Settlers* and leaves the white working class alone. Practice both confirms and prefaces each change. As the First Nations apply MLM, Maoism will unpack even more of its Western European baggage and develop further. As the imperialists destroy the environment, oppressed nations are turning against loggers and strip-mines; Filipino communists, First Nations revolutionary nationalists and MIM comrades expand their environmental line and practice. People learn from practice. As long as there are humans, the struggle will advance and ultimately be victorious. In the words of Chairman Mao: All reactionaries are paper tigers. Or, to paraphrase the Rolling Stones, Time is on our side, Oh yes it is!

Long live Maoism!
Long live continuous revolution!
Down with economic determinism!
Down with dogmatism!
All Power to the People!

Notes:

1. In the past 150 years Marxism has developed incredibly. A survey reading of the "classics," from Marx's *Capital* and Engels, to MIM Theory 10 shows that tremendous flexibility is part of the greatness of MLM. It's important to remember, however, that materialism is also a *conservative methodology*. Decisions are on the whole based on past precedent. We do what we do now because it has worked in the past. This is a good thing, it stops revolutionaries from going off the deep end.
2. The socialist "dream sequence" of one of Lenin's favorite Russian revolutionary classic takes place in a giant palace of glass and steel, modeled on the "masterpiece" of the World Expo in Paris.
3. Shotguns require steel and steel requires mines and factories. So too syringes and penicillin require a certain development of productive forces. This is not to say that a nation needs plastics, monocrop agriculture, strip-mines, huge iron smelting facilities or most of the other stuff people associate with industrialism. Self-reliant socialism assumes sustainable development. Modern science is gaining an understanding of ecology.
4. Since Maoism is about groups liberating themselves, there's not much to say about these idealists except that hopefully we'll defeat imperialism before Amerikkka kills them. It seems that the Hopi, at least, have a strong traditional belief that after the white man came he would destroy the Earth and the Hopi would leave this world for the next one. They're certainly right about destroying the Earth, but maybe their forecast didn't foresee the up-and-coming receivership of Euroamerika.
5. The concern is probably not so much about laws of history molding their culture, but getting into united fronts with organizations — like the RCP-USA — who want to annex smaller nations into their "larger socialist society."
6. Mao, "On Contradiction."

MIM RESPONDS:

While MIM has some agreement with this writer, we have fundamental disagreements with this article. Our main area of disagreement is with the writer's view that pre-industrial — but not communist — societies were "fine until imperialism came along." The implication is that imperialism invented oppression and eliminating imperialism will allow pre-industrial society to revert "back" to their blissful pre-colonization state. The writer applies this to social relations, but more importantly to technology. MIM does not agree that eliminating technology and going "back" to pre-industrial technology would best serve the oppressed.

First, we disagree with the 20/20-hindsight criticism of Engels. It is not true that "nothing is natural and everything is social construct." It is true, however, that the concept of "natural" is socially constructed. This writer, however, believes that pre-industrial societies had "natural" and therefore better means of meeting human needs. "European heterosexual intercourse" (which is obviously not just a European phenomenon) is no more or less natural than sex practiced in other cultures before or since. The writer also faults Engels for "letting the limits of his cultural knowledge set the vision of a utopia that he projected on the entire world." However, all theorists are limited by their knowledge, cultural or otherwise, so this is not a criticism, but a truism, and therefore not useful. As for the third criticism, that Engels "theorizes from a position as oppressor not as oppressed," MIM disagrees, but since this is not substantiated there is not much to quarrel over beyond that.

The writer is simply wrong to assert that "Non-industrial societies had been feeding, clothing, and sheltering their populations just fine until imperialism came long." MIM frequently uses China as an example, where it is clear that non-industrial society was in fact a system of feudal dynasties for thousands of years, during which time people were not all "just fine." Imperialism made things worse for China, but China was not "just fine" before imperialism. The implication here is that imperialism invented class and gender hierarchy, which is obviously false. The writer goes on to say: "Once a society is in control of its own land, resources and population, there's absolutely no reason to believe it needs Western style industrialization. The key is socialist productive relations." But what non-industrial societies had socialist production relations? Most non-industrial societies had less inequality than the world now has under imperialism, but that does not mean they were socialist. And for the technological question of "need" for "Western style industrialization" (like that great Western country, China), there is no getting around the historical fact that industrialization has improved the capacity of economies to improve and extend human life.

The writer further fetishizes non-industrial societies by saying that "it's not really saying much if ending oppression means liquidating your culture." Imperialism liquidates the cultures of its colonies, to be sure. But what is the good of preserving culture for its own sake? This is merely run-of-the-mill

conservatism or traditionalism. This argument says it was wrong to smash the oppressors' art during the Cultural Revolution, because that means we can't "preserve traditional culture." Well, imperialism has no right to liquidate cultures, and cultural defense against imperialism is necessary and justified. But that does not mean that culture does not or should not change.

The writer's model for revolutionary change is overthrowing imperialism and getting "back" to what we had before. This is an undialectical model based on idealism.

The writer is also wrong in doubting that humanity "as a whole progressively gets smarter." This is in fact what happens - in part. Once upon a time humanity "as a whole" did not know how to capture or produce and use fire. "We" learned. One of the great *advances* of humanity at all is the ability to pass information on across generations and cultures, what is sometimes called "cultural evolution." This is another way of saying that in some ways humanity absolutely "gets smarter." Of course, we also lose knowledge, in part from the violent liquidation of cultures. MIM therefore finds no fault in the Mao quote on the development of knowledge.

The writer says that dialectical materialism is good at making revolution but not so good for "other things." For example, MIM might suggest, dialectical materialism is not good at "understanding" (i.e., believing) creationism, so if you believe in creationism you are not a dialectical materialist. What is it about "spirituality" that dialectical materialism cannot understand? Or "expanded consciousness"? Dialectical materialism exists to expand consciousness; it is itself an expansion of consciousness.

What the writer means is dialectical materialism is not simultaneously a science and a religion. In that we dialectical materialists plead guilty. We are not running a religion. As we have said elsewhere, we do not intend to take away other people's religions, but we will struggle to prevent them from being used to hurt people. We do believe that religion will someday run its course and disappear. Others disagree. We do not intend to colonize anyone in the name of socialism and end their religious beliefs and practices, for that would violate their national self-determination. But we will not withhold or change our opinions about religion to win their approval.

Finally, we also should point out that scientists in all areas are better scientists when they practice dialectical materialism. We know of no areas of practice or knowledge that would not be informed and improved by the application of dialectical materialism.

In the vein of fetishizing the non-industrial, the writer adds: "We also don't have any interest in saying that older, pre-capitalist world-views were naïve, not fully developed, or in any other way inferior to our own. They had different ideas that

The writer wants to overthrow imperialism and get 'back' to what we had before.

probably served their purposes much as our own ideas serve our purposes." MIM asks, now who is theorizing from the perspective of the oppressor? What are "our purposes"? Religious views certainly were "naïve" and "not fully developed." No set of ideas is "fully developed," including dialectical materialism. But "naïve" is another thing. Compared to science, religion is naïve. It understands less. As with the fire example from above, MIM does think there is any reason to pretend - in misplaced deference to non-industrial societies - that science is not an advance over religion.

In some moral ways, there is no reason to say that industrialization makes a society "more advanced." That is, there is more and more efficient oppression under capitalism and imperialist industrialization than there was before. So, you could say that is less "advanced," rather than more "advanced" in that sense. However, this does not mean that imperialism is less advanced in terms of science, because it is not. Imperialism may have used violence and coercion to destroy cultures from which it could have learned a lot (in medicine, for example), but that does not mean imperialism has not advanced science. It has gained, while it has lost.

The writer basically believes the concept of "advance" is itself undialectical, and therefore attempts to replace materialist dialectics with idealist dialectics - to go back to the unchanging and mystical Yin and Yang, in which there are opposites, but there is no development or "advance." This is the same idealist opposition to dialectical materialism that we see emerging in postmodernism in the last 25 years. It is the new face of idealism, but it is not much changed once one looks under the surface.

The anti-advance views on technology belie the writer's attempts to reconcile his/her views with dialectical materialism, as in this passage: "As long as there are humans, the struggle will advance and ultimately be victorious. In the words of Chairman Mao: All reactionaries are paper tigers. Or, to paraphrase the Rolling Stones, Time is on our side, Oh yes it is!" Why is there revolutionary advance but not scientific advance? This is inconsistent. Finally, MIM does not endorse the misogynist song that the writer misquotes.

The writer is correct that there is no reason for MIM membership requirements to stipulate adherence to particular future forms of technological advance such as test-tube babies. However, if we cannot agree that science is an *advance* over religion, then our debate is taking place outside of Maoism and dialectical materialism. This is true while MIM simultaneously reiterates its opposition to Napoleonic visions of socialism based on scientific supremacy. Nations that disagree with MIM's view do not deserve to be colonized and have "socialism" imposed from without. But we may still disagree about science.

Pseudo-environmentalism

Mainstream groups earn Imperialist credentials

by MC12

A candidate for Congress in Maryland in 1996 ran with the slogan, "LOWER TAXES, JAIL NOT BAIL, SAVE THE BAY." In this and many other ways, in recent years pseudo-environmentalism has arrived.

Jumping off from a 1995 book by Mark Dowie, *Losing Ground: American Environmentalism at the Close of the Twentieth Century* (1), we discuss mainstream pseudo-environmentalism and its contributions to imperialism. The book is a critique of mainstream environmentalism and an argument for why that movement will become obsolete unless it reorients itself to take on "environmental justice" as its core issue. It's a liberal or social-democratic criticism but a useful starting point for some more MIM analysis.

Dowie puts a lot of his hopes on the "Principles of Environmental Justice" adopted at the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in October 1991.(2) This document combines vague but obviously legitimate declarations such as "Environmental justice affirms the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples." The United Nations would agree, although there would be disagreement about who is a "people" (not defined by the document, either). There are other good demands, but nothing about the system that could make them possible. They appear to use "environmental" to modify "justice" so that the two together are all we need to end oppression. With these principles achieved, they suggest, we would save the environment and create social "justice." The demand for "justice" as an end itself is reformist, because "justice" refers to "fair" treatment within a system of inequality – or else it loses its meaning: "justice" means not being beaten by cops, not having land and labor stolen, etc., which, while a progressive demand under imperialism, is not meaningful in a system without such categories.

Unspoken is the apparent fact that their demands are made on present governments. Or else they leave it up to others to figure out that their goals are not possible under imperialism, which would be just abdicating leadership. This is how they get contradictory demands such as "Environmental justice opposes the destructive operations of multi-national corporations." Does that mean that some of what multinationals do is OK? What part? If the implication is that multinationals should stop exploiting workers, stop pillaging Third World countries,

and stop destroying the environment – but everything else they do is OK – then you just have social democracy or regulatory liberal democracy, and imperialism gets off scot-free. This is no more workable a way to save the environment than it is to end exploitation or achieve self-determination.

At the end of the list of principles, however, is one that jumps out as graspable, and that's the problem: "Environmental justice requires that we, as individuals, make personal and consumer choices to consume as little of Mother Earth's resources and to produce as little waste as possible; and make the conscious decision to challenge and reprioritize our lifestyles to insure the health of the natural world for present and future generations." People who adhere to this document, then, while "opposing" some multinational operations, will be "shopping for a better world" (to paraphrase a best-selling pseudo-environmentalist guidebook) while they wait for multinationals to reform.

If, as individuals, revolutionary environmentalists are committed to making "personal and consumer choices" to consume as little as possible and waste as little as possible, then political action will be fatally compromised. Will we not consume ammunition in the people's wars? Will we not "waste" resources in acts of sabotage during times of war? If, on the other hand, this declaration refers only to passive personal behavior then it is an irrelevant waste of time anyway, for without revolutionary struggle and eventually war – with all of its consumption and waste – we will never destroy imperialism and achieve a sustainable relationship with the environment in the context of human liberation. This is no better than a declaration that a revolutionary will never kill another human being: there is a net loss of human life from the status quo while revolutionaries pretend to take the moral high road.

Finally, in the document's "people of color" and "Mother Earth" references, the activists further the racial and gender essentialism that undermines scientific approaches to revolution and furthers the practice of attributing mystical qualities to groups of people on the basis of biology. If some religions refer to the earth as our "mother" then communists must be critical of those religions. But MIM would not take action against individuals upholding these religions provided they don't force their religion on other people.

Such essentialism is not a necessary part of revolutionary environmentalism, although its advocates may be progressives

allies and – particularly in the case of First Nations – their right to religious and other beliefs is a crucial part of national self-determination.

The "Principles of Environmental Justice" aside, Dowie has provided a useful book in its exposing of mainstream environmental groups as the pseudo-environmentalists they are.

SETTLER ROOTS

Mainstream environmentalism has its roots a century ago in the "conservation" movement that began with white settlers trying to preserve their recreation grounds for vacations, hunting and shooting Jeep commercials. In other words, although Dowie doesn't say this explicitly, the "conservation" of some areas – as in the creation of the National Parks system – was the other half of the policy of conquering First Nations territory and extracting their resources; the two were opposite sides of the "gotta love 'our' land" imperialist culture. The first conservationist groups – such as the Sierra Club – were all white and exclusive; the Sierras required sponsorship from two members to join.(3)

The biggest environmental organizations now are the Sierra Club, the National Wildlife Federation, the National Audubon Society, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Wilderness Society, Friends of the Earth, the National Parks and Conservation Association and the Environmental Defense Fund. The "movement" is among the biggest in terms of money and bureaucracy – and supported by a majority of voters – although most "participants" do no more than send checks and read the junk mail they pay for. Donations to environmental groups in the U.S. were almost \$500 million in 1994.(4) In recent years, however, mainstream environmentalism has been less dominated by giant national organizations, and more so by local and not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) groups. National memberships are declining, while overall donations are still going up.(5) As we discuss below, Dowie thinks this is great, with little foundation.

Dowie's main criticism of "the nationals" has been their shameless tendency to compromise with big corporations and the government instead of relentlessly resisting even to the point of defeat. For example, Dowie details the tendencies of so-called "third wave" environmentalists, those who are determined to make environmentalism profitable for corporations. National Wildlife Federation President Jay Hair typified this when he said: "Our arguments must translate into profits, earnings, productivity, and economic incentives for industry."(6) President Clinton was quick to see the advantages of jumping on this bandwagon, declaring: "Adam Smith's invisible hand can have a green thumb."(7)

In this vein, the Environmental Defense Fund cooked up the scheme of "emission reduction credits" (ERCs), or the rights

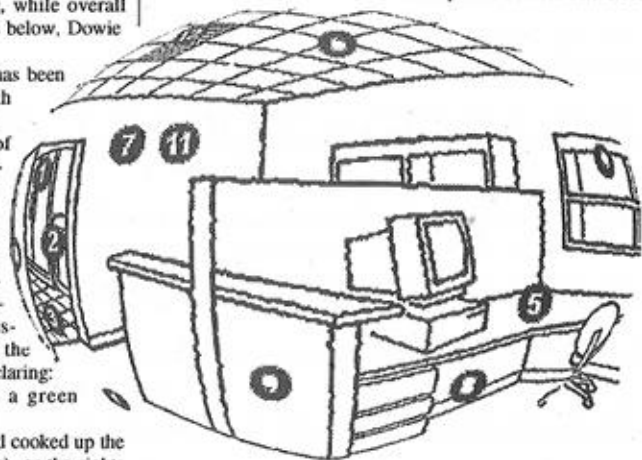
to pollute a certain amount. The government gave these for free to power companies based on how much they already polluted. Then they could buy more ERCs from other companies if they didn't want to reduce their emissions, or they could sell them if they cleaned up their act. So relatively clean companies sell theirs to higher-polluting companies, which creates "hot spots" with lots of pollution – which tend to be in economically depressed areas.(8) Dowie correctly finds the principle of a commodities market in pollution rights repugnant and counter to environmentalism.

That such schemes come from the "nationals" is not surprising when one considers the sources of their support: the decadent American middle classes and top-polluting multinational corporations. Companies like DuPont, Chevron, Monsanto, Mobil, and Waste Management (Now WMX Technologies), are "some of the largest environmental donors."(9) They give money to organizations which use it to further their interests under the polluted name of environmentalism:

"In 1991 Waste Management Inc. (since renamed WMX Technologies Inc.), a company that has broken records for EPA fines and violations, donated \$1.1. million to environmental organizations: \$75,000 to the National Audubon Society (shortly after which WMI President Philip Rooney joined Audubon's board of directors); \$45,000 to the National Wildlife Federation (on whose board WMX's current CEO Dean Buntrock now sits); \$25,000 to the World Resources Institute; and \$100,000 to the World Wildlife Fund."(10)

In the name of such pseudo-environmentalism, the big organizations and companies promote the "success" stories of com-

NRDC's "ENVIRONMENTAL" OFFICE: Creating a cleaner image of the imperialist's destructive core.



panies that have found ways to increase efficiency and profits while cutting down on emissions.(11) This makes sense as far as increased efficiency is bound to go along with less "waste" in the immediate sense. But companies singled out as such successes are often multinationals that prop up imperialism and all its environmental and human destruction – net destroyers of humanity and ecology – while-for-profitability-and-PR they reduce pollution in the United States.

No imperialist multinational can escape culpability, even when the chain of destruction is complicated. As Dowie points out, under "structural adjustment programs" of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, countries have to increase exports to make debt payments. That leads to "hastily deployed, environment-altering technologies imported from the industrialized world under the rubric of free trade."(12) Then environmentalist "missionaries" from imperialist-country groups accuse the locals of destroying the environment, instead of blaming imperialism. In some ways, the chain is even longer as dispossessed peasants, for example, contribute to rain forest destruction in the search for arable farm land. In a famous cartoon, a fat capitalist in a limousine leans out the window and yells at a peasant who is chopping down a tree, "Yo! Amigo!! We need that tree to protect us from the greenhouse effect."(12)

The World Resources Institute (WRI) leads in this missionary condemnation of Third World practices. They declared in one report that the poor countries were emitting as much carbon dioxide as the imperialist countries, a finding that was credibly disputed by many other scientists. "As a justification for environmental imperialism, it [the report] will surely be used to formulate aid and multinational lending policies for years to come." WRI is mostly corporate funded, and Clinton later gave one of their officers a position in the State Department.(13)

So Dowie is right to say: "close examination of almost any example of environmental degradation in the southern hemisphere uncovers the complicity [a too-gentle term, here -ed.] of a northern multinational corporation. In many cases, a mainstream American environmental organization will discover the problem first and negotiate some sort of accommodation with the violating corporation."(13)

Dowie offers the example of an incident in which the Natural Resources Defense Council, "mediated between Conoco and the Ecuadorian government over controversial oil-drilling rights in the Amazon rain forest."(13) This was the result of the NRDC deal. After the DuPont-owned Copoco was about ready to cancel the Ecuadorian operation

because of public opposition, he says, they decided to have a meeting with the NRDC, who had opposed the drilling, as a last try.

"At the meeting [DuPont-chairman Edgar] Woolard told [NRDC International Program Director Jacob] Scherr and [staff attorney Robert] Kennedy that because Ecuador was an oil-dependent nation, drilling was inevitable; if Conoco didn't drill there someone else would. The young lawyers commenced private negotiations with Conoco, convinced that it was better to have Conoco do the drilling than another firm. Without consulting the Huaorani people or the appropriate Ecuadorian environmental organizations, Scherr and Kennedy struck a deal: Conoco could drill on the Huaorani reserve in return for a \$10-million donation to an Ecuadorian foundation created by NRDC and Cultural Survival, an indigenous-rights group based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Ecuador's Fundacion Rio Napo had little or no contact with the Huaorani people and had no authority to negotiate on their behalf."(14)

And more recently, the World Wildlife Federation "worked with Chevron on construction of an oil pipeline through the wetlands of Papua New Guinea."(13) When the "environmentalists'" assumptions include the necessity of imperialism, then such a deal makes perfect sense. Maybe Conoco would cause less damage than another company. Given the social relations involved, however the short-term ecological damage cannot be the principal concern.

NIMBYs

The Love Canal toxic waste incident – featuring "an all-American, white, middle-class suburb – with its poisoned children and irate mothers" started the NIMBY movement, and the reborn American environmentalist movement.(15)

The main strategy of NIMBY environmentalism, represented by literally thousands of groups, is to hassle corporations or local governments into going somewhere else with their waste or construction. A Dowie puts it: "The populist anti-toxics movement has expanded exponentially and successfully chased waste handlers from county to county and state to state." Lois Gibbs, a Love Canal leader, declares: "As a result there has not been a single new hazardous waste site opened anywhere in the country in the last 10 years. Without passing any new laws or regulations, without getting into the debate, we have stopped the expansion of hazardous waste sites in this country."(16) So, when it comes to hazardous waste, it has not been chased "from state to state," as Dowie says, but across

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deals make
perfect sense.**

nation-state borders, which has not gone completely unnoticed: "Grassroots leaders, aware that toxic waste has become a major export of the industrialized countries, have also begun networking with environmental nongovernmental organizations" in the Third World. The result? None so far, but "They hope to one day extend their acronym to NOPE (Not On Planet Earth)." (17)

Dowie does not explain the moral foundation behind a movement that first seeks to remove the risks to itself, and then attempts to stop the harm it has caused to others in the process. This also violates the principal of NIMBY organizing, which is completely predicated on the protection of immediate self-interest, especially home property values. In fact, NIMBY movements, by opposing new housing construction along existing water and sewer lines, have contributed to urban sprawl, the wasteful construction of new infrastructure before existing capacity is met, and the deterioration of their own local environments. Such is the pseudo-environmentalism of the parasitic classes.

ENVIRONMENTAL NATIONAL OPPRESSION

Dowie is correct, however, that pollution is frequently linked to national oppression (not his terms), and that anti-racist environmentalism is the most progressive growing trend. And anti-corporate and anti-government opposition along such lines is well founded, as Dowie documents. Black children have much higher lead levels in their blood than others, to cite a prominent example, the adverse consequences of which are still emerging. Also, the federal government's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reported in 1992 that three-fourths of toxic waste dumps that are out of compliance with federal regulations were in Black or Latino neighborhoods. There are more than 200 million tons of radioactive waste in "tailings piles" on First Nation reservations, and Navajo teenagers have 17-times the u.s. average cancer rate affecting sex organs. Further, 300,000 mostly-Latino agriculture workers a year suffer pesticide-related sickness, and pollution-induced asthma kills five times as many Blacks as whites. (18)

One study by the Government Accounting Office found racial bias in the siting of toxic waste dumps. Emelle, Ala., for example, is home of one of the biggest hazardous waste landfills, and it's 79% Black. The United Church of Christ did a study that reached the same conclusion with more data. "UCC researchers also found that race, not income, was the primary determinant in siting polluting facilities and that three out of the five largest commercial waste landfills (accounting for 40% of the nation's garbage) were located in [B]lack or Hispanic communities." (19)

The EPA admits three-fourths of toxic waste dumps that are out of compliance with federal regulations are in Black or Latino areas.

primary determinant of bias. (20)

Dowie goes on. EPA didn't act to get lead levels lowered in gasoline until the presence of lead was confirmed in suburban children's blood, years after the problem among Black children was known. The reductions in gasoline lead are important, but the remaining lead problems are mostly associated with poor urban housing conditions. The EPA has also "consistently" had no more than six people working on pesticide spraying (which has Latino victims), compared with more than 50 people working on radon (mostly white homeowner victims).

When a toxic crisis struck the white Love Canal and Times Beach populations, EPA moved them into new homes. But residents in a serious cancer cluster among farmworkers in a McFarland, Cal. housing project built on a pesticide dump got nothing. Then, when the EPA set allowable levels of dioxin discharge for Northwest pulp mills, they based it on safety for people who eat 6.5 grams of fish per day - even though they knew that First Nations and Asian-descended people in the area eat up to 150 grams per day, creating a cancer risk many times higher than the law supposedly allows. (21)

Thus, Dowie is also correct to point out the idealism behind the oft-repeated pseudo-environmentalist claim that "we" all live in the same environment, so "we" are all in this together. (22) Well, even the oppressors face potential extinction from pollution, but in the nitty gritty of current contamination, environmental oppression goes hand in hand with other structures of inequality.

And so far, the rich have been pretty good at avoiding the bad effects of their excesses. Even the growth of cancer, for example, has as yet not prevented oppressor groups from increasing their life expectancies. Death rates from cancer in the whole u.s. population increased by 22% for men and 30% for wimmin from 1970 to 1991 (measured in deaths per

100,000 population), but the cancer death rates fell for people age 25-54, so the increase in the rates was all among older people.(23) During that time the overall life expectancy for men and women continued to go up, and increased age itself meant more people lived long enough to get cancer.(24) So while some of the increased cancer rate has to be caused by increased environmental toxicity, ozone layer destruction or the like, this has not reached the point of whittling away the life expectancy gains provided by improved health care and living standards. Although some kinds of cancer are more associated with poverty, overall cancer rates are about 15% higher for whites than for Blacks, and the white rate increased slightly faster than the Black rate in the 1980s.(25)

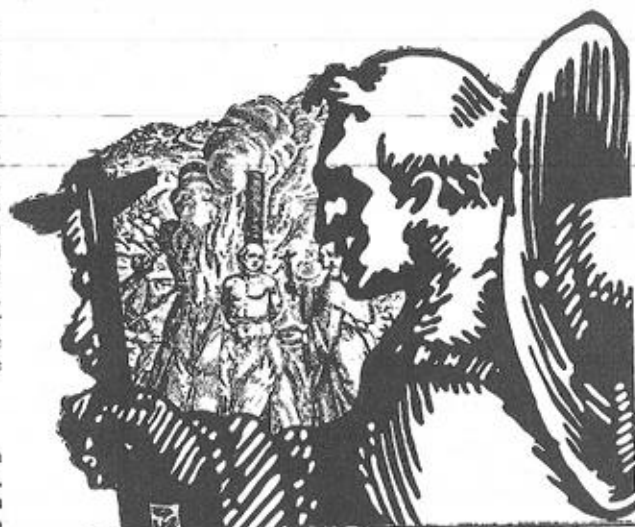
GENOCIDAL PSEUDO-ENVIRONMENTALISTS

Some big environmental organizations are in cahoots with the genocidal population people, including the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), which both Audubon and EDF have worked with. There are also activists in common between FAIR and the Sierra Club. Population has been a contested issue among Sierra Club members, which eventually declared: "Developing countries need to enlarge opportunities for their own residents, thus increasing well-being, eventually lessening population growth rates, and reducing the pressure to emigrate."(26) That mild-mannered statement is belied by the reality that, "in fact, population advocacy is now the highest-funded program in the club's budget." Some chapters of the Sierra Club were whites only until at least 1959.(27)

The "environmentalist" movement has attracted other out-right genocidal activists, as well, such as "ecologist" Garrett Hardin, who wrote: "How can we help a foreign country to escape overpopulation? Clearly the worst thing we can do is send food. ... Atomic bombs would be kinder. For a few moments the misery would be acute but it would soon come to an end for most of the people, leaving a few survivors to suffer thereafter."(28)

NAFTA

MIM did not oppose the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) per se, but instead opposes imperialism itself. Fighting over one trade policy is very misleading as well as self-defeating. And we pointed out that most NAFTA opposition was just chauvinistic protection of American jobs. Some opposition was at least correct to point out that "free" trade with Mexico hurts most Mexicans. Some of the opposition was environmental, and that was progressive to the extent that it recognized the pollution American companies cause in Mexico, away from American laws. The environmental heav-



WIPING OUT OPPRESSED NATIONS: The pseudo-environmental movement harbors genocidal tendencies in its ranks.

ies, however, went along with Clinton's promises to use NAFTA to improve the environment. Conservation International, the EDF, Audubon, the National Wildlife Federation, and NRDC, and the World Wildlife Fund formed the Environmental Coalition for NAFTA, and lobbied hard for it.(29)

The *Austin American-Statesman* reports that NAFTA "promises solutions to Mexico's environmental problems. Two years later, Mexico's people are still waiting."(30)

In Ciudad Juarez, on the border across from El Paso, "All along the frontier, canals that feed the river run black with sewage. The soil oozes with chemicals. The air is murky. Thousands of people have fallen ill, and many have died, from what doctors describe as pollution-related illness and disease."(30)

NAFTA promised more enforcement, and billions of dollars for cleanup, but it hasn't happened, and more and more companies are coming to the border. EPA administrator and bourgeois environmentalist Carol Browner said in the NAFTA debate that there would be \$8 billion in loans for cleanup. Mexico has spent a few million of that, and a total of \$120 million over two years of their own money. The Americans promised new wastewater treatment plants, but they haven't been built or even started.(30)

Again, MIM has to point out that with or without NAFTA American companies were going to Mexico and expropriating labor and land from the Mexican people for the benefit of America, and including rampant toxic devastation. NAFTA

was a bureaucratic arrangement that greased the wheels for this movement, but the trend preceded NAFTA and would not have ended without NAFTA.

However, with the pseudo-environmentalists on board, Clinton was able to actually claim that NAFTA would improve the environment along the border, a farce that has been exposed among those who care to notice. During the debate, Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen had the nerve to say "I've seen the babies born with birth defects. The NAFTA package gives us the ability to assure that (these problems) will be addressed."(30)

Clinton also said NAFTA would slow the rate of new American companies in the maquiladoras zone, but instead there were 300 new applications in 1995, up 80% over 1994. Even with NAFTA, the comprador government in Mexico still has to entice companies to move there, and they still do it by loose environmental laws, and looking the other way. NAFTA didn't change that, despite the "sidebar accord" on the environment that Clinton made such a big deal about including. The government of Mexico last year lessened environmental standards for new factories.

In the Chilpancingo neighborhood of Tijuana, 25 children in a community of 770 families were born with anencephaly (being born without a full brain), as well as 10 other kinds of birth defects. Chemicals from a giant industrial park flow through the neighborhood. And there is a large lead dump from an American company that used to recycle lead batteries there. The Mexican government put a tarp over the dump in 1993. A local study found Chilpancingo's creek had toxins and heavy metals 10-times safe levels. Residents have no running water, and the creek leeches into their wells.(30)

Unlike south of the border, when birth defects were noticed in Brownsville, Texas, General Motors and two other companies responsible for pollution across the river were eventually forced to shut them up with a slim \$17 million pay-off - a lot less than the cost of cleanup.(30)

Dowie is correct to point out that the pseudo-environmentalists helped pave the way for the increased destruction of Mexican people and resources by American companies by vigorously supporting NAFTA. In return, they got an "environment" friendly president indebted to them, which is worth a lot to those in the bogus social movement industry.

CONCLUSION

Dowie's book contains information useful for exposing the outright anti-environmentalism of the pseudo-environmentalist mainstream. As a radical critique he is not as successful, although he has some insights in that area as well. Typical of potentially revolutionary environmentalism, however, he is too concerned with getting everyone in the United States behind the "movement," rather than realizing that the social context of environmental destruction under imperialism calls for a true anti-imperialist struggle rather than a "big-tent" reformist movement based on supposed common interests.

One of the tragedies of imperialist environmental destruction is that the system undermines the potential unity among all people that does exist at some level. Just as it is a tragedy to have to kill enemy soldiers in a revolutionary war, so too is it sad that most members of oppressor-nations will stick up for the system that - although much more harmful to the oppressed - also pollutes their own air, land and water. A materialist analysis of the environmental crisis, one that does not naively attempt to transcend the social realities of class, gender and national oppression, makes it possible to see through the tragedy to the beauty of a future society in which the oppression of humans and the destruction of their environment has been replaced - through necessarily violent and prolonged processes - by a system without human oppression that is therefore free to develop new cooperative relationships with other organisms as well. Only under such a system will the environment cease to be the battleground for warring factions of humanity, to the infinite benefit of both.

Notes:

1. Mark Dowie, *Losing Ground: American Environmentalism at the Close of the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995. Page numbers refer to this book unless otherwise indicated.
 2. "Principles of Environmental Justice" is an appendix to the book.
 3. p. 2.
 4. p. 4.
 5. p. 5.
 6. p. 107.
 7. p. 109.
 8. p. 109-111.
 9. p. 115.
 10. p. 55.
 11. p. 112.
 12. p. 118.
 13. p. 119.
 14. p. 120. A search of NRDC's Internet web site for "Conoco" or "Ecuador" or "NAFTA" (discussed below) produced no hits.
15. p. 129.
16. pp. 134-5.
17. p. 135
18. pp. 145-6.
19. p. 142. One waste-industry funded study contradicted these results, but Dowie cites their methodological flaws and obvious bias.
20. p. 143.
21. p. 155-6.
22. p. 141.
23. *Statistical Abstract of the United States 1994*, p. 99.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
26. p. 163.
27. p. 163-4.
28. *The Limits of Altruism: An Ecologist's View of Survival*, Garret Hardin, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977; cited in Dowie.
29. p. 186.
30. Austin American-Statesman Dec. 17, 1995, p. A1.

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Review:

A Civil Action

by Jonathan Harr
New York: Random House, 1995

Review by a comrade

A *Civil Action* is an entertaining read for anyone with an interest in corporate destruction of the environment and the law. Jonathan Harr followed the case of *Anderson, et al v. W.R. Grace, et al* in Woburn, Mass. against W.R. Grace Corporation and Beatrice Foods starting in 1986, through an extravagant discovery process, 5 months of trial, lavish settlement meetings and the beginning of an appeal process to write this non-fiction account. The book is fascinating largely because what would seem to be cinematic exaggeration – lawyers spending tens of thousands of dollars to set up two-day meetings for 3 people, paying \$90,000 for physical exams of clients in the case, \$1,300 for one day's worth of depositions (adding up to expenses of \$1,803,195.84 before the case went to trial) and then expecting several millions of dollars in payment at the end of the casework – is all documented and true.

A Civil Action explores in detail some of the contradictions of capitalism exposed by American law. The objective of the law is ostensibly to right social wrongs, to provide balance among individuals' and organizations' conflicting interests. But lawyers who spend their time petitioning for legal judgments require money in exchange for their time – so the proceedings then have to serve two purposes: right whatever is wrong and remunerate the lawyers for their time. This means that lawyers frequently decide which social wrongs to attempt to set right according to which ones they think will yield the biggest reward.

The legal process also acts out some contradictions inherent to capitalism. In this case, the pressure to dispose of waste cheaply, to quicken the production process and decrease overhead was the direct cause of environmental destruction. Under socialist planned production, we will not see many cases like this one in which producers have taken short cuts to increase profits and are attempting to avoid correcting their errors. Under socialism, production planning will take environmental factors into account and profit will not be the sole judge of successful production. Instead, production for a healthy society will be valued.

The facts here are astonishing for being a product of First World circumstance. The plaintiffs in Woburn were poisoned and then developed cancer and died mostly within 10 years of when they had first gotten sick. In America we are used to seeing people poison themselves intentionally with cigarettes and with fat- and preservative-filled foods among other causes. But

we do not frequently notice people poisoned by their drinking water because pollutants are so regularly exported to the Third World to get around environmental restrictions designed to protect the imperialist country citizens.

In reading accounts like this one, MIM focuses not on the horrors of the individual medical accounts, but on the industrial context in which they occur. Under imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, the unequal distribution of wealth occurs evermore along national lines, as does the unequal distribution of labor and of damage to the environment. So while socialist planning would demand an accounting of total resources and direct stresses to the places that could most easily bear them, capitalism simply uses and destroys the areas which are farthest from its center of operations. The capitalists use up the resources which are not in their own backyards and save their own immediate surroundings – partly in response to labor aristocracy demands. This is conscious planning on the part of imperialist administrators and not mere accident. The fact that people in the First World clearly have the capacity to buy and therefore use more polluting resources than people in the Third World should make this clear: someone is making sure that pollution is separated from consumption.

SOCIALISM – NOT PERSONAL INJURY LAW

Personal injury law, while it can shed light on some nasty goings on in the corporate world, is an oddly decadent outgrowth of the American legal system. It has some romantic notions attached – personal injury lawyers usually work on a contingency basis, collecting fees based on their expenses and a percentage of the award in the case only when they win. This arrangement gives personal injury lawyers the appearance of doing legal work for "free" for people who can't afford lawyers, and going up against big nasty corporations in favor of less privileged people. But in the end, the law is set up to focus on big rewards, not on long-term assistance to poor people.

MIM does not look to the American legal system to correct capitalism's mistakes or to mitigate the harm it does to the masses. We devote our time and resources to building independent institutions of the oppressed and to supporting the just anti-imperialist struggles of oppressed people the world over. We know that only a dictatorship of the proletariat – of the majority over the minority – will alleviate the pain caused by capitalism and guard against it for the future. MIM calls on all people concerned with environmental destruction and irresponsibility to work with us to build organizations that can seize proletarian power and restore and protect the environment for the world's people.

Imperialists oppress people & the environment

Population control

by a comrade

The population control movement has gained more and more support among both the mainstream and among people who consider themselves progressives, feminists, and environmentalists. This movement is not just led by imperialist institutions and politicians. It has a mainstream political agenda that gives imperialist nation people a target for the ills of the world that is nowhere near their own backyard. Population control logic says the biggest problem in the world today is population growth and most problems of the world – including environmental destruction and poverty – would be addressed if we were able to stop or even reverse this growth.

The population control movement has the support of the imperialist government agencies and non-governmental political groups. This has led to the exclusive focus of programs on reproductive control. Between 1969 and 1991, the United Nations Family Planning Association gave 1.6% of its total assistance to the general area of wimmin, population and development, compared to 45.7% given to family planning programs.(1) For years the pseudo-environmentalist groups like the Audubon Society, the Sierra Club and the National Wildlife Federation have been running population control programs. In the early 1990s, the wholesale buying up of the population control agenda among the pseudo-feminists and the environmental mainstream is well illustrated in the transformation of the International Planned Parenthood Federation's (IPPF) magazine *People into People and the Planet*, a venture co-sponsored by the UNFPA, Audubon, USAID, Earthwatch, International Institution for Environment and Development, Family Health International, the Population Council, the World Wide Fund for Nature and a number of others.(1) Even back in the 1970s organizations such as the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) refused to join the struggle for strict federal regulation of sterilization at a time when the sterilization was being grossly abused targeting poor oppressed-nation wimmin.(2) NOW and NARAL recognized that this was not an issue of importance to their mostly white middle-class constituency.

This movement has effectively diverted many potentially progressive people from looking at the root cause of the world's most pressing problems (war, starvation, theft, exploitation, etc.): imperialism. Because of the progressive face this movement attempts to put on, anti-imperialists must expose population control as not only an incorrect strategy for fighting imperialism, but in fact as a strategy that leads to genocide and national and gender oppression, strengthening the patriarchy and imperialism.



THE FEW LOOKING DOWN ON THE MANY: Population control zealots see the existence of the poor as the problem.

WORLD PROBLEMS AND CAUSES

HUNGER

Hunger is one of the main things people focus on when they say there are too many people in the world. Population control advocates say that we just can't feed all the people we are producing. Each day, 35,000 children die from hunger-related causes.(3) But the world produces enough for everyone to have 2,500 calories a day, 150 more than the basic minimum.(4) We know that production technologies are improving all the time and we do not yet have reason to believe there is an upper limit to human creativity and ability to provide for ourselves.

Instead, hunger results from poor distribution of resources. For example, in the Philippines most people live in rural areas: 10% of the population owns 90% of the land. Seventy-percent of the rural people earn too little to afford an adequate diet. Two-thirds of them are landless or sharecroppers.(4)

CONSUMPTION AND POLLUTION

Population control advocates also like to talk about destruction of the environment. But the cause of most environmental destruction is the over consumption and pollution of the imperialist countries and their multinational corporations. The poor people in the Third World who have the most children contribute the least to this problem.

A few facts about imperialist consumption and pollution:

- In 1991, U.S. citizen-consumers spent more on jewelry and watches (\$30.1 billion) than on federal food and nutrition assistance (\$28.5 billion) or the entire Gross Domestic Product of 20 low-income countries in the world.
- Global military expenditures are estimated at \$767 billion

for 1994 – more than the total income of the poorest 45 percent of the world's population.

- The U.S. spends \$35 billion on Advanced Weapons Research and Development. The world total spent on this is \$50 billion.

- Industrial countries include only 20% of the world's people but consume 80% of its resources.

- Wealthy people, mostly in industrial nations, make up about one-fifth of the world's population. They control 85% of its income and consume 70% of its energy, 75% of its metals and 85% of its wood. They produce two-thirds of all greenhouse gases and 90 percent of ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons.

- People in the U.S. spend more than \$7 billion per year on lawn care alone: which uses chemicals that contribute directly to water pollution, solid-waste disposal problems, and air pollution.

- Each person in the U.S. uses an average of 24 barrels of oil per year, compared to 12 in Europe, and 1 in Africa.(4)

- 40% of grain produced and 40-60% of fish caught are fed to livestock.(5)

- In the U.S., 3,616 calories are produced for each person each day. Surplus food sits in storage, waiting for prices to go up. Enough food is stored to give everyone in the U.S. 50 pounds of dairy products.(6)

Notes:

1. "The Politics of Women, Population and the Environment in the 1990s," by Betsy Hartman p. 3, from UNFPA 1991 Report.
2. Sojourner, September 1994, p.17.
3. *Hunger 1994: Transforming the Politics of Hunger*, Bread for the World Institute. 1993.
4. *Hunger 1995: Causes of Hunger*, Bread for the World Institute. 1994.
5. *Diet for a Small Planet*.
6. *Exploding the Hunger Myths*, by Sonja Williams. Institute for Food and Development Policy, San Francisco. 1987.

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Review

Taking Population Out of the Equation

by H. Patricia Hynes
1993

review by a comrade

This book attempts to lay the groundwork for an alternative way of looking at "the population problem," published opportunely in time for the world population summit in Cairo. This is a good task and one that should be taken seriously. Unfortunately, this book falls short on some crucial questions of reformulating the formula popularized by the reactionary population control advocates Paul Ehrlich and John Holdren. They said:

$$\text{Environmental Impact} = \text{Number of People} * \text{goods/person} \\ * \text{pollution/good}$$

This is called "I=PAT," where I is units of pollution.

Overall, this book suffers from an abundance of rhetoric and a lack of facts. The formulations are intriguing, and indeed Hynes makes some good arguments for adding in other components to IPAT, but ultimately she fails to persuade the reader why population should not be a part of IPAT because it lacks substantial arguments.

The book does a good job pointing out the role of the military in destroying the environment and this information is useful. It also correctly points out that often the indigenous people who are criticized as the worst destroyers of the environment are in fact helping or at least living in relative harmony with their surroundings. Here Hynes adds in some important factors to IPAT with persuasive arguments and facts.

The book also takes the correct approach of saying "His don't solve themselves, people solve them" (p. 37). Unfortunately, this correct approach turns into a biology-is-destiny argument as Hynes goes on to argue that because men in power have systematically destroyed the environment it

must be in men's "nature." She goes so far as to quote Virginia Woolf saying that it is not wimmin's nature to fight. This is a grossly ahistorical argument and one that damages the overall impact of the book. What about Margaret Thatcher? What about Corazon Aquino? What about the many other wimmin who were allowed to accede to power only to use it in sometimes more reactionary ways than their male predecessors? It simply is not a question of the nature of men and wimmin, it is a question of the system within which they work.

Hynes supports her arguments about the nature of wimmin by defining wimmin as a class (p. 39). She does try to demonstrate why this is true with a few facts discussed below. She quotes the United Nations 1980 figure saying that wimmin own only 1% of the wealth in the world. This is a pretty inaccurate formulation resulting from incorrect male-centered accounting on the part of the UN. Just taking the ownership by wimmin in the United States this figure could not be correct.

Early on in the book Hynes says, "That the majority of the bottom 20 percent of the world's poor are women of color and their children (the P of concern), and the majority of the top 20 percent of the world's affluent are white men (the AT of concern) is not noted in IPAT" (p. 11). This quote is problematic in a number of ways. First and most importantly it does not offer any source or facts for the reader to reference. How do we know who the majority of the bottom 20 percent are? The population control fanatics are constantly throwing around impressive sounding numbers, and to properly refute them we must first be clear about our own facts and offer evidence to back up what we are saying. Perhaps it is true that the majority of the bottom 20 percent are wimmin and children while the majority of the top 20 percent are white men. But this is too simplistic a formulation.

In the First World in particular we need to be careful to pay attention to the role that white wimmin are playing in advocating population control. This is in the economic interest of white wimmin as much as it is white men in the U.S. Similarly, men in the Third World are not only a part of those who make up the "bottom," but they are also the objects of population control coercion (something Hynes does mention in passing). The lack of economic and social power of Third World men is a serious problem that contributes to all of the greater global problems Hynes hopes to address. The statement above unnecessarily dismisses the importance of examining the role of wealthy white wimmin and poor Third World men.

Going further with her arguments about biology and nature Hynes writes, "Income is a surrogate for consumption, and, we can only conclude that women consume less than men proportional to income" (p. 39). This sentence, taken in context, does not make sense. There is no evidence to suggest that this is true. It may be, but the logic does not bear it out. In the U.S., at

We need to pay attention to the role that white wimmin play in population control.

least, we can say that wimmin do spend a lot on luxury items - fancy clothing, makeup, toys, cars, etc. So again Hynes needs to provide some information to back up her claims.

Overall Hynes is correct, population should be taken out of the equation - population growth is a result of other more important factors. But Hynes does not go very far with this argument. People need to understand that population growth changes when economic and social conditions

change. In practice we can point to examples of decreased population growth and improvements in environmental conditions as a result of a more equitable distribution of wealth and health care and fairer treatment of wimmin. But rather than deal with real world examples Hynes chooses the more simplistic formulation of "Zero Patriarchy." Indeed this is a great goal. But Hynes' arguments for why this should be our endpoint are lacking both in substance and in direction. As was pointed out above, the premises for Hynes' patriarchy-first argument don't have the necessary factual background to offer a persuasive argument. She may be right that attacking the patriarchy is the best thing we can do to help the environment, but to make such an argument Hynes needs to offer some convincing facts on why the patriarchy is principal and why other things, most importantly population, but in addition nation and class, are not.

MIM disagrees with Hynes that attacking the patriarchy as the principal enemy right now is the most effective way to fight environmental destruction. We attack imperialism as the most important cause of environmental destruction as well as the best way to fight the patriarchy because in the world today imperialism is the driving force behind the oppression and exploitation of the people and the destruction of the environment for profit.

Hynes is offering us a very good formulation in saying that we need to target the ultimate causes of environmental degradation. The causes she leaves us with are patriarchy, consumption and technology. She correctly notes that consumption is a problem in the context of certain economic models, and similarly technology is a problem only in certain context. But Hynes' alternative model seems to be "abolish patriarchy" and in this she falls short of offering us a good argument. Although it is somewhat outdated, the introduction to Betsy Hartman's book *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs*, in which Hartman correctly lays down an argument against population control as accomplishing anything for the environment or the people, provides an excellent alternative to Hynes' book. As a source of historical information about population control, Hartman's book is the best out there and for anyone interested in more information about this subject it is well worth reading.

Notes: *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs*, by Betsy Hartman. Harper and Row: New York, 1987.

Pop control is people control

In MIM Notes 92 (Sept. 1994), MIM Notes ran a series of articles against the population control movement, as the movement took center stage at the Conference on Population in Cairo that year. MIM Theory reprints these articles here because population control remains high on the agenda of all pseudo-environmentalism. -ed.

*reprinted from MIM Notes 92,
September 1994*

People who want to save humanity and the environment by reducing the number of people are barking up the wrong tree. But they're also playing into the hands of imperialists who

want to control the *people*, not just the population.

When you think of the population "crisis," think of a slave ship. The advocates for population control would look at a slave ship and say that the reason the slaves are starving and dying of preventable disease is because there are too many of them on the ship.

MIM, on the other hand, would ask: "Who decided how much food to bring along and who gets it, what to do about medical care, how to arrange the living quarters?" And we would ask: "Where is this ship going, and why?"

It's not the population of the planet – or of the slave ship – that determines the

fate of its inhabitants. It's the social relations under which they live.

If the resources of the planet were used in a rational way to meet the needs of the people on it, and if the political power of the people was used to change the course of its development, then population itself would fade as a central issue.

But the population control zealots and their imperialist backers are using this issue to further their ambition: control the world's oppressed, keep them in check and keep them at work, producing the wealth and decadence that surrounds us in Amerika.

—MC12

Environmental crisis Imperialism, not population

reprinted from MIM Notes 92, September 1994

Never before have the pressures of an expanding population been so clear—from water shortages and deforestation to increased hunger and poverty.

*—Zero Population Growth
reactionary research organization*

The Preamble to the 1994 Conference on Population in Cairo announces that the leaders of the world are in "general agreement" that environmental degradation is linked to population growth.(1) But this lie is exposed by the facts that the imperialists use to justify their claims.

The environmental crisis is composed of global, regional and local problems, each with their own origins. An analysis of these various "little crises" shows that population growth is not the cause of environmental degradation.

GLOBAL PROBLEMS

The United States alone consumes nearly 25% of the global energy used. Per person, Americans consume 15 times as much energy as the average person in the Third World.(2) Because the burning of fossil fuels is one of the principle contributors to carbon-dioxide production, the resulting "greenhouse effect" is largely a product of the First World.

To the extent that Third World energy consumption has

increased, it is largely connected to production for First World markets and companies. First World over-consumption and decadence – not Third World peoples – need to be terminated.

The same is doubly true of ozone layer depletion. Cars with air conditioning, refrigerators and industrial processes which employ chlorofluorocarbons, are mostly located in the First World or in imperialist-controlled sectors of production.

REGIONAL PROBLEMS

Acid rain is perhaps the best example of a regional environmental crisis. It too, is largely the product of First World industrialism, affecting the surface water and forest resources of First World countries. While this might change if coal consumption in countries like China increases (coal burning releases sulfuric acid, the chemical responsible for the formation of acid rain), at present acid rain is a First World problem that has no business being included in the discussion of "acceptable" sizes of Third World population.

Desertification, surface water and aquifer depletion, forest destruction, and other forms of regional degradation are all complex problems which are over simplified when population control advocates blame Third World peoples for these problems.

For example, desertification in the Sahelian region of Africa has been linked to human activities like the search for ever

scarcer fuel wood. However, the imperialists ignore that much of the wood in countries like Senegal is used to make charcoal for Third World urban markets. And large portions of Senegal's water supply has been used for export-oriented peanut and cotton crops since the 1970s.(3)

Likewise, rainforest destruction is generally the work of either multinational capitalist companies, or the last-ditch survival efforts of the peasants made landless by those companies and the countries that back them up.

LOCAL PROBLEMS

Local problems like low-lying air pollution, hazardous waste contamination, and so on, have historically been First World affairs. This is changing rapidly with the imperialist orchestrated industrialization in countries like Mexico, Brazil, and India. Overwhelmingly, local problems as stressors on the environment are more closely correlated to the industrialization and other chemical intensive forms of production, like agriculture. These too, are mostly a product of imperialism and the profit motive - not of population growth.

The majority of the problems associated with the "environmental crisis" have very little to do with the growth of human population, but instead have far more to do with the mode of production, and lifestyles of imperialist countries, whose affects far outweigh their numbers.

Population controllers say over-population is responsible for every stressor, crisis and environmental ill. The bourgeoisie is trying to duck the blame by dumping it on the poor. It is the task of revolutions to put the blame where it belongs: on the capitalist system. And then work to end it.

Notes:

1. Draft program of action of the international conference on population and development. Third session. 4/22/94, Chapter III.
2. Zero Population Growth, cover letter sent with a packet of information for the concerned citizen, 8/94.
3. Francis Moore-Lape and Joseph Collins, *Food First*. New York: Ballentine Books, 1977.

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Smokescreen to exterminate Third World

reprinted from MIM Notes 92, September 1994

by MIM associates and comrades

Imperialists and their lackeys are gearing up for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo, Egypt September 5-13 [1994 -ed]. They claim that the Third World is too poor for more people, and the conference is to plan the decade's strategy.

Don't be fooled by the grim Malthusian picture being painted by the imperialists and their media. There is no "population problem." The Third World masses are not destroying the Earth through overpopulation. Imperialism, principally U.S. imperialism, is the real problem facing the majority of the world's people. Population control is just another way to control Third World peoples.

POPULATION CONTROL - CONTROLLING THE PEOPLE

The Cairo Conference will mark an intensification of efforts to control the masses who have an interest in revolution. The United States, planning to spend \$585 million in 1994, is the largest contributor to population control projects. Population Action International estimates that another \$3.5 billion is needed annually from the First World.(1) Third World neo-colonies currently spend \$3.6 billion.(2) Until now, the imperialists have been too thrifty to spend more than a combined \$1 billion.(1) Cairo may change the First World's priorities.

Despite the "shortage" of funds, population control has increased in recent years. In 20% of couples in the Third World where the woman is in her child-bearing years, the woman has been sterilized. Thirteen percent of women use IUDs.(3) By 1976 24% of all Native American women had been sterilized, and by 1986 35% of all women in Puerto Rico were sterilized. Most of this is done without the knowledge or consent of these women, with the knowledge and funding of the U.S. government.(4)

Other forms of "permanent birth control," like Depo-provera and Norplant, receive increasing attention from family planning research and development. Under the guise of woman's empowerment, they promote forms of birth control that reduce reproductive discretion.

OPPOSE IMPERIALISM, NOT POPULATION

The population control view sees the Third World as poor because it is overpopulated. The bourgeois apologists say that

there just isn't enough food produced or wealth created for that many people to survive. Marxists instead look at the flow of value from the laboring masses to the exploiting and parasitic classes, and expose the population controllers.

First, the world produces enough food to feed more than the current population, but the international division of labor ensures that almost one-fifth are chronically undernourished.(5) Imperialism, through the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (and the military when necessary), forces Third World countries to stop subsistence farming and switch to cash crops for export, while importing food. The imperialists and the comprador classes get wealthy from this arrangement. The First World working classes also benefit in the form of subsidies on food. The labor of coffee, sugar, cotton, fruit and mineral producing masses make life what it is for these millions of parasites.

But are the poor living standards of the majority of the world also attributable to imperialism? Yes. The imperialists fund and instigate the wars fought on Third World soil. The imperialists extract the wealth that could create a better society, and politically and militarily retard political progress.

Saying that population is the biggest danger to the world today plays right into the imperialists hands. This allows people to ignore issues of equity, exploitation, patriarchy, and the role of imperialism in perpetuating a system that makes it impossible for a majority of the world's people to adequately feed, house, and provide health care for themselves.

Forty thousand children—most of them in the Third World—die every day from preventable causes.(1) First World countries spent \$789 trillion in 1988 alone.(2) Three-quarters of illnesses in the Third World result from unsafe water and poor sanitation. Ruth Sivard estimates that \$12 billion would solve that problem.(3) But the imperialists aren't interested.

EXPOSE "WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT" LIES

The Cairo conference gives significant space to acknowledging gender oppression. In fact, to read the list of things the U.N. wants to see happen, you would think they were seriously thinking about abolishing patriarchy by 2015. However, like the 1992 Rio summit and the UN's Decade of the Woman, this conference is full of cheap, pseudo-feminist talk. MIM uses the term pseudo-feminist because the U.N. has no intention of abolishing patriarchy or moving towards gender equality. The U.N. is using the language of helping women to specifically target them for increased oppression.

When the U.N. was a sounding-board for anti-American politics on the part of socialist states and Soviet neo-colonies, it took more of a feminist position, and the United States often opposed it. Now, with Amerika's increased hegemony in the U.N., it has taken a turn for the worse.

The U.N. notes the severe oppression of Third World women. For example, two-thirds of the 960 million illiterate adults are women.(6) They also report the types of work and long hours that women work. The U.N. calls for full equality

for women, increased women's role in politics, universal primary education, eliminating legal barriers to equality by 2015, stopping violent and sexual abuse, etc. all by the year 2015. MIM says these are all worthy goals, but the only concrete actions proposed by the U.N. involve more population control.

Women throughout the world want greater access to a variety of contraceptive choices— to reproductive control— but oppressed women need political power, resources, food, health care, shelter, sanitation, and other necessities for survival. Imposing population control on Third World women while and not addressing these other shortages will only increase suffering.

The situation of Third World women is dire. Each year, 500,000 women die from childbirth, complications or illegal abortions: 90% of those are Third World women. In Northern Europe, nine or 10 out of every 100,000 women die in childbirth; in Niger and other parts of West Africa, 700 of every 100,000 women die from childbirth.(7)

The types of population control being promoted expose the shallowness of the UN's "feminism." The trend in birth control research is towards technologies that are virtually irreversible.

Since 1981, Norplant has been inserted in to the arms of about half a million Indonesian women alone.(7) Both IUDs and Norplant require medical personnel and sterile conditions to remove. If a woman is suffering side effects — especially common with Norplant — or wishes to have children, she must convince, and possibly pay, a doctor to remove the devices. If she can get to a doctor.

Health conditions are poor in the Third World, increasing the risk of complications with birth control. Women are not always told of possible side effects, and they may encounter economic or physical resistance to having their birth control removed prematurely.(8)

Because the imperialist's interests are opposed to women, it is even more important that women retain control over their bodies. This means access to resources, and it means ability to reverse their decisions. The only people being "empowered" here are the imperialists.

IMMIGRATION

The imperialists expose themselves when they talk about immigration as a result of "over-population." First World people are particularly concerned about the immigration of poor people into their wealthy societies. The U.N. Population Fund estimates that 100 million people are on the move, fleeing war or exploitation.(9)

The U.S. National Report on Population, prepared for the Cairo conference openly admits Amerika's hatred of the poor. Americans ranked immigration second as a "serious problem of the future," and residents of Southern California and similar places with a high number of non-white immigrants ranked it first.(10)

Immigration scares Amerika, so it militarizes the border with its exploited neighbor to the south.(11) Unable to stem the tide, the next step is to reduce the numbers at the source,

through population control. Amerika has no interest in ending the wars or economic exploitation that cause people to leave their homes because Amerika's very wealth is built upon this Third World misery.

Haiti is an excellent example. Timothy Wirth, the State Department Undersecretary for Global Affairs, and champion of population control, spoke at a winter town meeting sponsored by the U.S. Network for Cairo '94. He used Haiti as an example of a country that had too large of a population to be sustained economically. Instead of addressing the causes of Haitian oppression (U.S.-backed dictatorship), he proposes limiting the number of Haitians.

SELF-RELIANCE

Wirth also used the recent invasion of Somalia to promote population control. According to the bourgeois media, Somalis were starving last year because they were too stupid to control their own numbers or stop their own wars.

Western manipulation of the Somali economy weakened its ability to feed itself. The wars funded by U.S. military aid made that task more difficult. Then scores of non-governmental organizations, backed up by the U.S. and U.N. military dumped tons and tons of food on Somalia, destroying the domestic food production economy. Until the imperialists can be ousted from Somalia, the masses will continue to need U.S. "aid" now that their economy has been destroyed. By controlling the numbers of Somalis, Wirth and the U.S. hope to pre-

serve the ability to extract surplus, while preventing anti-imperialist revolution.

The imperialists have a difficult task ahead. They need to extend the life of a dying system by increasing profits from the Third World, but they need to control the numbers of the revolutionary classes. To carry out this evil plan, they need progressives to be fooled into believing that population control is "helping" people.

The imperialists are an enemy, not a friend. We expose the enemy, then we destroy them.

Notes:

1. Los Angeles Times 9/21/93, p. H6.
2. Wall Street Journal 5/17/93, p. A13.
3. United Nations, "Review and appraisal of progress made towards the implementation of the world population plan of action." 3/1/94, p. 55.
4. U.N. report cited in L.A. Times, 2/26/89, p.2.
5. Ruth Leger Sivard, *World Military and Social Expenditures*. Washington D.C: World Priorities, 1991. p. 5.
6. UN's draft programme of action of the international conference on population and development. Third session. 4/22/94, Chapter IV.
7. Tapoi Bulletin: The Indonesian Human Rights Campaign 4/91, pp. 21-22.
8. The Population Council, *Norplant Worldwide*, New York 4/86, p.2.
9. Washington Post 7/7/93, p. A1.
10. Population Reference Bureau, U.S. National Report on Population 10/93, pp. 32-33.
11. See MIM Notes 84 (Jan. 1994) and MIM Notes 87 (April 1994), for more on Operation Blockade and Operation Hold the Line.

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Population control in the US Target: Internal colonies

reprinted from MIM Notes 92, September 1994

Population control is a weapon used against the oppressed within U.S. borders as well. In this country, racism, eugenics and forced sterilization have all been justified in the name of women's rights and aid to the poor. The introduction of new "reproductive technologies," specifically Norplant, has allowed the imperialists to expand their reach.

Population control in general, and Norplant in particular, is a continuation of the imperialist's attempts to control oppressed people.

Norplant is a relatively new birth control drug that makes a woman sterile for five years. It consists of six tubes that must be inserted under the skin by a doctor. The tubes must be removed after five years or if the woman wishes to stop the drug's effects. Only a doctor or other trained person can remove the tubes.

This form of birth control is promoted more because, unlike the pill, there is no pill to forget. This gives effectiveness to people considered unreliable, or to those hostile to the drug. The drug is dangerous to those with diabetes, liver disorders, blood clots, breast cancer, high blood pressure, heart or kidney disease, and to smokers.(1) Five hundred women, with 50,000 more expected, have entered a class-action suit against the manufacturer.(2)

Norplant was originally tested on hundreds of thousands of Third World women, often without their consent or understanding of what was involved. It was originally hailed as a convenient new method for rich women, but since the bad side effects started coming out, it has been used more as a means of coerced population control.

Norplant is provided for free through Medicaid in most states, although its removal is not, unless medically necessary.(2) In 1991, Louisiana state Rep. and former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke introduced legislation pushing Norplant use for women on welfare.(3) Twenty states have now introduced legislation linking welfare to Norplant use.(2) Some of these proposals would have provided a material incentive to use Norplant. At least nine of the states propose requiring it for benefits.(4)

Norplant is also distributed in some ghetto high schools. In the primarily Latino San Fernando High School in California, Norplant has been distributed since September 1993.(5) Norplant is also distributed in the primarily Black school district of Baltimore, and is extensively marketed on First Nation reservations.(1)

PUNITIVE USE

Norplant has also been used by judges in exchange for plea bargains or as conditions for parole. The stated reason is to protect the children. This is merely window dressing for an anti-oppressed nation, anti-poor effort.

A proposed law in Ohio would have required women convicted of drug use while pregnant to undergo drug treatment, to be sterilized, or to participate in a five-year birth control program. This is not a pro-child policy, but a plan intended to target Black women. Drug use by pregnant women is as prevalent or more prevalent in white women, yet Black women are 10 times more likely to have their toxicology reports turned over to government officials.(6)

THE BIG PICTURE

Population control has entered a new phase both globally and within the United States: the pseudo-feminist phase. Overtly anti-woman plans are no longer acceptable. New forms of coercion are packaged in words like "choice" and "freedom" but little has changed.

Planned Parenthood's ancestor, the Birth Control Federation of America, is credited as a birth control pioneer, but it was explicitly a eugenics movement. They claimed Blacks were "breed[ing] recklessly" and were "that portion of the population least intelligent and fit, and least able to rear children properly."(7)

In the 1950s, women in the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico were used as guinea pigs to test the new birth control pill.(8) By 1982, 24% of Black women had been sterilized, 35% of Puerto Rican women, and 42% of indigenous women.

The scope of U.S. population control efforts aimed at internal colonies may shift slightly due to different technologies or to different bourgeois needs for the proletarian workforce, but the trend remains consistent. Regardless of the rhetoric about expanding women's choices, if a decent standard of living is not one of the "choices" then everything else is coercion.

Notes:

1. Amicus Journal Winter 1994, p. 29.
2. USA Today 7/15/94, p. A15.
3. Washington Post 5/29/91, p. A14.
4. Los Angeles Times 9/26/93, p. 24.
5. Washington Times 12/1/93, p. C5.

6. Berrien, Yale Journal of Law and Feminism 1990, p. 468.
7. Linda Gordon, *Woman's Body, Woman's Right*. New York: Grossman Publishers, 1976, p. 332.
8. The Independent 9/19/94, p. 24.

MIM has learned many lessons regarding the role of revolutionary environmentalism from the theory and practice of the Communist Party of the Philippines. Our publication of the following document reflects that debt. In the pages that follow, MIM Theory presents a MIM photo essay on environmental conditions in the Philippines. -ed.

On the Issue of the Environment in the World and in the Philippines

By the International Department
Central Committee
Communist Party of the Philippines
31 March 1995

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During the last more than two centuries, the bourgeoisie has increasingly exploited the human and natural resources in the development of industrial capitalism. In the era of modern imperialism in the 20th century, the monopoly bourgeoisie has carried out on a global scale unprecedented plunder and caused the destruction and pollution of the natural environment. Furthermore, the world capitalist system has been repeatedly afflicted by the crisis of overproduction leading to two global wars, several "limited" wars (among them the Korean war and the Vietnam war) and the invention of one genocidal weapon after another.

Following World War II, the imperialist countries headed by the United States have ferociously opposed the socialist countries and national liberation movements, accelerated the production of nuclear and other genocidal weapons in the arms race during the cold war and used the methods of neocolonialism to undermine and negate the national independence of countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, aggravate their underdevelopment and force the people down into the mire of poverty by exploiting their labor power and natural resources in order to extract superprofits and debt service payments.

Monopoly capitalism has used all kinds of methods to prevent, stunt or derail the industrial development of countries that dare to assert national independence or build socialism. These methods have included political and military acts of interference, intervention and aggression. But economic, financial and technological manipulation and blockades have been the most effective methods for long-term domination and control of underdeveloped client states and for tightening the

encirclement of and undermining the socialist and anti-imperialist countries.

THE ENVIRONMENTALISM OF THE U.N. AND MONOPOLY CAPITALISM

Now gloating over the ruination of countries subjected to neocolonialism as well as those countries subjected to decades of revisionist betrayal of socialism by the monopoly bureaucrat bourgeoisie, the imperialist countries preach that any attempt at industrial development outside the world capitalist system is not only futile but destructive to the environment. In the name of environmentalism, darkened pictures of state-owned industrial plants and the landscape in the former Soviet bloc countries are used in the bourgeois mass media to mock at the very idea of seeking industrial development independently.

The tale repeatedly told to terrify the people is that if they dare work for economic and social development under the banner of national independence or socialism, they would suffer economic blockade by the most advanced industrial capitalist countries and thus be deprived of advanced, "environment-friendly" and fuel-efficient technology and they would devastate their environment and incur social costs which will make any degree of self-reliant industrial development "unsustainable".

Since the '70s, the imperialists and their retinue of bourgeois scientists, ideologues and publicists have adopted environmentalism to deflect attention from the anti-imperialist and class struggles in the world, to stress to the world that the imperialists are economically and technologically supreme and must therefore be the ones determining the development of the world. They exaggerate the scarcity or limitedness of natural resources, blame the people of the world themselves for the destruction of the environment and make the people in the industrial capitalist countries think of clean air and clean water and good health in a self-indulgent way.

The worst propaganda of the pro-imperialist environmentalists idealizes underdevelopment as the preservation of the natural environment and obscures the unhealthy conditions and

consequences of underdevelopment and poverty as well as the vulnerability of the underdeveloped and poor countries to imperialist plunder and pollution. Indeed, the monopoly firms have had all the license to pollute and damage the environment in the underdeveloped countries.

The imperialists have systematically misappropriated the issue of environment and have pushed, under the auspices of the United Nations, an ideological line and political agenda which pretend to allow criticism of the "worst" environmental abuses of governments in general (first sector) and big business (second sector) but which in fact prettify these on the false promise of their becoming "environment-friendly". The two sectors cultivate and promote a pro-imperialist "third sector" of "nongovernmental organizations" and "people's organizations" that go through the motions of "criticizing" environmental abuses and environmentally destructive practices and policies from a classless civic viewpoint in order to beg from the monopoly capitalists and governments for reforms and for measly amounts of money to promote bureaucratic, tokenistic and palliative environmental projects.

Under the neocolonialist framework set by the imperialists through the U.N. Conference on the Environment and Development and the U.N. network in general, it is propagandized that the monopoly capitalists are the ones who can most efficiently promote environmentalism and "sustainable development" because they are supposed to have the capital and most advanced "environmentally-friendly" technology and because they are interested in a kind of development that maximizes the use of limited resources and makes profit-taking sustainable. The phrase "sustainable development" an ill-intentioned paraphrase of Mao's concept of self-reliant development, overstates the scarcity of natural resources and consequently the "limits of growth" as earlier decreed by the Club of Rome and asserts the global hegemony of the imperialist countries over development and the environment.

It is pure hypocrisy and chicanery for anyone to speak of environmental concerns without criticism and repudiation of the monopoly bourgeoisie and imperialism. We must expose the fact that special funds have been made available through U.N. agencies and directly by the imperialist governments, big business and pro-imperialist institutions in order to finance the propaganda - in the bourgeois mass media and among the "NGOs" and "POs" to obscure the criminal responsibility of monopoly capitalism in the plunder, destruction and pollution of the natural environment, ameliorate the image of the so-called first and second sectors on the issue of ecology, discourage self-reliant industrial development in the underdeveloped countries and in a subliminal way romanticize as idyllic the

Fight to establish a new social system which promotes both industrial development and a clean and healthy environment.

conditions of underdevelopment. Since the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, the imperialist countries have not decreased but have even aggravated the destruction of the environment and have not cut down but have even increased the emissions of carbon dioxide, methane and fossil fuel which cause global warming. The United States - the world's biggest spewer of carbon dioxide is at the head of the imperialist countries which refuse to take drastic measures to cut down the greenhouse gas emissions but which demand that the underdeveloped countries remain underdeveloped to minimize the "greenhouse effect". The U.N. global climate conference in Berlin is one more exercise in muddling the issue of environment and obscuring the

culpability of imperialism for global warming and underdevelopment.

The genuine advocates of environmental protection for the wellbeing of the people, self-reliant development and conservation and wise utilization of natural resources are those who condemn and repudiate imperialism, neocolonialism and reaction and, better still, those who act to combat and overthrow these malignant forces and establish a new social system which promotes both industrial development and a clean and healthy environment in countries like the Philippines.

DESTRUCTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES

Let us consider the Philippine historical experience with regard to the issue of the environment. It was in the 19th century when deforestation was pushed more vigorously than at any previous time under Spanish colonialism. This occurred with the expansion of the friar estates for producing crops exported to the industrial capitalist countries. There was a chain of reaction from crop specialization for export and domestic consumption to the rapid land dispossession of peasants who had to resort to swidden agriculture.

In the first half of the 20th century, under the direct colonial rule of U.S. imperialism, deforestation accelerated at a rate making that in the 19th century look like kindergarten work. U.S. and local comprador firms deforested large areas in all major islands to take logs for export and increased domestic use. The further expansion of the plantations for export crops, the opening of the mines and encouragement of homesteading also contributed to unprecedented deforestation. In exploiting the mineral resources, the U.S. firms cut trees for making shafts and for fuel, polluted the rivers with chemicals and mine tailings and caused soil poisoning and erosion over extensive areas. They did not bother to adopt any filtration method nor pay for the damage to the land.

In the second half of the 20th century, the deforestation of the Philippines proceeded exponentially from decade to decade. Logs were exported mainly to Japan in the course of its rapid economic reconstruction and subsequent construction booms. Japan financed the big compradors in their logging operations. The wanton deforestation has caused increasingly severe floods, soil erosion and silting of rivers, lakes, hydroelectric dams, irrigation systems and the coastal waters and higher rates of dehydration during droughts.

In the '50s, more than one-third of the Philippine land area of 30 million hectares was still covered by tropical rain forests. Now, less than one million hectares of this remains. And the forests are being cut down at the rate of 200,000 per year. At least one billion cubic meters of prime top soil are eroded every year. Thirty percent of the rivers have died. There has been a tremendous loss of biodiversity on land and in waters and thus a drastic reduction in agricultural and marine productivity. Deforestation, together with its consequences, are the principal ecological problem in the Philippines. It is also contributory to the problem of global warming.

Greenhouse gas emissions come from crude oil and coal-fired energy plants, some manufacturing enterprises and the heavy urban traffic of motor vehicles. Due to the gross underdevelopment of the country, these emissions are not yet as problematic as those in the imperialist countries with regard to global warming, although these emissions are immediately detrimental to the health of the people in urban areas.

Since the '60s, U.S. and Japanese monopoly firms and their big comprador-landlord partners expanded the mines and plantations for export crops without consideration of ecological balance and the social costs. The destruction of agricultural land by toxic chemicals and tailings from the mines and the grabbing of the best land by agrocorporations have forced many peasants and indigenous people to clear land even on steep slopes. There are now 26 large active mines producing gold, copper, bauxite, iron, nickel, ferrochrome and other mineral ores for export; and a great number of plantations producing sugar, coconut, banana, pineapple, etc. as well as aquafarms producing shrimps, fish and other marine products also mainly for export.

Big hydroelectric dams have been built without consideration of ecological balance and without adequate compensation and proper resettlement of the people displaced. The power generated is mainly for consumption related to enlarging the market for imported appliances and secondarily for supplying the energy needs of import-dependent enterprises. The corollary irrigation systems built have also encouraged the agrocorporations and landlords to accumulate land.

Since the '70s, the "green revolution", involving the "miracle rice" varieties, has resulted in dependence on imported chemical fertilizers and pesticides, which have damaged the health of peasants and work animals, made the soil lose fertility and turn acidic, polluted the streams and rivers and killed off the fish and other marine life which previously provided the protein in the diet of the peasants. The rising costs of imported inputs have bankrupted the peasants and have brought down the level of rice production.

Agricultural chemicals already banned for being harmful to users in the developed countries are sold to and used in the Philippines. Dubious chemical products - agricultural or medicinal - are also frequently trial-tested in the country by foreign monopolies, with Filipinos, especially the poor, serving as guinea pigs before these products are approved for marketing in the United States, Germany, Japan and other imperialist countries.

A few pollutant industries in the primary stage of production, like the Kawasaki iron sintering plant, have also been shifted from Japan to the Philippines. But the general preference of the imperialist countries is to simply transport their toxic wastes, including computer scraps, used batteries, PVC scraps and nuclear wastes, and dump these on Philippine waters and soil. Officially and unofficially, the U.S., Japanese and West European countries, especially Germany and the Benelux, are dumping huge amounts of toxic wastes on Philippine territory. The import-dependent manufacturing enterprises owned by foreign monopoly firms and Filipinos dispose of their industrial wastes flow by dumping these into the ground and into the water system with impunity. Thus, the streams, rivers, lakes and coastal waters near manufacturing sites are clogged with these industrial wastes. Real estate development projects have also been undertaken on watersheds of reservoirs for drinking water and have caused the dwindling of water supply in urban areas. In the urban areas,

large amounts of solid garbage waste are piled up on the ground or thrown directly into rivers and the sea. Due to soil erosion and toxic flows from the land and the massive cutting of mangroves for export to Japan, mangrove forests have either disappeared or become inhospitable to marine life. The factory ships and fishing fleets from Japan and Taiwan have raided and depleted the fish, seaweed, coral and other marine resources and destroyed the marine ecosystem over extensive areas of the Philippine territory. At the same time, corrupt bureaucrats in the localities have encouraged dynamite and chemical fishing. The honest poor fisherfolk are shunted off the fishing grounds.

Soon after the official termination of the U.S. military bases in the Philippines

**Filipinos,
especially the
poor, serve
as guinea pigs
for new medical
and chemical
products for
the imperialist
countries.**

in 1991, the U.S. government acquired for its military forces "access rights" to the Philippines in 1992. Thus, the U.S. military forces have continued to carry to the Philippines nuclear and chemical weapons of genocide under the guise of transit, acquisition of supplies and forward deployment. The United States has also refused to clean up the pollution its forces have left in the erstwhile U.S. military bases.

FRIENDS AND FOES OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Like its predecessors, the U.S.-Ramos regime is the principal domestic force in the service of foreign monopoly capitalism wreaking havoc on the environment in the Philippines. It has expanded and liberalized the privileges of foreign monopoly firms and the local reactionaries to exploit the human and natural resources.

It has continued the open rule of terror and perpetrated grievous human rights violations. It has launched the most vicious military campaigns which are destructive to the lives, property and environment of the people in order to make the human and natural resources of the country available for exploitation and profit-taking by the imperialists and the local reactionaries under its so-called Medium Term Philippine Development Plan or Philippines 2000.

The regime sheds crocodile tears over the issue of ecological destruction and echoes the U.N. slogans on "environmental protection", "people's empowerment" and "sustainable development". But it works to destroy the environment. Despite the official log ban, it issues logging concessions under various pretexts as a way of enriching its coterie of military officers and bureaucrats. It has allowed foreign investors 100 percent ownership of mines and encouraged open pit mining. It has encouraged the dumping of toxic wastes from developed industrial countries on Philippine territory as a way of earning foreign exchange.

Historically and currently, the communist and noncommunist advocates of national industrialization, free from imperialist domination, have always been ahead in criticizing and condemning the wanton plunder of our country's human and natural resources and in advocating the conservation and wise utilization of natural resources.

Before and after reestablishing the Communist Party of the Philippines in 1968, the proletarian revolutionaries have made comprehensive and profound critiques of the exploitation and plunder of the Philippines by imperialism and the local reactionaries. The CPP's Program for a People's Democratic Revolution encompasses the issue of environment. The CPP has also issued social investigation reports and timely analyses explaining the increasing degradation of the environment as well as the increasing severity of the floods and droughts.

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines and the mass organizations, sectoral and multisectoral alliances of the national democratic movement have addressed the issue of ecology in their programs of action. They have become the powerful mass base for the environmental movement in the Philippines in

opposition to the plunderers, destroyers and polluters of the environment - the imperialists and the local reactionaries.

The imperialists and local reactionaries blame the people for the environmental destruction. For instance, they obscure the wanton deforestation done by the big logging, plantation and mining firms and put the blame on the peasants and indigenous people who in the first place have been deprived of the land by the exploiters and have been driven to swidden agriculture. They also obscure the destructive role of the big foreign fishing fleets that raid Philippine waters and they put the blame on the poor municipal fisherfolk for the dynamite and chemical fishing done by unscrupulous elements that connive with local bureaucrats and military and police officials.

In the Philippines in recent years, there are latecomers who have used the issue of ecology to get money from foreign funding agencies and who specialize in falsely claiming that they represent the environmental movement and that the forces of the national democratic movement have had nothing to say or do about the issue of ecology. They pose as advocates of classless civic consciousness, social voluntarism and reformism within the trisectoral framework of neocolonialism.

These are anticommunist petty-bourgeois hustlers cashing in on the issue of ecology. They pretend to criticize governments and big business and at the same time toady up to them directly and to their conduit private funding agencies begging for money to fund imaginary or token ecology projects. These hustlers have become notorious as "NGO" racketeers and are concentrated in the so-called Green Forum. Variably they call themselves popdems, socdems, BISIG, Siglaya, Sanlakas and the like. They collaborate in spreading the anticommunist line of hostility towards the national democratic movement, empowering themselves through NGO bureaucratism and enriching themselves on money from foreign funding agencies. They also collaborate with Haribon Foundation, which is composed of bureaucrats, academics and dilettantes in ecology.

The funding sources of the Green Forum and Haribon Foundation are not limited to foreign private funding agencies of varied ideological, religious and political persuasions, which are in fact conduits of the imperialist states and big business. Conspicuously, they get increasingly large amounts of funds from the World Bank, the "development" agencies of the imperialist states and the Philippine reactionary government, as in the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) project. They celebrate the announcement of the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) to channel more money to the "NGOs".

The third sector of neocolonialism, consisting of "NGOs" and "POs", is an instrument of psychological warfare under the U.S.-Ramos regime. Its propaganda work to slander and discredit the revolutionary forces serves the imperialists and the local reactionaries and is actively a part of the low-intensity conflict scheme of the U.S.-Ramos regime.

PERFORMANCE RECORD OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The performance record of the revolutionary movement led by the CPP on the question of ecology is clear. It has resolutely and militantly carried out the line of the new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war against the imperialists and the reactionaries. It has carried out the most vigorous struggles against all policies and actions which mean the exploitation, plunder and destruction of the human and natural resources of the country.

It has fiercely fought the enemy military campaigns undertaken to force the evacuation of the people from hinterlands and to clear the way for the agroccorporations, bureaucrats, landlords and loggers to grab their homesteads, the ancestral lands, the forest and other natural resources. It has been outstanding in struggling for the dismantling of the U.S. military bases and against the positioning of nuclear and chemical weapons of genocide in the Philippines. It carried out militant struggles against the World Bank-financed Chico River dam project, the Cellophil project, the Kawasaki sintering plant and the Bataan nuclear power plant project in the '70s and '80s.

The armed revolutionary movement has encouraged legal democratic mass organizations and sectoral and multisectoral alliances and organizations dedicated specifically to the protection of the environment to participate in the mobilization of the broad masses of the people against the destroyers, plunderers and polluters of the environment. Some of the organizations taking up the issue of ecology were initiated by CPP cadres but were eventually corrupted by "NGO" bureaucratism and foreign funding by imperialist and imperialist-related agencies.

The revolutionary movement has undertaken so many campaigns against programs and projects launched by the imperialists and local reactionaries to despoil the natural environment and grab the land and natural resources from the people. To make as complete a list as possible from 1968 to the present, every regional committee of the CPP has to make its own listing. In areas and roads under their control, the revolutionary forces have enforced the law of the people's democratic government. They have aroused, organized and mobilized the people to require mining companies to adopt antipollution measures and pay social compensation for damage these have caused or else close down; to combat the landgrabbing operations of agroccorporations and real estate speculators; and to scuttle several hydroelectric and other power generation projects which deprive the peasants and indigenous people of land without sufficient compensation and without provision for alternative sources of livelihood.

In recent times, the most outstanding policy adopted by the CPP is to impose a 25-year complete ban on logging for export. At the same time, this policy allows in certain areas limited logging, provided the logs are for domestic housing, other local end uses and local processing (including furniture making, plywood manufacturing, pulp and paper manufactur-

ing). A campaign is now being undertaken to confiscate and prevent log exporting firms from using their logging equipment and facilities. At the same time, the revolutionary forces promote reforestation and the development of livelihood projects to improve the social conditions of the people and provide alternative sources of livelihood for the logging workers displaced by the log ban.

The revolutionary forces do not merely talk about the issue of ecology. They take decisive actions and mobilize the people against the imperialists and the local reactionaries who rape the natural environment. These actions must extend to the banning of the programs and projects undertaken by seemingly voluntaristic but imperialist-funded "NGOs" and "POs" ostensibly to promote environmentalism but in fact to scout for natural resources for grabbing and exploitation by foreign monopoly firms at the expense of the peasants and indigenous people and to use the line of pro-imperialist environmentalism - within the context of the U.S.-sponsored low-intensity conflict - to attack the national democratic revolution.

Among the most absurd propositions made by these imperialist-funded "NGOs" are that peasants and indigenous people must be kept out of extensive areas of the country to be preserved as national parks under the pretext of maintaining biodiversity (as if humans are not part of the biosphere) and that extensive areas of the country must be classified and agreed upon by the NDFP and the GRP as "zones of peace and life" for the purpose of preventing the armed revolutionary movement from availing of these in the people's war.

The counterrevolutionaries fall silent on bombardments, arson, massacres, torture and other barbarities unleashed by the U.S.-Ramos regime upon the peasants and indigenous people in order to force them to evacuate and allow the foreign monopolies, bureaucrats and military officers to grab the land and natural resources for themselves. At the same time, they falsely claim that the regime has achieved "democratization" and "reduction of human rights violations" and that there is now "peace and stability" for the imperialists and the local reactionaries to freely exploit and ravage the country.

The issue of ecology is well taken up and covered by the Program of the People's Democratic Revolution. The broad masses of the people led by the CPP resolutely and militantly fight for the conservation and wise utilization of natural resources for the purpose of self-reliant development against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

The revolutionary line of the CPP is diametrically opposed to the dominant imperialist line running through the conferences on environment sponsored by the United Nations and by any of the three sectors of neocolonialism. These U.N. conferences on the environment try to obscure and cosmeticize the imperialist plunder of human and natural resources and attempt to harmonize the interests of the imperialists and the neocolonial client states in the first sector, the foreign monopoly firms and the local comprador big bourgeoisie in the second sector and the "NGOs" and "POs" of paid hacks in the "third sector".

Scenes of Destruction, Soil of Revolution

*A MIM Photo Essay
from the Philippines*

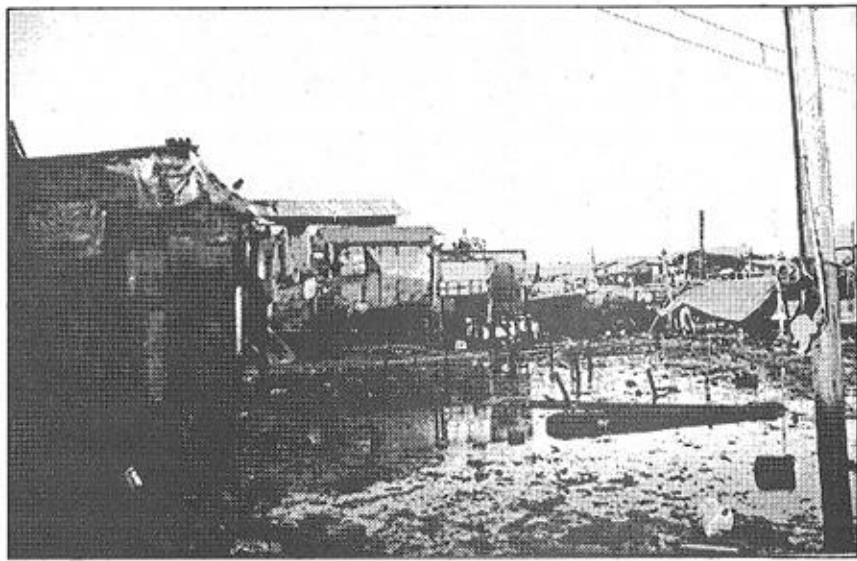


PROFITS BEFORE PEOPLE: Multi-national corporations such as Benguet Corp. (above) draw profits from human sweat and blood — and from the environment. The company practices open-pit mining in the Cordillera region (right), destroying food and water supplies.





PEOPLE AND POLLUTION, RURAL AND URBAN: Mindanao region peasant community members stand before a banana plantation (above), that releases harmful pesticides into their water supply. In Metro Manila (below), the urban poor survive without sewage facilities.





IN THEIR BACK YARDS: The urban poor in Metro Manila have no sewage facilities, and no trash pickup (left). In conditions unthinkable for imperialist-country residents (below), children grow from young survivors into revolutionaries; in them imperialism has met its match!



Self-defense against pollution

reprinted from MIM Notes 115, June 1996

“Fine particles of air pollution from power plants, motor vehicles and other sources kill some 64,000 Americans a year, causing deaths even at pollutant levels the federal government considers safe, a new study concludes,” according to the Boston Globe. That number is about three times more than the number of murders each year and is higher than the number of people killed in auto accidents.

“The study, which calculated death rates from air pollution for 239 cities across the country, was prompted by a growing body of research showing that barely detectable airborne particles can lodge in the lungs and, in extreme cases, cause death.”

Los Angeles leads the list of total deaths caused this way with 5,873 deaths attributable to air pollution annually.(1)

Meanwhile, the prevalence rate for asthma (a disease often triggered by air pollution) in the United States rose from 34.7 per 1,000 to 49.4 per 1,000 between 1982 and 1992, an increase of 42%. In that same period, there was an increase of 40% in the death rate from asthma. The age-adjusted death rate from asthma for people age 5-34 shows that Blacks die from asthma at a far higher rate than whites. In 1991 Blacks faced a death rate from asthma of almost 15 per one million people while the death rate for whites was just over 3 per one million.(2)

Air pollution causes death and hence the people are justified to defend themselves against those who profit from pollution. Under socialism, the workers' right to a clean environment will not be negotiable. If necessary, the international proletariat will use force against anyone whining about how their right to profit is higher than our right to breathe clean air. Since the proletarian demand for a clean environment is non-negotiable, MIM is for dictatorship.

Capitalism has premised itself on killing people as an ordinary part of production for so long, that when the international proletariat leads a dictatorship of the oppressed nations over the united states, the people will inherit polluting production techniques. Hence, pollution will not end the day after the Revolution; however, there will be no further barriers to introducing environmentally sound and sustainable production. It's one thing if the workers decide to put up with a little pollution, because there are no better techniques available yet for the people to support themselves. But it is unacceptable for a small class of people making fabulous profits from choosing techniques of production (or defending those techniques as corrupt politicians) that kill people through pollution.

Notes: 1. Boston Globe May 9, 1996, p. 1.

2. Managing Asthma Care, a special report prepared by the editors of Business and Health, Vol. 13, No. 7, Supplement D, 1995.

Environmentalists protest chemical weapons school

reprinted from MIM Notes 112, Mid-April 1996

by a RAIL comrade

On February 5, a protest rally was held on the steps of the Capitol building in Jefferson City, Mo. The Student Environmental Action Coalition and other concerned people were protesting an army proposal to relocate their chemical weapons training school from Fort McClellan, Alabama to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. Fort Leonard Wood is located in the heart of the Ozark Forest.

“We believe the Army's Mission of ‘national security’ jeopardizes the health and well-being of American citizens, and that this is unjust,” says SEAC member Jillian Borchard. A chemical weapons training facility at Ft. Wood puts human and non-human communities at risk through its obscurant training program, chemical decontamination program and use and production of radioactive nuclides, nerve gas, mustard gas, and dioxin. Member Eric Hempel says that “the chemical weapons school is a school of death and we don't want it in our state.” MIM takes it further—we don't want the chemical weapons training school anywhere.

The purpose of the rally was to raise the awareness and express discontent to the government about the army's proposal to relocate the school. The SEAC demanded:

- 1) That the military not jeopardize the people and environment through defense training.
- 2) That the United States Army be required to comply with the Endangered Species Act.
- 3) That the United States uphold the Biological Weapons Convention of 1972 which reads that signing countries agree to “never in any circumstances develop, produce, stockpile or otherwise acquire or retain any biological weapons.”

MIM agrees with protests against U.S. militarism but it takes the approach: “think globally—act globally.” United States imperialism is a global problem—not a local problem.

Environmental groups such as the SEAC righteously defy U.S. militarism's disregard for the environment and people. The chemical weapons training facility trains U.S. soldiers to use these weapons on people of the Third World—millions of hungry, oppressed people who organize to throw off the domination of their land, labor and resources by the United States of Amerika—now this is unjust.

But it won't be stopped by telling the imperialist beast that they must obey laws such as the Endangered Species Act and

weapons treaties. U.S. imperialism will end when a revolution led by the proletariat overthrows the U.S. and replaces it with socialism. That requires the building of a revolutionary Maoist Party to create public opinion and ripen revolutionary conditions. We invite you to join us. No U.S. troops—anywhere—anytime!

Notes: Information for this article was provided by a press release issued by the Student Environmental Action Coalition.

Two roads for environmentalism

The following article first appeared in *MIM Notes 112* (April 15, 1996). The letter that follows, and *MIM's* response to that, appeared in *MIM Notes 114* (May 15).

WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS, MARCH 10, 1996

Activists from the Cove/Mallard Coalition in Idaho gave a multimedia performance at Smith College about their campaign to save the largest roadless forest in the contiguous 48 states. On March 12 at UMass Amherst, MIM and RAIL showed the video "Green Guerrillas" about the New People's Army in the Philippines and their work to save the culture of the indigenous Mandayan people and the rainforest they live in by enacting a ban on logging.

In the week prior, activists at a MIM-led study group studied the communist understanding of environmentalism, in which the assault on imperialism is the focus and the struggles of oppressed peoples are recognized as the way forward. In preparation for the upcoming events, the activists read the Communist Party of the Philippines statement on the environment, as well as a bourgeois news article about the Environmental Rangers taking up arms in Idaho and Montana to save the forests.

PACIFISM IN IDAHO

Cove/Mallard is 76,000 acres and is "part of the ... largest tract of unlogged primary forest in the continental U.S." In 1990, the U.S. Forest Service agreed to allow 200 clear-cuts by logging companies. This would entail building 145 miles of roads to get the loggers there and the trees out. Twenty one million board feet are being logged, which will fill 26,000 logging trucks. Via road subsidies and deficit timber sales, the U.S. Forest Service is subsidizing the logging industry in Cove/Mallard for \$6 million over the 6 years of logging.

The Cove/Mallard Coalition engages in non-violent direct action as well as lobbying to try to stop the logging. According to their pamphlet, they do not damage logging machinery like Earth First, nor do they carry weapons like the Environmental Rangers. These distinctions were not discussed at their event.

The Cove/Mallard activists were on tour encouraging people to become active to stop the logging. They wanted people to come out to Idaho in the summer and participate in direct action. Recognizing the continuum of activism, they expressed additional options for people: tell your friends, and write to Clinton and Congress. While it is good to see leftists recognize that there is a variety of types of support that you can get, it was unfortunate to see that the activists didn't directly challenge people to follow what they saw as the best way forward.

The multimedia performance expressed many anti-capitalist and anti-big business sentiments, with songs with lines about how the environment is dying for "your [corporate] bottom line." Resistance outside of the so-called law was praised in "Ain't playin' by your rules anymore."

MIM would disagree with the neo-Luddite approach taken in one song: "Quitting time on the high-tech plantation." While it is correct to say that there is no connection between higher technical levels and more meaningful life, the answer is not to oppose technology. So much technology is oppressive and destructive in Amerika because Amerika is an oppressive and destructive society based on capitalism. The social system is the problem, not just the tools it uses. Elsewhere in the performance the activists correctly pointed out that the solution is to ban logging and transform the society that sees destroying the environment as profitable.

The first video was MIM's favorite, at least until the last few seconds. It was a poem entitled "The faceless ones" about animals being brutally killed by the corporate rush to profits. There was footage of animals dying in oil slicks and in other gory ways. The last line was the most disappointing, however. After sounding a strong call for action, the poets advice: "We have the power to vote."

At the moment, MIM believes that the majority of Americans would support logging in Idaho "for jobs." So voting won't really work. However, MIM does believe that reformist means to save forests in North America can be successful because Amerika is an imperialist society whose wealth production is external to it's home territory. There are a variety of reasons to save the forests in Idaho. But activists have to keep in mind that the logging companies, if kicked out of Amerika because they are "spoiling the view" can readily go somewhere else. Kicking the logging companies out of Idaho, unless it is done on an internationalist basis, is not a blow to logging. Rather, by preserving the "view" and by preserving North American biodiversity, this shores up First World support for international logging.

ARMED STRUGGLE IN THE PHILIPPINES

The differences between the strategies of the Cove/Mallard activists and the New People's Army were discussed at the MIM & RAIL "Green Guerrillas" event, in addition to the underlying differences in the political situation.

At the Cove/Mallard multimedia presentation we saw video footage of activists chaining themselves to roads or tying

themselves high up in trees scheduled to be logged. This can stop or at least slow logging within U.S. borders, but in the Philippines would quickly result in dead environmentalists.

One RAIL member relayed to the event participants how the Communist Party of the Philippines statement made the connection between imperialism and the continued destruction of the environment in the Philippines. First the Spanish and then later the Amerikan imperialists cut down trees in large numbers to make way for the planting of export crops.

The CPP statement reports that "agricultural chemicals already banned for being harmful to users in the developed countries are sold to and used in the Philippines." This clearly exposes why reformism can work in one area, but it is not an international strategy. The corporations that directly peddle death will leave places where there is too much resistance, such as within U.S. borders. Some reformists would respond that Amerikans should lobby Congress to ban the export of chemicals banned for use in the U.S. But this does nothing to effect the reality that these multinational corporations could just shift their corporate headquarters or possibly manufacturing plants, to a different part of the world and continue selling deadly products. The problem here is the capitalist system, not its products.

It is only this clear systemic analysis held by the Communist Party in their statement and in the practice portrayed in "Green Guerrillas" that can adequately and permanently end environmental degradation.

At the MIM event there was also some discussion about the motivations of the Green Guerrillas as compared to the Cove/Mallard and similar activists. The principal reason why the New People's Army instituted a log ban was because it was the best way to preserve the Mandayan people, and in a larger sense, the Philippines itself. The log ban serves to prevent the international logging companies from taking away the natural resources that rightfully belong to the Filipino people. The preservation of a whole community of people who live in harmony with their environment is a superior practice to working to preserve a national forest which exists at the expense of forests and people around the world.

ARMED STRUGGLE IN IDAHO?

There was also some discussion about the Environmental Rangers in Idaho who say "They're [logging and mining companies] not getting these places without a war. And I mean a real war. ... We're the ones who will put our lives on the line if that's what it takes." MIM can't predict whether the Mallard/Cove logging will be stopped, but we can predict that it likely won't take picking up arms to do it.

The difference in strategy between the anti-imperialist Filipinos and Idaho's Environmental Rangers shows why the Idaho armed movement is not significant. The New People's Army is working to defend people and their homes, whereas the Rangers are offering to die to protect the land for non-human reasons. The NPA is working to build up enough inde-

pendent power to drive, first the logging companies and then the imperialists, out of the Philippines. There is no similar situation in Idaho, and the Environmental Rangers can offer only symbolic reformist resistance.

Notes:

1. Los Angeles Times, Jan 9, 1996.
2. International Department, Central Committee, Communist Party of the Philippines, March 31, 1996. "On the issue of the environment in the world and in the Philippines"
3. The Cove/Mallard Coalition. "Why all the fuss?" P.O. Box 8968, Moscow ID 93843, (208) 882-9755, cove@moscow.com For information about the revolution in the Philippines or showing "Green Guerrillas" in your area, contact MIM or RAIL.

MIM Antagonizes First World Forests?

This letter was received in response to the previous article.

MIM's article "Two Roads for Environmentalism" compares the Maoist line on revolution with environmentalists protesting the logging of Cove/Mallard, one of the bigger old growth forests left in North America. MIM correctly emphasizes that activists who want to protect the Earth's environment, and not just some part of it in the First World, need to focus their efforts at defeating imperialism and overthrowing the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. MIM righteously upholds the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) in this regard as those who are waging People's War against the U.S. backed Ramos dictatorship. The CPP and its mass organizations have shown the environmentalist community in the Philippines and around the world how to effectively stop the clearcutting of forests and rape of the environment by the imperialists and their local cronies. The key is to organize and arm the oppressed masses so they can defend themselves and the environment on which they depend.

MIM distinguishes between two roads for environmentalism: a privileged First World reaction and a revolutionary proletarian offensive. First World environmentalists, those who really are concerned with defending the earth and not merely devouring it, are mostly pacifists or focoists. Pacifists rely on some combination of direct action, lobbying and electioneering to achieve their goals. Some groups, like local not-in-my-backyard pseudo-environmentalists, merely want the nuclear waste, clearcut, or chemical dump in someone else's community; almost always the someone else is a community of oppressed nationals who don't have enough political clout to keep the toxic colonialists away. More progressive groups, like Greenpeace, take an internationalist stand and oppose French

nuclear "testing" in occupied Mororoa (Tahiti) and Shoshone territory ("Nevada"), dumping in Black and Latino communities, and imperialist wars like the Gulf War. These groups are good but mislead the masses into thinking we can save the environment without overthrowing the system. They also use lingo like "environmental racism" which obscures the actual process by which imperialist pigs can destroy the Earth - toxic colonialism or neocolonialism and capitalism. Above all, First World people can afford to be pacifist (or at least they think they can) because they are not threatened as directly as oppressed nationals. Third World and Indigenous environmentalists know that any hesitation surely means death.

The focoists rely on acts of sabotage to raise environmental consciousness or achieve a particular goal. Earth First! spikes trees and monkey wrenches logging equipment to raise the cost of logging any particular forest. Contrary to public opinion, they always warn the loggers first, as the point is not to kill anyone but dissuade the pigs from coming at all. The strategy is sometimes effective at stopping a particular clear-cut, but doesn't decrease the net destruction of forests. Some activists contend that, as a result of opposition to clearcuts near privileged communities, loggers are more likely to pick forests in the Third World or on First Nation land where activists can be shot with more abandon. On the other hand, Earth First! also tends toward internationalism, publishing accounts of environmental struggles all over the world in their newspaper. Their philosophy, like most of the sincere environmental movement, is that of direct local-action coupled with global solidarity. [...]

Nowadays the Unabomber is in the news a lot and s/he deserves credit as a hard-core focoist who has successfully proved that killing individual pigs doesn't do a thing but sell bourgeois newspapers. Progressive groups inspired by Earth First! focoism and Greenpeace pacifism are non-revolutionary and will not save the environment, though they build public opinion against environmental destruction and sometimes get through effective reforms. Our only real hope is overthrowing the imperialist system of world domination and profiteering. The only way that every people can defend their environment is through self-reliant socialism. That being the case, MIM and RAIL - as the Party and mass organization in North America dedicated to smashing imperialism and waging self-reliant socialist revolution—are presently the best way forward for environmentalists in North America.

MIM and RAIL do not yet have an adequately worked out environmental line, and the article "Two Roads for Environmentalism" made three regrettable errors. It is important to keep in mind that smashing imperialism and building self-reliant socialism are necessary but not sufficient conditions for human survival. Therefore, revolutionaries must struggle diligently to work out the correct environmental line if we are to survive to see a world free of oppression.

First, contrary to the claim in MIM Notes, there is no "national forest [in the First World] that exists at the expense

of forests and people around the world." First World people can be parasites, living at the expense of the plundered colonies, but trees cannot. Forests are producers by nature, they never leech. What MIM correctly wants to say is that it is parasitic and imperialist to save trees in North America as a cute national park while clear-cutting the rest of the world. However, environmentalists should not stop protecting North American forests. They should just do so within the general framework of anti-imperialism and revolutionary organizing. Plenty of pseudo-environmentalists are guilty of national-park-ism and Sierra Clubbery, but that is a people-error not a forest-error. If we ever get to build self-reliant socialism in North America we will need the forests, as will our comrades in India, the Philippines and Peru.

Second, MIM misinterprets so-called Luddism and "the neo-luddite approach" taken by some environmentalists and Indigenous activists. Neither the Luddites or the so-called "Neo-luddites" were ever or are now opposed to all technology or change. Rather, like Marx and genuine communists everywhere, revolutionary environmentalists oppose certain technologies that foster alienation, hierarchical divisions of labor, brain vs. brawn divisions and ecological degradation. Thus monocrop agriculture, nuclear energy plants, and huge centralized factories are all out of the question. The very scale of the projects - as well as their traumatic effects on the ecosystem - make them enemies of humanistic labor.

Finally, MIM accuses some environmentalists of "offering to die to protect the land for non-human reasons." While it is good to tell environmentalists more effective ways of dying - or better yet, living - to save the environment, it is not true that environmentalism depends in any way on "non-human" justifications. As Marx and Engels repeatedly said, people are of nature. The distinction between human and non-human - like all distinctions - exists for humanity at a particular stage of historical development. Like other philosophical constructs, the mind-body distinction for example, it pops up and disappears throughout human history. Western science - not to mention non-Western or Indigenous knowledge - recognizes an identity and continuum between humanity and "nature." Evolutionary biology, ecology and physics resist the notion of borders and divides. Minute particles are constantly passing through "us" while we have the feeling of identity through time. Apes are genetically closer to people than zebras are to horses, yet people continue to talk of the unbridgeable human/non-human divide, or even of "races" of people. There are differences of course, most importantly for revolutionaries differences about how and who to organize (people yes, horses no). But that hardly changes the reality of the world and the dialectical nature of existence.

There is a basis in Marx for some of these undialectical constructions of theory and, regrettably, of practice too. In the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, Marx describes the relationship between humanity and nature as the relation between a person's head and their body. Marx wants to say

that humanity is part of nature, yet is able to change nature consciously. In reality, however, the head is no more able to "consciously" control the rest of the body than hormones, genes and the environment let it. More precisely, it doesn't make sense any more to talk about the mind as separate from the hormones (the body) or anything else. Even Marx would have to admit that if you shoot a person in the head they will die, but nature can get along just fine without humanity.

The metaphor is no good, but another point in the *Manuscript* is right on the mark: There is no genuine resolution of the conflict between people and nature without resolving the conflict between groups of people. Today the principle conflict in the world is imperialism. There will be no environmental progress made until imperialism is smashed and every people can safeguard their local environment from toxic colonialism. There is no time to waste on failed strategies. Smash imperialism, defend the earth!

MIM RESPONDS:

You make three criticisms, the first of which is correct. While Third World people should be first in line to stop their forests from being injured, there is nothing harmful in trees in the First World. However, there is a dangerous provincialism in the slogan "Think Globally, Act Locally." The imperialists are organizing globally, and we need to be organizing globally to oppose them. First World environmentalists who focus on First World forests are not taking the most effective and necessary actions to fight imperialism and really save the people and the environment.

The second criticism, regarding whether those MIM called Luddites oppose technology per se, feigns more unity between Marxists and the anti-technology line than is the case. Perhaps you would call those who really do oppose essentially all technology past the knife revisionist Luddites, betraying the original cause. However, we disagree that it is Marxist to oppose large-scale production on principal. You are correct that ultimately communists seek smaller scales of decentralized production, but we do not believe that goal can be accomplished prior to the transition from socialism to communism. In fact, in the development of socialism there may be a great need to develop large-scale production to meet immediate needs. This dialectic was recognized in the Cultural Revolution (for more on this see Charles Bettelheim's book *Cultural Revolution and Industrial Organization in China*, available from MIM for \$4).

On the third point, we agree with you insofar as genuine environmentalism does not require non-human justifications. However, some environmentalists think that ignoring human beings is the best way to organize. Recognizing that many in the First World do not want to help the oppressed in the Third World, they pander to reactionary sentiment by assuring their supporters that they only care about trees, or worse yet only First World trees.

There is a great deal more that can be said about revolutionary environmentalism in the context of the First World. We

encourage you to write articles for MIM Notes and for RAIL. Notes on this topic so that those who read MIM Notes will be more informed on the news at the same time that your theory is opened for critique as we see how you put it into practice.

Environmental conservation requires national liberation

Reprinted from RAIL Notes, Summer/Fall 1996

BOSTON, MA

MIM and RAIL showed two films and hosted a speaker for our event *Capitalism and the Environment*. The first film *No Grapes* documented Latino farmworkers struggle against poisonous working conditions harvesting grapes in California. The film exposed Amerikkkan agriculture as based on the toxic colonialism of oppressed nations. Amerikkkan agriculture is colonialism because it subjugates entire nations — Third World nations, Blacks, Latinos and First Nations (American Indians and other indigenous peoples) — to feed the white nations of the First World. It is toxic because the pesticides and poisons make oppressed national workers and their families sick or kill them. The film documented some of the independent organizing efforts of the Latino farmworkers and their struggle to build public opinion against the grape growers.

The second film, *Deadly Deception*, exposed General Motors' role in developing nuclear weapons and how, in order to make money building bombs, GM exposed factory workers to deadly radiation and lied about the risks. The film was good insofar as it showed the need for regulating big corporations and doing away with nuclear production, but bad because it focused entirely on the white workers involved in production.

MIM and RAIL's speaker, a local RAIL comrade, called *Deadly Deception* "a whitewash" because it ignored the plight of oppressed nation communities entirely. For instance, the movie talked about a Department of Energy nuclear weapons plant in Hanford, Washington, and the bad conditions workers faced there. However, it did not mention that the plant is on stolen Yakima Nation land. The Chernobyl-style plant — which closed in 1987 — caused far more damage to the First Nation Yakima people than to the plant workers themselves. In July 1990 the US government admitted dumping nuclear waste

illegally near the plant. In April 1991, the government admitted dumping 444 billion gallons of water laced with plutonium, strontium, tritium and cesium into the neighboring river — just 30 miles upstream from the Yakima reservation. The First Nation community's food and water supply is now irreversibly poisoned. The speaker said s/he did not point this out to minimize the plight of the plant workers, but to point out that mainstream and even Leftist environmental activists ignore oppressed national communities in favor of white society.

The speaker pointed to mining in North America as a good example of toxic colonialism. One third of all US low sulfur coal mining, 20% of all known US oil and natural gas extraction, and over half of US uranium mining is done on First Nation reservations. Nearly 100% of federal uranium production is done on reservations. In the Southern Arizona copper belt, two thirds of US copper comes from the Papago Nation reservation which has been gradually taken away by Congressional decrees beginning in 1920.

In 1952 a mineral extraction agreement was set up between the Navajo Tribal Council and Kerr-McGee Corporation on Dine Nation or Navajo land (UT, AZ, NM, CO). Throughout the 1950s ventilation was not operating properly and wages for 100 nonunion Dine employees was \$1.60, only two thirds of the off-reservation rate. Low wages, a guaranteed labor force, almost no severance tax and no safety regulations made this operation extremely profitable for Kerr-McGee. The uranium ran out in 1979 and Kerr-McGee closed their Shiprock facility in 1980. After Kerr-McGee's abrupt departure, 71 acres of radioactive tailings with 85% of their original radioactivity were left 60 ft from the San Juan River — the only significant water source in Shiprock. Lung cancer, leukemia, cleft-palate, and other birth defects are now prevalent at Shiprock and all the other Native communities downstream. All together there are 42 uranium mines, 7 mills, 4 coal strip operations, 5 coal power plants on the Navajo reservation exploiting and poisoning the Navajos for the benefit of white Americans who get cheap electricity and big corporations who reap huge super-profits.

On the Lakota or Sioux Nation territories there are over 5000 uranium claims and a lot of coal mining in the Black Hills "National Forest" (which is stolen Lakota land). On June 11, 1962, 200 tons of radioactive tailings (the contaminated waste from nuclear mines) washed into the Cheyenne river near Pine Ridge Reservation. When the reservation requested clean drinking water, the Bureau of Indian Affairs consented but provided the condition that the water would not be used for the Native people's consumption but only for cattle. Not surprisingly, increases in lung cancer and birth defects followed.

In 1972, the US National Academy of Sciences as well as the Trilateral Commission submitted reports to the Nixon administration designating Indian Country — the Four Corners area (UT, AZ, NM, CO) and the Dakotas, Wyoming and Montana — a "National Sacrifice area" meaning that it should be rendered uninhabitable in order to supply white

Amerikkka's water and energy needs. The proposal — fittingly dubbed Project Independence — shows that Amerika's energy independence comes at the expense of oppressed nations. The speaker pointed out that designating Indian lands as National Sacrifice Zones and exploiting other nations resources for Amerikan energy independence is not just a part of the Republican agenda and not just a Nixon administration plot. The plan is bi-partisan and its widespread support in Washington DC exposes the futility of relying on the democrats or any other politicians to prevent the genocide of indigenous peoples. The speaker also pointed out that all US nuclear tests have taken place on indigenous land. Over 600 tests alone have been perpetrated on Shoshone Nation land in so-called Nevada.

The speaker said that the analysis of toxic colonialism applies equally well to Blacks, Latinos and the First Nations. Black children are 2-3 times more likely than whites to suffer from lead poisoning at all income levels. Three-fifths of all Blacks and Latinos, 15 million Blacks and 8 million Latinos, live in communities with uncontrolled toxic waste sites. Half of all Asians, Pacific Islanders, and First Nations live in communities with uncontrolled toxic waste sites. According to the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ, race is the single most significant variable in the placement of commercial hazardous waste. According to the National Law Journal in 1992, 'white' hazardous waste sites get cleaned up faster and more comprehensively and the polluters are punished significantly more severely.

The speaker said that once you accept toxic colonialism as the best concept for explaining environmental destruction you are committed to ending the unequal power between groups that results in dependency, exploitation and repression. You are committed to building independent institutions to struggle for the decolonization and liberation of all oppressed nations. This is why it is important to engage in genuinely revolutionary movements that support Blacks, Latinos and First Nations as well as Third World and Indigenous peoples around the world. Groups like Greenpeace and Earth First! are good insofar as they build public opinion for environmental struggles or oppose US militarism, but they don't even attempt to end US domination over the continent and the world. Ultimately, this latter task is what we need to do if we want to defend the earth and the peoples of the earth.

The speaker briefly touched on the need to replace capitalism with socialism and central planning — though s/he explicitly did not support a single socialist government in North America, but advocated establishing many sovereign and independent states corresponding to the many different nations inhabiting the continent. The point was that without some kind of joint industrial/national planning and major restraints on corporations and profiteering, there is no way to end the waste and deliberate pollution of the environment. During the discussion which followed, we had a chance to explore this topic in more depth. One participant said that we should support "good

companies" that don't pollute the environment and treat their workers well. Another person said that we should buy organic produce "even if it means going without" other things we might like. The MIM and RAIL comrades pointed out that buying from "good companies" or "organic" food products is already a sign of relative affluence not available to the majority of the world. "Good companies" exist because of the abundance stolen by Amerika from the oppressed nations. Revolutionaries do not revel in their excess consumption but seek to eliminate it. Secondly, "good companies" — because of the rules of the market — do not operate as efficiently as polluters. Because they spend more money in order to be eco-friendly, they don't compete as well and may lose money. The point is not to foster a few small eco-friendly companies but instead to replace the entire industrial-capitalist order with self-reliant ecological socialism.

One participant — who had also argued for buying organic foods — said that it didn't matter that Amerika was bent on the genocide of the First Nations because there were non-Native people who kept their "ideas alive." She made a number of offensive comments that exposed the insidious side of New Age spiritualism. While constantly referring to American Indians in the past tense — as if First Nations only existed in history books and in old Westerns — she pretended that there was only one indigenous culture instead of thousands of distinct national cultures; and that white New Age spiritualists had successfully absorbed the sum total of Indigenous knowledge, thus eliminating the need for Indigenous peoples at all. Finally, she said, you don't have to fight imperialism at all, just drop out and live a morally pure existence on the margins of American society.

MIM and RAIL were not convinced. The First Nations, along with oppressed nations from every place on Earth, are fighting the good fight against imperialism. The answer is not to drop out and keep one's hands clean, but rather to get down and dirty and defend real live people instead of ideas. In fact, moral purity is an impossibility when you are living under apartheid. Kibbutzim in occupied Palestine and communes in South Africa or North America are no escape. The only solution is revolution. The only way to save the Earth and the peoples of the Earth is smashing imperialism. Taking that road means building independent institutions of the oppressed as well as public opinion in support of real change.

This article and the RAILer's presentation were based on Ward Churchill's excellent book *Struggle for the Land: Indigenous Resistance to Genocide, Ecocide and Expropriation in Contemporary North America* (Common Courage Press, 1993) and M. Annette Jaimes' equally exceptional anthology *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization and Resistance* (South End Press, 1992).

Pigs are Killing Earth

Reprinted from RAIL Notes

Amerikkka's parasitic death feast is not only responsible for the brutal oppression and exploitation of all women and peoples around the world, but is the chief cause of the rapidly failing health of planet Earth and the torture or extinction of many plant and animal species. Amerikkka is a ravenous meat-eater stuffing itself with bloody cow meat fed on the last old-growth forests. Even the average pet cat in Amerikkka eats more meat every year than the average Central American where that meat originated.(1) Amerika devours chickens, pigs and sheep packed in factory farms under torturous conditions.

The morning newspaper, reporting bourgeois propaganda to prop up male supremacist-patriarchal-imperialism, comes straight from the forests — and uses more paper pulp in one print run than some Third World countries use for school books in an entire year.(2) Just as significantly, the outflow of villagers from land turned into Amerikkkan plantations or clear-cut for logging causes a massive colonization of the rain-forests; pushed off their homes and facing huge unemployment in the cities, displaced Third World people have no place left to go. The casualties, for both people and the planet, are tremendous.

Amerikkka has detonated its nuclear death weapons over 600 times on Shoshone land in so-called Nevada. It strip-mines Navajo land to get uranium for more death weapons, poisoning the earth and killing off the Navajo people with cancer.(3) It poisons rivers, lakes, land and air with toxic runoff from agribusiness, oil drilling, strip-mining, and war production. Indigenous and Third World peoples everywhere, including Latinos in the United States, Amazonians in Ecuador and Blacks in Azania, are the victims. Amerikkka has no respect for the Earth and, unless The Man is disemboweled, will continue his doomed plunder until all humans and many more species die out.

Individual, conscience-soothing life-style changes on the part of people in the First World won't save themselves or the non-human world. Recycling, composting, idealistic vegetarianism, and canvas shopping bags might make you feel good, but they're not revolutionary. Defense of other species and the environment requires revolutionary action. The imperialist division of the world, where some nations recklessly expropriate the natural resources of other nations, must be destroyed. Individualism and capitalism must be replaced with socialism and ecobilibrium. Real environmentalists seek to transform the parasitic consumer society into one that lives within nature, not in spite of it. Green revolutionaries seek to defend the Earth and end oppression by any means necessary.

Marxists know that one must resolve the antagonistic contradictions between groups of people in order to resolve the antagonistic contradictions between humanity and nature. This becomes clear when you consider the fate of forests in the Third World. The two biggest causes of deforestation in the world are companies that clear-cut forests for timber as well as to start big agribusiness enterprises — to grow bananas, prawns, coconuts, soy, etc. — and villagers that are evicted from their homes by agribusiness and forced to move into forested lands, particularly ones where logging roads have been started.(4) The only acceptable way to stop the deforestation is by ending the imperialist control of the land through a radical land reform. The only other way to stop deforestation is genocide, which the imperialist "population planners" push constantly; and even then the greedy pigs will just keep mowing down the trees.

It's important for revolutionary anti-imperialists to lead environmental struggles and push the struggle in North America further. Anti-logging movements provide a good example of what to do and what not to do. The communist-led anti-logging movement in the Philippines and the pacifist Chipko (which means "hug the tree") movement in India are two environmental movements initiated by oppressed people and based on the principles of social justice, self-determination and internationalism. The American Indian Movement campaign against nuclear dumping on the reservations — which they aptly call radioactive colonization — is another.(5) On the other hand, there are lots of "save the wilderness" campaigns run by Americans who don't care about the world, but just want some pretty scenery in their backyards. They don't understand the notion that North America is occupied territory and they're the occupying settlers. They don't defend freedom, only revel in their privilege. Anti-imperialist environmentalists base their campaigns on the rights of oppressed peoples to the environment, as well as the rights of the environment as such. We are thoroughly internationalist and defend the rights of all oppressed peoples to self-determination.

All across North America, anti-imperialists are leading and taking part in environmental actions. In so-called Oregon, the Siskiyou Forest Defenders have been fighting logging by the murderous Croman Corporation which is bent on destroying over 200 acres of old-growth forest. In so-called Alberta, the Lubicon Lake Indian nation is fighting the Canadian government and the Daishowa Paper Manufacturing Company of Japan for its 4,000-square-mile forest. And in Mexico, mostly indigenous campesinos have been battling it out with PEMEX, the national oil and gas monopoly, which has been poisoning the people for over 20 years.(6)

Environmentalists can't let the pigs lay claim to the mantle of ecology with terms like "sustainable development" and plans for worldwide governing bodies to supposedly protect the earth. The world meetings they hold are attended by the same imperialists that staff the United Nations and International Monetary Fund — and backed by the United

States, Japan and Western Europe. Their eco-fascistic plans have nothing to do with revolutionary environmentalism, which means local and not international control. The first step is smashing the imperialist monster and winning self-determination for all oppressed peoples. As we see in the Philippines, India and on First Nations reservations, environmental struggles are an important part of the battle.

Notes:

1. Hungry for Profit (Documentary film)
2. Colchester and Lohmann (eds.) *The Struggle for the Land and the Fate of the Rainforests*. 1993.
3. Richard Hofrichter. *Toxic Struggles*. p. 99.
4. Colchester and Lohmann.
5. Ward Churchill. *Struggle for the Land*. 1993.
6. Earth First! March-April 1996. C/O EPI Journal, POB 1415, Eugene OR. 97440

MCI2 RESPONDS:

MIM agrees with the general thrust of this polemic, with an important exception. The writer says: "Anti-imperialist environmentalists base their campaigns on the rights of oppressed peoples to the environment, as well as the rights-of-the-environment as such." MIM asks, if there are no rights, only power struggles, what are the "rights of the environment as such"? The right to be an environment? That is tautological. The right to be unaltered? That is undialectical and impossible. Likewise, when the writer says "the planet" suffers casualties, we again need a definition. Is coal mining always a casualty for "the planet," but growing and harvesting corn is not? Is some kind of coal mining a casualty and not others? If humans or some other life forms are still alive when the earth is ready to crash into the sun, would it be immoral for the living to leave earth and go to another planet instead of trying to save earth from destruction? Would it be oppression to bring human life to another planet and eat the vegetation that grows there?

These are impossible questions, and that underscore's MIM's point: morality is a human construction based on class and gender ideologies. If we are to say that it is immoral to "harm" the earth itself, we therefore have to admit that such a view is a social construction that imposes a human perspective. Our dialectical materialist ideology demands this understanding of us. Therefore, we must ask and answer: What is the human basis for granting "rights" to the earth? MIM's revolutionary environmentalism sets a human standard for morality. We frankly oppose environmental desecration that undermines human equality and human life, because our morality is a proletarian feminist morality based on the revolutionary emancipation of all oppressed people — the elimination of oppression of groups of people by other groups of people. The question of non-human morality cannot be answered outside of this context. Maoists therefore evaluate such claims on their relation to human liberation. The RAIL comrade's polemic is within Maoism inasmuch as it is on the side of all oppressed groups of people against their oppressors. In practice, during the anti-imperialist era of struggle, there is much more basis for unity

than contradiction between us. Most of the issues argued above are common to both views.

In fact, the RAIL comrade's view expressed above is not consistent. The only reason it can be immoral to eat animals but not immoral to eat corn is because animals are more like people. The only reason it can be immoral to mine minerals but not immoral to use agriculture to remove nutrients from topsoil for human consumption is because mining often perpetrates oppression upon humans (miners or those whose land was stolen from them). When the RAIL comrade condemns meat consumption but not grain consumption, it is because the meat consumption in question perpetuates human inequality. Therefore the RAIL comrade is mixing human and non-human criteria inconsistently. MIM prefers a human standard with the understanding that: (a) the worst ecological destruction furthers human oppression and inequality, and (b) when human equality is approached or achieved, new moralities will arise based on new material conditions, and in that context non-human questions of morality may become more salient.

Towards a Revolutionary Environmentalism

MIM received the following draft of an essay from a RAIL comrade. MIM's comments follow.

by a RAIL Comrade

A revolutionary analysis of the environmentalist movement should take into account three primary factors.

1. The destruction of the environment is a symptom of capitalism.
2. Environmental abuse in the Third World is a form of imperialism.
3. The essential unity of the struggle of the International Proletariat and the environmental struggle.

The destruction of the environment is done mainly by governments and multinational corporations. This makes it a symptom of capitalism. Destruction of the environment for monetary gain can be seen in central and south America where rain forests have been clear-cut in the name of profits and bourgeois "progress." Also in Aztlan, where young children must bathe in water polluted by wastes from factories owned by multinational corporations. A much weaker form of this can be found in the United States in the current movement by automobile dealers to lower the environmental safety standards for their cars. A Marxist-Leninist-Maoist (MLM) position

would realize within this two points of fact:

1. Without an environment for us to live in, everything else is pointless.
2. That the earth is/should be the common property of all those residing on it, thus environmental abuse is a crime against the People.

Third World nations bear the brunt of global environmental destruction, primarily carried out by First World governments and corporations. Environmental abuse can thus be seen to be a form of imperialism by which the First World nations exploit not only Third World workers but their very environment. Besides the examples previously cited, the Union Carbide chemical leak in India has had an untold effect, the extent of which is still being made known. In north America, Canada's natural resources are being ruthlessly exploited by the U.S. government (Canada is hardly Third World, but the example serves to illustrate how governments get involved), wherein much of the power for the northeast U.S. comes from Canada, as well as much paper for sale in the U.S. A proper MLM position would call attention to this, and wherever possible to succeed, agitate for a stop to this exploitation.

The struggle for the liberation of the International Proletariat and the struggle against environmental destruction go hand-in-hand. It should be stressed that the struggle against environmental abuse is at its base a struggle against international capitalism. Through continued agitation on this position, supported by the previous points, and guided by MLM theory, the class-consciousness of those involved only in the environmental struggle can be awakened. Their eyes will be opened to the true arena of struggle and the root cause of environmental destruction: international capital.

MC12 RESPONDS:

We largely agree with this statement, but with the following caveats or clarifications.

MIM agrees that "destruction of the environment is a symptom of capitalism," but it does not only occur under capitalism or even under industrialism. As we explained in the response to an RC's environmental line proposal, pre-industrial societies have also perpetrated environmental destruction, for example. We also think that although eliminating private ownership and profits as driving forces in the economy will go a long way to ending such destruction, under socialism we will continue to struggle to end these practices while fulfilling human needs.

In the same vein, MIM would argue that although there is a potential unity between "the environmental struggle" and the international proletariat, that dualism is itself unsatisfactory. There is no real environmentalism that is not revolutionary environmentalism. But there is plenty of pseudo-environmentalism that is actively opposed to the interests of the oppressed. We should not pretend that imperialist NIMBYs are on the side of the oppressed as they demand the export of toxic waste while struggling to increase their own gluttonous consumption. This is important in the same way that we can't apologize for

pseudo-feminism by saying that although they are increasing oppression among the gendered-female majority of the world, their effort to equalize opportunity between men and women in the U.S. Army is in "unity" with the struggle against all gender oppression. So, this is not to say the RAIL comrade's statement is necessarily wrong, but that it needs to be spelled out in this way or else it is potentially wrong.

As an aside, although it is true that blame for the destruction of the environment may be mostly laid at the feet of governments and multinationals, it is also important to remember that much of the nitty-gritty of destruction – as in deforestation – is done by poor peasants looking for arable land. This will be the result of poverty or inequitable domination of resources under any circumstances.

MIM does not agree with the blanket statement, "Without an environment for us to live in, everything else is pointless." Why not? Well, someday we don't have a planet anymore, right? Does that mean that everything is pointless? No. Imagine that we have socialism for 200 years and then through some terrible mistake people wipe themselves out. But imagine that without socialism it would have taken 250 years for imperialism to finally wipe out humanity altogether. Which would be better? By the RC's reasoning, imperialism would be better in that case, because if we all die in the end everything is "pointless."

Another way of looking at why we disagree with the statement is it is often used to justify single-issue or reformist envi-

ronmentalism that ends up supporting imperialism. This is what people say to justify working with Greenpeace instead of making revolution. "What is the point of socialism if we can't save the environment?" Keeping the earth habitable for humanity is a crucial task for communists, but it is not the most important or first-order task at all times.

With regard to the Canada example, MIM would only say that it is not inherently worse for America to devour forests in Canada than within the USA; both are on stolen land. The important point there is rather that the imperialist countries, including Canada, devour world resources vastly disproportionate to their populations.

Canada and the USA, for example, average more than 12,000 kilowatt hours of electric consumption per capita per year, compared to only 80 kilowatt hours per capita per year in the poorest countries. This reflects the decadent levels of consumption among the oppressor nations as well as the energy-intensity of their industries. So, although more than three-quarters of households in Latin America have access to electricity, they still average less than 2,000 kilowatt hours per capita per year. (By comparison, in sub-Saharan Africa electric power is only available to about 25% of the population. Seven countries in Africa consume less than 30 kilowatt hours per capita per year.) Thus we have to consider total overconsumption as well as the question of stealing resources from other peoples.(1)

Notes: 1. United Nations, *World Economic and Social Survey 1996*.

What do you know about the Philippines?

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) is leading a revolution in the Philippines today, in alliance with anti-imperialist and nationalist forces throughout the country.

Find out more about the Philippine revolution. MIM distributes these materials by the CPP and allied organizations:

- *Liberation International*. A publication of the International Office of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF). Bi-monthly news and analysis of the revolution, including international news. \$3 per issue.
- *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, by Jose Maria Sison. CPP founder's account of the revolution. \$15 post-paid.
- *Rebolusyon*. Theoretical journal of the CPP. \$4 per issue.

Send cash; check or m.o. made out to "MIM Distributors" to PO Box 3576, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3576.

Struggle and Review

On Proletarian Leadership in the Imperialist Countries

MIM reaffirms its support for its 1995 Congress Resolution called "Reject the Outdated Idea of an Emerging International Center." Already in the past year, the application of that resolution in struggle has proved fruitful in varied and numerous circumstances.

The reorienting of the international communist movement on the basis of Maoism and its unification within those parts that already uphold Maoism turns on questions of varying degrees of universal significance.

Those questions of absolutely universal significance include Deng Xiaoping, Hoxhaite, Khrushchevite, Brezhnevite, Gorbachevite and Hua Guofeng revisionism. Also, the earlier generations of revisionism and social-democracy including Trotskyism in the imperialist countries remain of absolutely universal significance. Regardless of national or local conditions, Maoist party members must be unanimous in their opposition to Chinese and ex-Soviet revisionism. MIM refers to this as a matter of its first two cardinal questions, one each for the Soviet Union historically and the Cultural Revolution in China. We refer to these questions as absolutely universal because they do not vary by national conditions.

As Mao explained, there is no Marxism-Leninism that is not integrated with national conditions. Hence, it will not suffice to be fully Maoist by taking the correct stand on questions of universal historical significance within the international communist movement. The first two cardinal questions are a very important first step to make and likewise, those comrades most able to integrate Maoism with national conditions are more likely to have the stand on the first two cardinals correct.

Restating Mao, the Peruvian Maoists employ the concept of "Guiding Thought" as a convenient phrase to refer to the integration of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism with concrete national conditions. While comrade Gonzalo was still free, the PCP Central Committee wrote: "Thus, each revolution must specify its own Guiding Thought, otherwise there is no application of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, nor development of a revolution." MIM's third cardinal on the white working class of the imperialist countries is an example of "Guiding Thought." At the first level, the question of class formation is a universal one. All Maoists must use the same definitions of classes. However, in the end, the breakdown of classes in a society and what to do with them is a question for the formation of a Guiding Thought.

In Volume One of the *Selected Works*, Mao sets forth definitions of the classes he will analyze in Chinese society in the first

essay. The second essay in Volume One is already the application of those definitions in an analysis of Chinese society.

Such questions as the breakdown of society into classes, the existence of a class as opposed to scattered elements of a class, the particular class content of the national question, whether or not a society is still semi-feudal — these are matters of the Guiding Thought and cannot be answered by way of quotation from the classic works of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. As an example where attention to particular detail is necessary, we can point to Ancient Rome, where Marx said there was a still-born property-less proletariat. Likewise in Ancient China of almost 1000 years ago, there was a manufacturing sector and a proto-capitalist class. Yet though the definitions of proletariat and capitalist might apply to some elements of society in Ancient Rome or China, we cannot really say that the proletariat as a class existed, especially in the way we understand that term scientifically as a class today. That is a matter of integrating Marxism-Leninism-Maoism with the concrete conditions.

In the imperialist countries, there is not a single organization other than MIM that seeks to apply the definitions of proletariat and semi-proletariat. Hence, there can be no question as yet as to whether any but MIM is a Maoist organization in the imperialist countries. There is no point over arguing which Guiding Thought is correct for which imperialist country when there is no organization other than MIM starting from definitions appropriate for the era of imperialism that Lenin analyzed and named.

We can name the major obstacles to taking up the universal aspects of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism in the imperialist countries. In order of declining importance they are bourgeois democratic prejudice, post-Modernism, hegemonic dogmatism and populism.

The significance of bourgeois democratic prejudice is that many who set out to conduct a scientific analysis of classes in the imperialist societies recoil when they learn that the proletariat can only be a tiny minority in the imperialist countries. They then turn around and alter the definition of proletariat or take-up outright social-democracy in order to achieve a "majority" as the vehicle for progress within imperialist countries, conveniently by omitting the question of opening borders to obtain a majority of proletarians or former peasants. Social-democracy has not vanished as a trend in the world today, principally because it is based in an actually existing class, the semi-proletariat. Over time, the task of separating from the social-democracy of the Second International in the imperialist

countries has become more urgent and more difficult, not less.

The second major obstacle seen is post-Modernism, which is often mushed together with bourgeois democratic prejudice. Where post-Modernism is not merged together with bourgeois democratic prejudice, it does not seek a majority for its own sake, but it takes advantage of Marx's process of defining the proletariat to redefine the proletariat to include white-collar workers, "pink-collar" workers and other such inventions of the intelligentsia including those related to environmentalism, feminism and anti-racism. Such post-Modernist attempts to change the definition of proletariat are anti-Leninist in that they deny that imperialism is an historical era that we are still in and that the definition of proletariat remains unchanged since Lenin's day. Post-modernism is also counter to the MLM understanding of the world as divided into nations, and the fact that today the principal contradiction is between imperialism and the oppressed nations — a contradiction of utmost violence and not just a matter of language reform or tolerance psychology instruction for instance.

Hegemonic dogmatism is the third obstacle to a correct development of Maoism in the imperialist countries. Dogmatists take up quotations from the classics of MLM without regard to concrete conditions. They quote Mao on the united states and other societies in a way that Mao abhorred. They escape an analysis of concrete conditions by quotation. Such dogmatism by itself is nothing new, but gains dangerous force when backed by the prestige of Maoist revolutions not in the

imperialist countries. Hegemonic dogmatism is then the denial of the need for a study of concrete conditions combined with the denial of a need for a Guiding Thought.

Finally, there is populism as a roadblock to development of Maoism in the imperialist countries. Often indistinguishable from bourgeois democratic prejudice, it becomes distinguishable when those comrades who define and apply the definitions of the classes correctly, nonetheless never seek to mention them again. Instead, such populists always speak of the "people" and their just demands via the environment or education, where there might be a congruence between the interests of the proletariat and the middle-classes combined which form the people. In practice, this is a way to lead comrades into being swamped by middle-class concerns and drag us back to the Second International. The way to separate from populism right now is to put the principal emphasis on setting up the proletarian pole in the imperialist countries. That entails as its corollary the destructive side of attacking revisionism and social-democracy as principal over allying with the middle-classes — until that time we can be sure there are Maoist parties with the four cardinals set up in the imperialist countries. This does not mean we do not "walk on two legs," but we must be sure to ensure proletarian leadership by carrying out the destructive phase of clearing out revisionism and social-democracy as a higher priority for us now than allying with the middle classes.

— Adopted unanimously at MIM's 1996 Congress

On Peru and the RIM

With the participation of some of the RCP-USA influenced organizations in the RIM, *A World to Win* published a magazine on Peru. It has already proved to be the work of the center-right in our movement — those like Hua Guofeng waving the red flag to conciliate with counterrevolution. Although the document is marked as published in 1995, MIM only just received it in recent months of 1996.

Italicized in the document is a statement summing up the centrist approach to waving the red flag. "In the actual circumstances and given the relation of class forces at this stage in Peru, there is, from the standpoint of the proletariat, no need for and no correct basis for negotiations leading to the end of the People's War. There is no basis — in terms of the freedom and the necessity of the revolutionary camp on the one hand and the reactionary camp on the other — for achieving a peace accord that would not represent abandoning the revolutionary road and compromising away the fundamental interests of the people. Under these circumstances, the only kind of peace accord which would be accepted by the Fujimori regime — and more generally by the ruling classes in Peru and their imperialist masters — is an agreement to end the war on a

basis that could not benefit but would harm the revolutionary process in Peru. Therefore, a proposal for peace accords to end the war could only lead to opportunism and must be combated." (p. 15)

On the same page that it refers to itself as the "emerging political centre of the international communist movement," the RIM says, "those who have been confused by the right opportunist line or stumbled off the revolutionary path should repudiate this line, oppose and counter the damage being caused by this line and its adherents, and retake the revolutionary road." (p. 17) Therein lies the essence of the problem of the *World to Win* stand. We take the stand that of course there is a two-line struggle at all times in the party, but in the instances that the RCP-USA is pointing to in this document, what we see is not right opportunism but counterrevolution. Furthermore, those conciliating with these counterrevolutionary forces while maintaining the appearance of a different line also lose their credibility as Maoists. Unlike the RIM, we do not suggest to the PCP-CC to conciliate with these counter-revolutionaries and police to the extent of keeping them in the party. We find it unlikely that the PCP could have kept such people in the

party and maintained its progress with the armed struggle and it also seems likely to MIM that whatever discussions were about the "peace accords" were done years ago, at least in relation to this type of most fundamental question in which a party such as the PCP would have achieved unity very quickly.

The statement "it was important that the masses, and especially some of the middle strata, realize that Mao had gone to great efforts to reach a reasonable accord with Chiang" (p. 25) is correct. Those who deny this aspect of the peace sentiments of the masses are metaphysicians. However, it is a different question when it comes to the party and what is permissible for a party member to believe, and this is the crux of the problem with the RIM line on the People's War in Peru.

MIM never saw one of the documents released on pages 64 and 65 before. In the "Outline for a Basic Document," we see a clear call for counterrevolution. "Ending the people's war represents neither surrender nor abandoning the revolution, but rather continuing the struggle under new conditions." In addition, the document continues,

"II. Basic Approach

"1. Sign a peace agreement whose application would lead to the ending of the war the country is experiencing.

"2. End the people's war begun 17 May 1980, in all its four forms of guerrilla actions. Disband the People's Guerrilla Army, destroying its arms and combat material; likewise, dissolve the People's Committees and the revolutionary base areas of the People's New Democratic Republic."

Going back as far as statements released in 1994, MIM said it would never be permissible to advocate laying down arms. "Outline for a Basic Document" does exactly that, but the RIM calls it "written in the latter part of 1993 by leaders of the Right Opportunist Line." (p. 64)

Whatever right opportunism there might be in the PCP pales in comparison with this counterrevolutionary document. Without MIM ruling on questions unique to Peru or determining Peru's Guiding Thought, MIM can clearly say that the universal aspects of Maoism in the oppressed, semi-feudal countries include never laying down arms except for partial and limited symbolic gestures, not as across-the-board action or strategy. The conditions do not matter. There is nothing about Maoism to integrate with the conditions on that question. The document cannot be called Maoist, no matter what conditions in Peru might be.

Hence, even though MIM does not know the conditions or pretend to have a Guiding Thought for Peru, MIM knows that that document went too far. Its signers can not be members of the PCP. The whole affair of pretending otherwise is a montage of the police and its press lackeys.

RIM talks about "stumbling," but this goes further than that. This kind of "stumbling" removes one from the party. Perhaps these people can take up work in the new democratic forces. Others may prove themselves in the people's army, but they cannot be immediately trusted. A well-publicized example of this is in the Philippines with the case of General Jarque whose

story is told in Maoist Sojourner, May 1996. If someone clamors to join the proletarian-led forces that is good, and we must let them, but in the case of someone like Jarque with a history of bloodshed on his hands, caution and step-by-step struggle is necessary. Furthermore, those saying they want a "peace accord" and would conciliate with the signers of "Outline for a Basic Document" to the extent of keeping those signers in the party — such conciliators should also be thrown out of the party. The core of the party must be with those who recognize the "Outline for a Basic Document" as counterrevolutionary. Abroad, this means the line of Luis Arce Borja has been vindicated by the publication of *A World to Win*.

On the INTERNET, those defending the RIM line have reminded MIM of its own internal purge of the anarchist wind. They speak of "not casting out" people, blather about going on the offensive through outreach with everyone vaguely included in the Maoist forces and emphasize how their approach is "practice." Those unwilling to purge the party go against what Lenin taught on how purges strengthen the party. This is to leave aside the whole issue of police infiltrators, which is also connected up with a reluctance to purge and a happy-go-lucky approach to unity.

Other defenders of the RIM are a case in point of how difficult it is to break with the RCP-USA's revisionism without the MIM line on the imperialist countries. Already some ex-RCP USA circles are crawling back to the RCP-USA line as the struggle intensifies.

In light of these documents in *A World to Win*, and also other press reports about RIM-sanctioned people attacking the PCP-CC as "totalitarian," MIM sees that this struggle has gone beyond the confines of what is acceptable within the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. We do not seek to present a Guiding Thought for Peru from here in the imperialist countries. We will not march through Peru's conditions the way *A World to Win* did as if we should form the Guiding Thought from here — though it is certain that the blow to the leadership and the lack of inter-imperialist war will make the People's War more protracted than would otherwise be the case.

We recognize instead of trying to form the Guiding Thought, we abroad should follow Luis Arce Borja in his approach. He has warned against RIM centrism and conciliation with counterrevolution and police plots. Meanwhile, he has rebuffed the obviously non-Maoist attacks on the PCP including the recent police plot activities of the New Flag aimed at MIM and Luis Arce Borja himself, and Luis Arce Borja has earned MIM's trust in these matters including detailed questions that MIM cannot know much about. Meanwhile, the RIM belies its claim to be fighting the "right opportunist line" by distributing leaflets against Luis Arce Borja internationally. If one is conducting a struggle against the "right opportunist line" for the peace accords, one does not proceed against those like Luis Arce Borja who have steadfastly opposed them. Such is the tell-tale sign of the center-right: wave the red flag to attract

adherents, but attack the left and base oneself in the support from the right. In such a way it is possible to confuse the left momentarily, strike down its forces and achieve counter-revolution, whether subjectively intended or not. This is the outcome we must now struggle to avoid.

— Adopted unanimously 1996 MIM Congress

MIM changes Internet Address

Readers of the Marxism List, MIM Notes or Maoist Sojourner will know that MIM and others have been exposing a police plot to disrupt the work of the Communist Party of Peru (PCP, "Sendero Luminoso" in the bourgeois press), its supporters, and its potential supporters. The operation goes under various names, including "MPP-USA (Peru People's Movement, USA)," "The New Flag/La Nueva Bandera," "Luis Quispe" and "Marcelina Ccorimanya."

Because of Agent Quispe's association with NY Transfer, including a Web site fraudulently called "The People's War in Peru," and an e-mail account on that server, MIM's past endorsements of NY Transfer as a resource for the oppressed objectively lent legitimacy to Agent Quispe and his phony 'MPP-USA.' MIM will no longer lend legitimacy to Agent Quispe in this way. You can now reach MIM at: mim@mim.org

Change your bookmarks! Our web site has moved to:

<http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM>

If you would like more information about the Quispe plot and MIM's documented exposure, send us email to receive one article and information about how to get more. Or just subscribe to Maoist Sojourner from MIM Distributors, PO Box 3576, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3576, \$12 for 12 issues, and ask for the June, 1996 issue.

MIM leaves NY Transfer News Collective

reprinted from MIM Notes 127

In early November MIM informed the NY Transfer News Collective, with whom we have worked for several years, that we would no longer maintain our e-mail accounts or World Wide Web site on the collective's system. We also sent a public statement (printed on page 1 of MIM Notes 126) explaining that our decision was rooted in the fact that Agent "Luis Quispe" of the "MPP-USA" has an e-mail account and a Web site with NY Transfer. We understood that our mutual association with NY Transfer was lending legitimacy to a police plot.

Our decision followed months of struggle with NY Transfer, during which we sent evidence of Quispe's counter-revolutionary activities (as we have printed in Maoist Sojourner and on the Internet's Marxism List) and argued that a self-identified progressive political resource like NY Transfer should not accommodate Quispe by allowing him to operate from its server.

Our decision to part company came when NY Transfer made it clear to us that it did not want to choose sides in what NY Transfer perceived as an international split among Peruvian exiles. Despite NY Transfer's good work over the years, Maoists consider it a form of liberalism to ignore genuine political principles in the name of conciliation with "old friends."

NY Transfer responded to our decision by explaining that it believes "MIM and many other activists in this ideological firefight have been hoodwinked by a COINTELPRO-style disinformation campaign designed to do exactly what it has accomplished: throw the anti-Fujimori forces into disarray, sow dissension and mistrust, and disrupt the work of Peruvian revolutionaries."

Here, we reprint NY Transfer's response to our notice that we were leaving; our response to that letter follows.

Dear MIM:

We're sorry to learn of your decision to move your electronic operation elsewhere.

Frankly, we think your position that our nonsectarian access policy constitutes endorsement of any of NY Transfer's member groups is absurd — as you well know, our slogan is "NY Transfer Follows NO Party Line."

We do wonder how you can reconcile [your position] with your decision to move to etext [www.etext.org], with its very eclectic membership of groups. Of course, etext's services are free, we believe. Perhaps it's okay in your value system to share access on the same server with political enemies as long as you don't pay for it.

In any case, we'll be very sorry to see you go. Your use of the Internet has been a model for many other activists (including Quispe and the New Flag — a group we originally welcomed to NY Transfer partly because of your referral and recommendation). We're disappointed that your political differences with this group have led you to move to another server, but we certainly understand your desire to cease any activity that you consider to be "liberalism." We are also sure you understand our position: to deny access to any other group because MIM disapproves of them would be completely contrary to our nonsectarian policy.

Because of our long-standing relationship with MIM we did not dismiss lightly your allegations about Quispe and the New Flag, but investigated them seriously, both here and abroad. We were unable to find any evidence that supports your charges. On the contrary, we found the actions and accusations of some people (not MIM) who joined in the anti-quispe campaign to be unethical, disreputable and thoroughly dishonest. We have reached our conclusions, and you are free to reject them.

But NY Transfer cannot ever allow

any one group, MIM included, to dictate who will be permitted access on our system. Such an expectation on your part is surprising and disappointing; it is also inappropriately authoritarian and completely unacceptable to us.

We were not aware that MIM considers itself a "Peruvian exile" organization. We have always thought of you as a homegrown American radical movement. But regardless, far from choosing a "middle ground" between two groups, our policy has remained the same for years, and is quite uncompromising: we will not censor our members, restrict their access because of their political views, or engage in their sectarian squabbles, under any circumstances!

Be assured that now and in the future, we will not hesitate to deal promptly with any threat if we believe a member of NY Transfer is a police agent, a provocateur, or attempting to do harm to our system or our Collective. We are truly sorry you are leaving NY Transfer and we hope you enjoy the same care, attention, and excellence of service on etext that we have always tried to provide at NY Transfer. Best of luck to you.

— System Administrators
NY Transfer News Collective/
Blythe Systems

MIM responds: Thank you for your quick reply. We would like to clear up a few misconceptions. First, we did not suggest that you were endorsing Quispe/New Flag. We do indeed understand your policy of not endorsing or following any party line. As we have repeatedly explained, we do not view New Flag as a "party line," but, based on actions towards Calero, etc., a cop. We have this basic disagreement over your position that you are viewing as nonsectarian and we are viewing as accommodating cops. Notice we have never complained about people on the system because of political line. We understand that incorrect political lines can be defeated with the correct line. So it is not about our "disapproval" of Quispe, or differences of political line. We understand that cops cause very real harm to

the oppressed and to revolutionaries.

(By the way, MIM has never claimed to be a Peruvian exile organization. We were simply responding to an earlier argument you had made to us — that you saw this struggle internationally as a struggle between factions in the Peruvian exile community, and that you did not want to get involved in choosing sides. We were just reiterating that Quispe does not represent a legitimate "side" in any such struggle.)

As for our decision to move the Web site to the free etext server, that was not a financially motivated decision. We have been advertising NY Transfer as a resource for the oppressed for years, and you yourselves claim to be a movement resource. We cannot reconcile that with your inaction regarding Quispe. The etext Web server, on the other hand, makes no such political claims, nor will we advertise it as such.

MIM does not see its actions as authoritarian, we did not attempt to coerce anybody into anything, we used evidence to try to persuade you. As you say, you looked into it and rejected it. That meant, for us, that we had to leave NY Transfer. We fail to see the authoritarianism in this action.

In struggle,
MIM

MIM wins first Battle against 'MPP-USA' Police plot

May 28, 1996

As we [MIM Notes -ed.] go to press, MIM has foiled a police plot conducted in the leadership of the "MPP-USA," which stands for Popular Movement of Peru, USA branch. In May, the misleaders of the "MPP-USA" made the public mistake on the INTERNET of calling for the overthrow of Luis Arce Borja, the editor of El Diario

International and a genuine leader in the People's War in Peru, most known for interviewing comrade Gonzalo at length in a famous PCP document that MIM has been distributing for some years now.

A year ago, MIM sent a message to the PCP (Peruvian Communist Party or "Sendero Luminoso") through possibly defective channels to tell it that at least one of the leaders of the "MPP-USA" was a cop and that another one or two people had serious problems of honesty. MIM stopped reprinting New Flag articles in Maoist Sojourner and adopted a policy of total silence on the New Flag. We waited for a PCP reply in the meantime. Many honest people criticized MIM for adopting silence on the New Flag in the year from May, 1995 to May, 1996.

MIM does not know how the PCP handled what MIM is trying to tell it, but a centrist Peruvian sojourner did get MIM's message without taking it seriously. Finally, on May 1st, 1996, various centrist and wavering elements working with the infiltrator leader of the "MPP-USA" received some information that started them wondering. Previously, they had all been working together on the "Marxism List" to set up a pole of support for the People's War in Peru — all in fact following Quispe's lead in denouncing MIM.

On that day, a person in Malmoe, Sweden noticed that someone working for the revisionist Co-RIM (Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement) was distributing leaflets against Luis Arce Borja. This started a chain of events which caused the "MPP-USA" leaders going by the name of "Luis Quispe" to attack various wavering, centrist and honest proletarian elements in the movement to support the People's War in Peru.

On May 3, "Luis Quispe" started a provocation by asking if someone in his own camp was a "a plant of the intelligence services"? The suddenness of this change of opinion shows in that weeks earlier, Quispe was trying to defend the same person in the camp to MIM. On

May 10th, a bogus Maoist in Detroit spoke for the New Flag against Luis Arce Borja, and said to Luis Arce Borja that he should just learn to live with the idea that no one will supposedly support his Worldwide Mobilization Call (WMC) to support the People's War in Peru.

Yet, on May 11, a New Flag supporter rose to call for self-criticism from "Luis Quispe." Another New Flag supporter started referring to the New Flag as "lumpen"-led. At that time, some information about the financial support for the New Flag leader from pro-Cuban revisionists arose.

As of May 12, the centrist leader of the camp opposing New Flag leaders admitted he had only convinced two people of the error of their ways. At that time, he made a point of saying he was unwilling to "cry wolf" of cops.

However, on May 15, rhetoric heated up and lines started to harden. Another Maoist sympathizer lined up with Quispe, but so did a die-hard Trotskyist fool who criticizes all alliances. (He is the type who should note his collaboration with the bourgeoisie for having a bank account.) Quispe started becoming bolder, calling for the overthrow of Luis Arce Borja. Later he called Luis Arce Borja a "traitor" and said the "proof" was that Luis Arce Borja never distributed PCP documents from 1994 to 1996.

On May 28, MIM pointed out that Luis Arce Borja's job was never mainly to circulate PCP documents, and that was true in the years before 1994 as well. Quispe was simply trying to fool the newer supporters of the People's War who didn't know that Luis Arce Borja is a journalist first and foremost.

On May 22, we have a response from Quispe about MIM's stand, and from then on the battle-lines became increasingly clear. On the one hand is someone who called for the split of MPPs (ordered by Quispe not to support the WMC) and the overthrow of Luis Arce Borja for no new reasons of any political importance. On the other hand, we had the camp that recognized that Quispe was someone who had infiltrated the

movement after the arrest of Gonzalo, at a bad moment for the PCP. Quispe had gained credentials by doing translating work and editing of the New Flag. Now he was using them to gather information on a wide variety of organizations in imperialist North America, including Committees of Correspondence, CP-USA, SWP, PLP, WWP, RCP and MIM - while claiming to be buddy-buddy with all of them, unlike anything the real PCP would do.

It came to light that Quispe fabricated the positions of MIM for his own purposes, and created documents out of thin air for several people not in MIM, including CP-USA. For this kind of reason, MIM said it was important for the supporters of the People's War abroad to break with people like Quispe, whether they claimed to have PCP authorization or not. The PCP is not able to see everything that goes on abroad and so it's real supporters can't just sit back and watch

its supposed representatives do things they hide from the PCP back home. People in the camp to support the People's War in Peru started to realize that despite our fundamental political differences, having cops in our midst could only cloud everything we were arguing over and that we had to unite to throw cops out, and then thrash out our differences and maybe even split over real (as opposed to cop-instigated) issues. For this purpose, the centrist leader spoke of MIM as part of "revolutionary unity." To unite with people even in revisionist organizations, MIM distinguished between "cops wearing revisionist masks" and revisionists.

There are many, many small things we should learn to overlook in each other for the purposes of unity in this movement and others. When it comes to fabricating positions, fabricating documents, double-dealing for the purposes of setting groups trying to support the

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People's War against each other while claiming to be for both by word-of-mouth and for gathering intelligence – at that point we have to say, such a person is a fraud, not a representative of the PCP. Then we must find a way to let the PCP know the damage caused but also the tempering experience gained from such struggle.

As we go to press, MIM is happy to report that new converts have been won to the cause of smashing the police plot and only one person in the last week was remaining willing to put in a paragraph supporting Quispe. Some went so far as to say we should all ignore Quispe and continue talking about things like the national bourgeoisie, the labor aristocracy and theory issues generally, because "no one could possibly take him seriously."

There remains much work to be done to crush the police plot in the "MPP-USA" however. This "MPP-USA" leader arose from MIM circles and has done extensive work to infiltrate MIM circles, starting in 1993 by use of sugar-coated bullets. In fact, in 1994, Quispe named MIM a member of the "red fraction of RIM," which is the highest honor the PCP can bestow on MIM from the PCP's own political view. Fortunately, MIM never quite believed this character 100 percent, and discovered him as caught up in a host of un-Maoist activities, including denouncing MIM as "counterrevolutionary" when he needed to depending on what audience he was speaking to.

MIM's Party Congress approaches this summer. MIM is already looking for greetings, ideological challenges and suggestions for its program for the middle-classes – semi-proletarians and petty-bourgeoisie.

Now MIM would also like to hear from our comrades everywhere supporting the WMC and MIM's line. From our point of view, the main task of the WMC is to clear away some debris blocking the movement to support the People's War and also to be heard by the PCP-CC and then to follow the PCP-CC. Already the call has resulted in uncovering a major police plot lasting at least

three years which was confusing the world's movement to support the People's War in Peru. More details will be forthcoming in Maoist Sojourner.

If the only thing the WMC does is to mobilize the masses to carry through in clearing out the police plot and raise our voices in support of the PCP so that it knows it does have supporters abroad, despite the confusion cops have sown, then the WMC will have justified its existence as far as MIM is concerned. If we succeed in globally mobilizing people with the proletarian line of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism on questions of classes and international organization, the WMC may have a very bright future indeed.

(To reach the "Marxism List" with Netscape or some such browser, do an INTERNET search for "Marxism List." To reach it by gopher, go to jefferson.village.virginia.edu under public discussions lists under "spoons.")

Freedom Socialist comes Up empty on Feminism

**Freedom Socialist: The Voice of Revolutionary Feminism
Freedom Socialist Party
New Freeway Hall
5018 Ranier Ave
Seattle WA 98118
\$5/yr (4 issues)**

Review by RC343

Freedom Socialist (FS), which declares itself the "Voice or Revolutionary Feminism," has little to say in the way of feminism, much less revolutionary feminism. Judging from the content of this publication, this is yet another bourgeois, pseudo-feminist Trotskyist attempt at self-congratulatory reform. From its cries for a third electoral party to its praise of union strikes

in First World countries, FS is advocating a bigger piece of the pie for First World people at the expense of the Third World. FS fails in its politics because it is Trotskyist, and proud of it. It claims to advocate revolution, but FS works for legal economic reform, what Lenin called "trade union politics."

As most Trotskyists do, FS fails to recognize that the white working class is bought off, and hence, materially opposed to revolution.(8) FS calls for the oppressed national proletariat to join in solidarity with the white labor aristocracy, which is chauvinist and opposed to the interests of the oppressed nations. FS recognizes that capitalism profits by exploiting oppressed nations (FS uses the unscientific term "race"), but it doesn't realize that the white working class has a material interest in seeing this oppression continue. The chauvinism of the white working class is blatantly revealed in its reaction to NAFTA, its whole-hearted support of Proposition 187 in California, the acquittal of the murderers of Vincent Chin and support for further militarization of the U.S.-Mexican border, to name a few examples.

So FS's call for "revolutionary integration" (viz. reactionary nationalism) as a solution to "racism," and its opposition to "cultural nationalism" are absurd in the face of white worker hostility and self-interest.(1) The white working class at this time is allied with imperialism. To ask the First Nations, Black, Latino, and Asian to unite with white labor, to hope that somehow their interests will coalesce, is wishful thinking at best. Oppressed nationalities don't need to be friends with their overseers, they need to overthrow them. This integrationism diverts much needed energy from the struggle against capitalism.

If by the term "cultural nationalism" FS meant the ideology of promoting cultural pride as the sole means of liberation, MIM would concur with its critique on this point. Oppressed nationalities are not only oppressed culturally, but politically and economically as well. Political and economic oppression must be in the

foreground of any meaningful discussion of or struggle against national oppression. However, FS argues principally that "cultural nationalism" is divisive to the working class movement. It seems that in focusing on this aspect, FS means all-nationalism — especially revolutionary nationalism like that of the Black Panther Party — is divisive. FS's use of "cultural nationalism" to refer to all nationalism is a condescending generalization. By dismissing all nationalism as cultural in origin, FS misses the point. FS's implication that the First Nations, Blacks, Latinos, and Asians differ from whites only culturally willfully ignores the material basis of national oppression. Revolutionary nationalism is essential because exploitation and oppression occur along nation, class and gender lines. By ignoring national oppression, FS actually works against the needs of oppressed nations in whose interests it claims to work.

Along with advocating integration, FS supports unionizing, taking special delight when oppressed nationalities and wimmin join unions — as if the presence of a few individuals from oppressed groups legitimizes the white chauvinism of American unions. American unions have nothing to do with thoroughgoing social change. They are predominantly white. Most unions represent the interests of the First World white labor aristocracy, not the Third World proletariat. These unions petition the system for a bigger piece of the imperialist pie, but support the system of imperialism overall. The benefits accrued by striking must come from somewhere; indeed, those benefits are the result of superexploitation of the international proletariat. White workers support imperialism because it ensures their benefits.(7) By cheerleading for Amerikan unions, FS is defending imperialism.

Although FS recognizes that equality cannot be won "within the status quo ... it will require an all encompassing restructuring of society," it draws an irrelevant conclusion when it advocates reforms within the system.(2) Its excitement over forming a labor party is but

one example of this fallacy in reasoning. It claims to want "global solidarity" and a higher standard of living for "workers worldwide," but by working within the imperialist system, FS legitimizes it and helps prop it up.(3) Even while Amerikan unions maintain their own high standard of living by keeping the living standards of "workers worldwide" below subsistence levels, FS hopes that it can achieve socialism and "total equality" through legislation and reform.(4) This is a bourgeois liberal pipe-dream for the complacent. To truly achieve socialism and equality, we must work for the annihilation of capitalism guided by a theory for the proletariat, i.e. Maoism.

On a positive note, FS supports gay rights, which is good. Unfortunately, FS also supports gays' supposed right to be in the military. This is the same military which rapes, tortures, and murders "workers worldwide" on a daily basis, which upholds fascist puppet regimes in the Third World that suffocate millions in their capitalist chokehold. Why should gays supply the butchering capitalist pigs with more (expendable) murdering machines? Why should gays support imperialism? For gays to truly liberate themselves, they must destroy the patriarchy and capitalism, and end the oppression of groups over groups.

As little as FS has to say directly about wimmin, it celebrates their partici-

ipation in trade union politics with all the accompanying contradictions outlined above. FS criticizes the Spartacist League for discrediting the idea of date rape, but does not analyze the power inequality in all romantic/sexual relationships which would lead them to conclude that all sex is rape. FS sarcastically announces that the Spartacists reject date rape because "feminism, you see, is inherently bourgeois."(5) However, FS doesn't recognize that First World feminism (pseudo-feminism) is bourgeois [and patriarchal -ed.]. "Feminism" in Amerika celebrates white middle-class values, and ignores the greater oppression of Third World proletarian women. An anti-patriarchal, anti-imperialist revolution would ultimately benefit all people, as it will be the first step in building a society free of reactionary patriarchal oppression and violence. First World wimmin genuinely interested in seeing an end to the patriarchy should work with RAIL and MIM to bring about socialism and eventually communism.

Overall, Freedom Socialist lacks a consistent materialist analysis of class, nation, and gender conditions, which severely weakens its political position and argument. In order to be an effective political force, the vanguard party must be "guided by an advanced theory": Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.(6) From the many contradictions, muddled think-

Why is MIM Underground?

Read *Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement*, by Ward Churchill & Jim Vander Wall. This history of the birth of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and a detailed account of the FBI's work infiltrating and splitting and wrecking revolutionary organizations, including murders and frame-ups, helps answer the question. The book demonstrates the extent of the threat to anti-imperialist movements, and the long-term futility of the FBI's work.

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PO Box 3576, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3576.

ing, and reformist-minded preening of FS, it is clear that FS is not the revolutionary vanguard for the masses. People wanting to work for substantial change instead of revisionist fantasies should work with real revolutionaries and join RAIL to expose the atrocities perpetrated by capitalism.

Notes:

1. The Freedom Socialist April-June 1996, p. 3.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
5. FS, July-September 1995, p. 6.
6. V.I. Lenin, *What is to be done?* (New York: International Publishers, 1929), p. 28.
7. MIM Theory 1: A White Proletariat? (\$3) and J. Sakai, *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat* (\$10). Both available from MIM.
8. MIM Theory 1 and MIM Theory 10, "Coming to Grips with the Labor Aristocracy."

Postmodernism: Idealism Again

The Truth about the Truth: De-confusing and Re-constructing the Postmodern World
Walter Truett Anderson, ed.
(New York: Putnam, 1995)

Review by a MIM Comrade

Billy Joel says, "It's still rock-n-roll to me" in reference to the imperative of music promoters to come up with advertising gimmicks and revolutions to repackage "new music" periodically. There is "new wave," "punk," and "grunge" all to refer to various trends in the same basic kind of music.

Academia in the capitalist world is not removed from the profit imperative. Now we have a "postmodern" movement pretending to be a revolution much more profound than hard-core is as a break from rock music. What the "postmodernists" package is the same old idealism, particularly subjectivism and nihilism.

The impetus for postmodernism divides into a progressive aspect and a reactionary aspect. On the one hand, the progressive aspect is seen in English departments and other academic units that teach people the appreciation of literature. With the abolition of slavery, and the national liberation struggles around the world, imperialist country intellectuals started to take notice of other cultures. As our thousands of years of human slavery prove, it is an unfortunate truth that cultures are only taken seriously by their oppressors after their guns are taken seriously.

In this sense, the postmodernist movement is simply the realization by Western intellectuals that they have been teaching exclusion and ethnic chauvinism for hundreds of years in English, literature, art criticism and political ideology classes. Not far behind is the nagging discomfort that there was nothing really scientific in the way wimmin writers have been ignored all this time by Establishment colleges.

In a word, the dominant intellectual is now embarrassed by his or her past. In reaction to that embarrassment, there is now a movement called postmodernism. The reasoning goes: In the past, these intellectuals all thought they were teaching "classics" good for all times and cultures with a scientific or rationalist underpinning for that reasoning. But now they realize that is false and hence they discard all of science. We Marxists believe this is throwing the (scientific) baby out with the (oppressor) bath water.

The other impetus to postmodernism aside from the confrontation with a neo-colonial world is the decadence of scientific endeavor in the imperialist countries. Here too a limited understanding of science and the realization of its uses to oppress has embarrassed formerly scientific intellectuals. However, while we cannot object very much to the advance of postmodernism in academic classes concerning cultural appreciation, on the whole it is reactionary to claim that there is no science just because for hundreds of years Western intellectuals stunted its

growth by allying with the ruling class to oppress the colonized and wimmin.

By Seinar Kvale, the first essay of this book sets forward all the central philosophical tenets of postmodernism.

"Postmodern thought is characterized by a loss of belief in an objective world and an incredulity towards meta-narratives of legitimation. With a delegitimation of global systems of thought, there is no foundation to secure a universal and objective reality. There is today a growing public acknowledgment that 'Reality isn't what it used to be.' In philosophy there is a departure from the belief in one true reality - subjectively copied in our heads by perception or objectively represented in scientific models" (p. 19).

The galling thing about this trend of thought is that it is simply a rehash of old ideas already demolished by Lenin in his book *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. There is nothing at all new about believing that there is no common underlying universal truth and that in fact everything is subjective.

Although Kvale does not believe in progress the way Hegel did, Kvale does adopt the same approach to reality: "All facts embody theory" (p. 19).

Like most subjectivists, Kvale leaves us wondering why he bothers writing a book at all to communicate with the public. "There exists no standard method for measuring and comparing knowledge within different language games and paradigms; they are incommensurable. A postmodern world is characterized by a continual change of perspectives, with no underlying common frame of reference, but rather a manifold of changing horizons" (p. 21).

In this decadent stage of imperialism, intellectuals have been found out for what they are. They stand indicted by the failure of their objectivity in class, national and gender terms. Some intellectuals realize that, but they mistake their temporary reality in which imperialism exerts its regressive force for a methodological truth about the truth.

"Rock music videos capture a world of continually changing perspectives and overlapping contexts" (p. 21). It is not just that Kvale is reflecting this fact about Western rock videos. He is also glorifying the MTV video as a condemnation of science as it is taught. In contrast, we believe that the social phenomena known as "attention deficit disorder" and Ritalin are a temporary and far from universal aspect specific only to late imperialism and perhaps other empires in decline.

Profit-seeking and national chauvinism have been justified in the name of science in the West for so long that some have equated science itself with a stultifying effect on the brain. This causes the postmodernists to attack the belief that science applies to the study of society as well, a belief known as positivism. For example, Walter Truett Anderson is so good as to separate science and Western heritage clung to by conservatives, but he is also correct that especially in academia the science-believers and conservative traditionalists tend to stick together (p. 113). We cannot deny this, but at the same time we should seek to win over the scientists on the importance of class, gender and national liberation and ultimately we must seize power to apportion resources to solving the scientific problems associated with class, national and gender oppression.

We Maoists take a position between, on the one hand, the majority of positivists who deny that science production is political and on the other hand the postmodernists who think there is no science at all. During the Cultural Revolution, Mao Zedong, Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao blazed the road forward between a naive belief in whatever a man in white coat in a laboratory says and having no science at all. Science is political; science exists.

In a society like the united states, the great majority of people have their food, shelter and clothing needs met, it is not surprising for some intellectuals to believe that there is nothing left for science to accomplish and that in fact science does not matter anymore. However,

if someone like Christopher Jencks wants to criticize science, he should try to tell starving peasants short of food that it doesn't matter how they plant their seeds, plow their soil, fire a gun at occupier troops or organize a party for maximal effect. Even if such subjects are not taught in the bourgeoisie's universities, they are nonetheless matters of the application of science, as well as matters of life and death.

For that matter Walter Truett Anderson should notice the real-life prisoners in this prison state. According to him, "now we see that the strongest chains are symbolic ones, mind-forged manacles" (p. 243). Presumably he with a strong postmodern mind will still be quite free if he winds up in maximum security.

In the nihilist view everyone might as well use heroin. Such a view becomes common when society is not moving forward of its own steam and instead demonstrates militarism and other wasteful and regressive behaviors that seem worthy of total destruction. Again though, we believe that the nihilist view of the pointlessness and worthlessness of life is limited and narrowly focused on what has happened in this century under imperialism. It has nothing to say about the possibilities of reorganizing or life after reorganizing society.

Some of these intellectuals of postmodernism are clearly 1960s burnouts. "In this period no social or political 'project' is worthy of commitment. Ahead lies overpopulation, genocide, atomic destruction, the apocalypse, environmental devastation, the explosion of the sun and the end of the solar system in 4.5 billion years, the death of the universe through entropy" (p. 108).

Those postmodernists with a more "affirmative" view, according to Pauline Marie Rosenau, are into "New Age religion and New Wave life-styles" and tend to be "non-dogmatic" and "non-ideological" (p. 108). These people failed in the 1960s, and they retreat into their inner spiritual selves, albeit in a non-traditional way.

One of the "affirmatives" in the col-

lection is an essay by Bell Hooks, which is its own headache. According to Bell Hooks, it's not that the Euro-American nation is sucking in superprofits or sitting on someone else's land. No, according to Bell Hooks, now the Western intellectuals are stealing their identity with attacks on identity politics. "Yeah, it's easy to give up identity, when you got one" (p. 121). According to Hooks the postmodernists are not subjective enough, so her essay is outdoing the postmodernists in their own game. In the essay, she ends with all the same themes of diversity.

Another affirmative is Maureen O'Hara, who revels in "post-structuralist feminism." She knocks essentialist feminism correctly in many regards, but she ends up with a call for post-structuralist feminist therapy to replace essentialist feminist therapy for depression (p. 154). We at MIM prefer structuralism to post-structuralism. O'Hara gives us an example why: For her, "construction" is an individual activity and the individual can shape their own society and meaning as if there were no ruling class.

It is fitting to end this review with some quotes of relativism in postmodernism. "The most important human activities can barely be measured, much less predicted and controlled. Rather, the post-modern scientist strives to identify, describe and understand these activities as deeply and as thoroughly as possible. 'Truth' is a matter of perspective, and perspectives are a byproduct of social interchange or 'discourse'" (p. 163). Such is the clarion call of the petty-bourgeoisie - the settler of American frontier history - denying that there are classes "controlling me!" and claiming that the individual can make it alone as if this was already a classless society. Therefore, according to this frontier-settler view, science cannot be true, because if there were a science of society, it would be possible to use it for control and that's impossible since we have already assumed it is impossible.

Then there is also the historian Arthur Schlesinger, who said: "It is this belief in absolutes, I would hazard, that is the

great enemy today of the life of the mind. This may seem a rash proposition. The fashion of the time is to denounce relativism as the root of all evil. But history suggests that the damage done to humanity by the relativist is far less than the damage done by the absolutist" (p. 225). According to Schlesinger, Christian preachers wrote almost one half of the defenses of slavery. A book he cites includes a list of 275 ministers who thought slavery was divine (p.226).

It is true that the class of slave-owners thought they were pious and they had widespread support amongst whites. This to MIM does not prove the value of relativism. It is by righteous violence that slavery is destroyed. Owners and preachers were not merely talked out of it. Relativist prattle only delayed the inevitable. And yes, we can righteously say that abolition of chattel slavery in the united states was progress - contrary to the postmodernists.

Dengist Baraka Strikes again

Unity And Struggle
Box 1313
Newark NJ 07101
\$10/year

Unity and Struggle is the new organization of Dengist Amiri Baraka. The April 1996 issue MIM reviewed contains articles about the Black NIA Force and American Communist Union joining U&S, the Million Man March, New Jersey Gov. Whitman's assault on the poor, coverage of the repression of Rutgers University activists, the sell-out leadership of the AFL-CIO president, and a defense of Stalin. There are also articles by the cop-run "MPP-USA," although we read more recently on the Internet that Unity and Struggle has broken with the MPP. We also see many ads for more theoretical books and pamphlets. MIM is ordering U&S's materials on Stalin and on the Black Nation to

review as well as the theoretical statement, "Revolutionaries Unite!" (MIM had not heard of the Black NIA Force or the American Communist Union before.)

MIM was sent this newspaper by a friend who described U&S as a "Maoist grouping." It is unclear to MIM without reviewing "Revolutionaries Unite!" and other theoretical materials whether U&S claims to uphold Mao or Marx. It could be that U&S merely considers themselves a mass organization of revolutionaries. MIM didn't see a mention of Marx or Mao in the issue that MIM read, but we did see a discussion of Engels' and Lenin's idea on the oppression of wimmin. If U&S is a mass organization, MIM would simply criticize some of their positions as wrong. If U&S claims Marx for their ideas, we would go farther and call U&S revisionist and much more dangerous than mass organizations with incorrect ideas. We await word from U&S on their foundations.

For the benefit of the friend who sent us the newspaper and those on the Internet who refer to U&S as Maoist, we will compare the theory and practice of U&S to the concrete application of Maoism in North America. MIM's four dividing line questions serve to make this distinction, as they are the minimum points of unity necessary to distinguish Maoism from revisionism here in the imperialist societies.

Question 1. Capitalist restoration in the USSR after the death of Stalin in 1953 and in China in 1976 after Mao's death and the arrest of the "Gang of Four." U&S correctly gives Khrushchev responsibility for capitalist restoration in the USSR. On China, they are much murkier:

"Revolutionaries the world over watch the Peoples Republic of China closely, because of its revolutionary history. But also because we all hold our breath watching the Deng Hsiao-ping-led Chinese government lurch and sway towards revisionism, for which Deng in the 60's was made to wear a dunce hat as "The Person In Power

Following the Capitalist Road."

"Deng is still following the capitalist road. China is riddled and beset with revisionist premises and programs, including deep economic relationships with the same international imperialism that helped overthrow the corrupt social fascist USSR."

Previously, Amiri Baraka and his League of Revolutionary Struggle defended Dengist China as socialist (while maintaining that capitalism was restored in the USSR under Khrushchev). This being an unsustainable position especially with the passage of time, we now see a more muddled position.

Since our founding in 1983, MIM has been clear that China under Deng was a capitalist country. Now, it is even more incorrect to refer to China as "lurching" towards capitalism, when China has already been there for 20 years.

It is progress that Baraka now sees Deng as a state capitalist, but it is incorrect to make this reference without explaining that only another revolution could restore the means of production to the control of the proletariat and peasantry. MIM would go much further than Baraka and label Deng a capitalist-roader long before Mao's death, and would support Mao's struggle against Deng Xiaoping during the Cultural Revolution.

In addition, blaming external causes for the restoration of capitalism in a socialist society is incorrect. Capitalist restoration is carried out by a new bourgeoisie that arises within the Communist Party itself. It is expected for Dengists to gut this essential part of Mao's theory of contradiction (internal contradictions are principal) in order to defend Deng's hold on power while upholding, at least superficially, the Chinese criticism of the USSR under Khrushchev.

2. MIM's second dividing line question holds that class struggle continues under socialism and defends the Cultural Revolution in China as the closest a society has ever gotten to communism. The Cultural Revolution was the closest to communism because it was initiated

out of scientific understanding of the roots of state capitalism and the need to struggle against the capitalist road during the socialist stage and to decentralize authority and increase the masses' political initiative over their society and their lives.

The Dengist theory — of which we can find no mention in this issue — holds that class struggle does not intensify under socialism. U&S talks repeatedly of "winning the advanced to communism" but without discussing the most important historical battles that have occurred on the way to communism, U&S is at worst misleading the people and at best shooting only for more state capitalism.

3. MIM holds that the white working class is a bought off labor aristocracy and not a revolutionary proletariat. The article about the AFL-CIO in U&S clearly upholds the rank and file of the AFL-CIO as oppressed proletarians, which is incorrect.

4. The U&S "Principles of Unity" contain the only mention of party-building in the paper. The entire reference, which is sometimes quoted from in other articles, is: "(D.) Build a Democratic Workers' Party (an independent mass party)." Nowhere in U&S do we see mention of Lenin or Mao and the necessity of a disciplined party to carry out the mass line and complete the circuit from practice to perceptual knowledge to rational knowledge and redirect that rational knowledge back into practice.

All four questions are necessary to determine Maoism and it's best path forward, and U&S strikes out all on four. Many U&S articles are progressive in their opposition to U.S. imperialism in the Third World and Amerikan/FBI war on the oppression nations. However, we wish that U&S would be clearer on whether they do or do not uphold Marx, Lenin or Mao so as not to confuse the masses on the difference between Marxism and revisionism.

Party building is vital to revolutionary organization; the bourgeoisie is well organized in the maintenance of imperialist society, and revolutionaries who take the cause of the international proletarian

seriously must work to build structures that can rival and eventually destroy the bourgeoisie's.

Maoists should join MIM, and supporters of Maoism should work with the Maoist Support Group and the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League (RAIL). While MIM has not yet done all the research on Unity and Struggle, we can already claim the theory and practice of MIM and RAIL to be superior.

National Center For Men

National Center for Men
ncmen@teleport.com
"Men Have Rights! Right?"
by James Pierce Whinston
What's the Point? September, 1996

reviewed by MIM

Betty Friedan has predicted that the next wave of advance for winnin could very well be led by men. Her scorn for a certain brand of feminism that should be called pseudo-feminism was one contributing reason for this prediction. Now there are men's rights organizations arising, not all of which flat out deny the advances of feminism. In fact, the National Center for Men has arisen in response to a detailed understanding of what it calls "victim-feminism" and what MIM calls pseudo-femi-

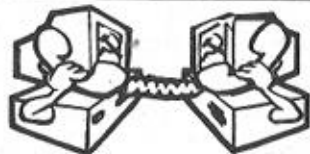
nism. The phenomenon of anti-pseudo-feminist men's rights groups is very dialectical. We can hope for progress in such struggle almost as much as we can hope for progress amongst lesbians who discover lesbian battering and rape.

To the extent that pseudo-feminism is a subjectivist identity politics, there is no point in engaging it, because the point is that "no one can know what it's like to be a womyn except a womyn." If that is so, then communication is impossible and certainly consent is impossible; hence there is nothing more stupid than heterosexual identity politics. The National Center for Men has recognized this and gone beyond it by trying to understand feminism and even speaking in feminist terms on many subjects.

The NCM steals some thunder traditionally reserved for pseudo-feminism. "Men currently die seven years earlier than women. ... A stunning 94 percent of workplace deaths are men ... let us not ignore the losses on the battlefield. About 1.1 million men have died ... Where was the feminist movement when men were being drafted for the slaughter in Vietnam? [Coming up with excuses why they had to "work on their own oppression" only and not work with radical organizations. —MIM] Why did the women's groups fail to rally around the men deemed expendable by our government? ... Men receive longer prison sentences. A man convicted of killing his wife receives an average of 17 years. A woman convicted of the same crime receives only six years. Women also

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<http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM>



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benefit from more plea bargains than men. And we never hear that mothers commit twice as much child abuse as fathers."(p. 13) Well it's almost true; people who read MIM Notes notice that we don't hold much water for biological distinctions in the imperialist countries; and we didn't pull any punches reporting on the child abuse rate by wimmin. While most wimmin (and men) in the imperialist countries are not gender oppressed, their children are.

Centrally, men's rights have been discussed in terms of abortion and custody battles. MIM does not really care for either the father's or the mother's claim to ownership of children (otherwise known as custody). We also believe the NCM is barking up the wrong tree on the abortion question. Instead, the question of men's rights in reproduction should be framed as a rape question while the right to "choice" as the middle-class and gender aristocracy calls it is deferred to wimmin.

MIM holds that it is the wimmin's "choice" as the lingo goes, but many

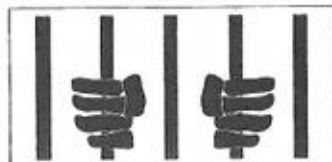
biological men are being raped by wimmin who lie about the conditions under which they are having sex. Men should learn to be more confrontational about what they expect about having kids. If they don't want kids then they should only have sex under the conditions of that understanding. Wimmin who promise to have abortions if they should by chance become pregnant and then proceed to have a child are an example of how all sex is rape, because they have voided the man's right to consent to sex under conditions of his choosing. Alternatively, if men want to have sex only if it will lead to children then they should voice that in advance of having sex. Those who voice no opinion and obtain no agreement prior to having sex surrender their rights to wimmin. Hence, men's rights with regard to reproduction must be exercised prior to the act of sexual intercourse.

The act of having a child or not alters people's futures. Even in the case of the man who runs from pregnancy - having to run away is still on account of an act

of power by wimmin over men. For now in bourgeois society all we can do is try to clarify terms of sexual consent more and more while we work to abolish the power of people over people entirely.

This is something one won't hear much except from MIM. That has to do with the stranglehold of pseudo-feminism propped up by the gender aristocracy on the discussion of feminism.

The men's rights movement should stop trying to be a reactionary front for right-to-lifers and anti-affirmative action bigots. Men who study feminism should learn to speak it in terms applicable for everyone while understanding that they are going to have to give up gender privilege, as are many imperialist country wimmin who hold gender privileges. Progress for wimmin is unfolding and unstoppable. Men should instead strive to hurry along the progress toward a more harmonious communist future. That includes calling out the pseudo-feminists on their contradictory, hypocritical mish-mash that only prolongs the agony of the patriarchy.



Support MIM's Prison Work



1. Struggle with, work with, finance and join MIM. The best way to help prisoners is to overthrow the system that profits from their oppression.
2. Finance MIM's prison work. Our biggest bill each month is postage. Most prison comrades have no way to pay for their literature. Send what you can afford. Stamps are as good as cash, more is better than less, anything is better than nothing.
3. Distribute *MIM Notes*, *Notas Rojas*, *Maoist Sojourner* and *MIM Theory*. Bring the voices of prisoners and their supporters to a wider audience. Contact MIM for distribution information. Send \$24 for a one-year subscription to MIM Notes.
4. Start or join a prison support group. MIM can help with advice and resources.
5. Fight censorship, beatings, torture and other fascist crimes. Work with political allies and let the enemies know you are watching. Sometimes political pressure brings local victories.
6. Stay in touch. Keep us informed of pro-prisoner work you do. Our readers will find it educational and inspirational.

MIM Notes publishes *Under Lock & Key* — news from prisons and prisoners — every issue, twice a month. Write: MIM Distributors, PO Box 29670, Los Angeles, CA 90029-0670.

What's Your Line?

FOURTH EDITION, OCTOBER 1996

MIM Theory prints this new edition of "What's Your Line?" knowing that, as always, it partial and may contain dated information. Don't complain, though – help out! Send updated information, reviews, addresses, and so on, to MIM for inclusion in future editions of this feature. The latest version of this document will be made available on MIM's World Wide Web sight (www.etext.org/Politics/MIM) –ed.

There is a lot of confusion about various divisions in the North American Left. From the Democratic Party leftward many people become lost in the maze of groups calling themselves communist or socialist. This pamphlet sorts them out according to general ideological orientation.

There are three sections which follow: (1) a general essay on the materialist method of choosing and ideology, (2) a glossary of terms and ideologies so that the labels such as Trotskyist or Stalinist can be meaningful, and (3) a list of left groups, their orientations, our comments on them, and a list of further readings on them. All suggested readings are available at the listed price (postpaid) from: MIM Distributors, PO Box 3576, Ann Arbor MI 48106-3576.

Choosing one ideology over Another: The materialist method

One of the common questions in the left movement is: What work is the most effective? MIM answers this via historical comparison. This is the process of looking at history to see which ideologies most successfully brought about revolution.

It is only by examining the practice of various ideologies over the long run of history that one can decide which ideology is the most effective in promoting end of oppression of oppressed groups by oppressor groups. In contrast, some people think it is fair to compare an abstract idea with an actual movement. That is not materialist method. Once one allows ideas to be compared to actual, historical movements one has no way of stopping all kinds of comparisons of ideas to actual practices. One can only compare practices with practices.

It is intellectuals and Trotskyists who compare practices to ideas to see how good or bad the practice is. With this comparison, for example, it is easy to shoot down the practice of Stalinism with the ideas of Trotskyism or the ideas of Madison and Jefferson or any idea for that matter. This method is not wrong because it is Trotskyist or Madisonian. Rather, Trotskyism is wrong because it uses this idealist method to criticize Stalinism instead of comparing Trotskyist practice with Stalinist practice.

In the same vein, it's not fair to compare Maoism with Jesus Christ in the abstract. Maybe Mao did not obey the 10 Commandments. But his followers have a better practice than

the Christians when it comes to ending oppression.

The only time it is correct to evaluate a practice in relationship to an idea is within that practice. Maoists can determine if there are better ways to be Maoists and tap existing potential by discussing ideas within Maoism. Even then, the only proof of the validity of a new Maoist idea is by comparing one Maoist practice with another Maoist practice.

Hence MIM uses the "where's the beef" taunt to everyone else. There are an infinity of logically consistent ideas ranging from professors' pet economic models to Hare Krishna. Only some ideas, however, have come with practices to end oppression. By choosing the ideology that goes with the most historically effective practice of social change to end oppression, one separates oneself from dogmatism and religion. Dogmatism may take the form of believing in reform no matter what; it may take the form of opposing dogma all the time, but in every case dogmatism and religion really amount to comparing apples and oranges, the apples being ideas and the oranges, practices. Dogmatists of all stripes conclude that oranges should be more like apples. In contrast, Marxist materialists just pick the best oranges.

MIM forms the following conclusions on the materialist method: 1. In debate, we must decide when it is appropriate to compare practices with each other. 2. Then we must decide on when it is appropriate to develop ideas within a practice.

—MC5

Glossary

Anarchists: Typically anarchists don't believe in a party or democratic centralism. Although they have a hatred for oppression and authority, the groups are principally a First World phenomenon and have never won a revolution. For more information, see MIM Theory 8: "The Anarchist Ideal and Communist Revolution" (\$6).

Social Democrats: Believe that socialism can be brought about through the ballot box and that the bourgeoisie will compromise with the working class. For more information, see the section on rightism in MIM Theory MIM Theory 5: "Line, Strategy, and Tactics" (\$6).

Dengists: Support the student butchering regime of China today and the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. Often these groups espouse mixed economy rhetoric.

Hoxhaists: These uphold Albanian socialism and the leader of the Albanian Communist Party, Enver Hoxha. Hoxha claimed unity with Mao until the latter's death, when Hoxha publicly criticized the Cultural Revolution.

Maoists: Follow the lead of Mao Zedong, chair of the Chinese Communist Party, who was the first communist leader to identify class struggle as continuing under socialism. Believe that capitalism was restored in the USSR after the death of Stalin and that capitalism was restored in China in 1976. See "What is MIM?" (\$2).

Nationalists: In the U.S. this generally refers to groups

struggling to liberate the Black, Native American or Latino nations within these borders. Nationalists may or may not be communists and either way they see the struggle of the nation as primary. See MIM Theory 7: "Revolutionary Nationalism" (\$6).

Trotskyists, Neo-Trotskyists, Crypto-Trotskyists: Trots support Leon Trotsky, Menshevik leader who opposed V.I. Lenin until the Soviet victory in 1917 Trotsky broke with Stalin over the feasibility of socialism in one country which Trotsky said was impossible. Orthodox Trots believe that the working classes of the advanced capitalist countries are the best vehicle for worldwide revolution and downplay the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggles of the oppressed nations.

Neo-Trots temper their support of Trotsky by dropping one or two of the most obviously reactionary Trotskyist tenets. Neo-Trots are often more supportive of national liberation struggles in principle than mainstream Trots. However, neo-Trots still uphold Trotsky's non-Marxist critique of the USSR under Stalin.

Crypto-Trots do not explicitly support Trotsky and often reject Trotskyism superficially in words. In practice, however, crypto-Trots put forward Trotskyist dogma in new packaging. Most significantly they suffer from the same great-nation chauvinism as the other Trots, over-emphasizing the role of the oppressor nation working classes and underemphasizing the role of the liberation struggles of the oppressed nations. For more information on Trotskyism, read *On Trotskyism*, by Kostas Mavrakis (\$15).

Group, self-description, comment, further info:



MAOISTS

Maoist Internationalist Movement
MIM Distributors
PO Box 3576
Ann Arbor MI 48106-3576

See description on Page 2 and Program in this issue.

CRYPTO-TROTSKYISTS

Revolutionary Communist Party

Revolutionary Worker
PO Box 3486
Chicago, IL 60654
\$40 per year; \$1 per issue

Self-Description: Uphold Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Support Communist Party of Peru. Bob Avakian, chairman.

Comments: The RCP continues to distribute Trotskyist anti-Stalin and anti-Mao diatribes in "Conquer the World" and "America In Decline," despite its claim to uphold Maoism. Leader of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (see below).

Further Info: See critique in "MIM's RCP Study Pack," \$15; Review of "America in Decline" in MIM Theory 4, \$6; "Unraveling the RCP's Political Economy" and other in MT5, \$6; Review of "Democracy: Can't We Do Better Than That?" in MT6, \$6; "The

RCP and the National Question" and "NAFTA Stand Clarifies RCP Differences with MIM" in MT7, \$6; "The RCP & Trotsky" in MT9, \$6; "Historical Revisionists, Too" in MT11, \$6.

Revolutionary Internationalist Movement
A World to Win
BCM
London WC1N 3XX
UK
\$5 per issue

Self-Description: Declaration signed by parties from several nations in 1984 upholds the Cultural Revolution Journal claims to end international confusion since Mao died in 1976.

Comments: The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) con-

tains both Maoist and pseudo-Maoist parties and is led by the crypto-Trotskyist RCP through the Committee of the RIM (CoRIM). MIM polemicized with the RIM as early as 1989, and has yet to receive a response. The CoRIM consistently makes the error of hegemonism calling the RIM the "emerging political center of the international communist movement despite Mao's rejection of the idea of an international center or party.

Further Info: "MIM's RCP Study Pack," \$15; Maoist Sojourner, April 1996, June 1996 \$1 each; "Reject the Outdated Idea of an Emerging International Center," MIM Notes 105 (MN105); "On Peru and the RIM" in MT12 (\$6).

MAOIST-INFLUENCED

Progressive Labor Party
Progressive Labor Party
2211 Church Ave. Rm 100
Brooklyn, NY 11226
(718) 282-9000

Self-Description: The Progressive Labor Party (PLP) "fight[s] directly for communism... The two-stage idea of first socialism, then communism, led back to capitalism... Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society."

Comments: Was official Maoist party in '60s. Was one-half of SDS. Supported Chinese ultraleft and broke with Maoism when Mao shut down Red Guards. Current incorrect, idealist positions on socialism and the role of the party exacerbated by the PLP's incorrect political economy and factual analysis.

Further Info: "Differences Between MIM and the Progressive Labor Party," MT11, \$6.

SOCIALIST POLITICS

Socialist Politics
2020 W. State St.
Milwaukee, WI 53233
\$10 per 4 issues

Self-Description: Independent journal of Marxist theory.

DENGISTS

League of Revolutionary Struggle

Self-Description: Sees China as socialist. Scattered theoretically: Upholds Three Worlds Theory. Supported Mondale and Democrats in 1984. Don't describe self as socialist in paper.

Comments: Hard-working opportunists. Worked in anti-draft group for two years without revealing identity. Members may be honest, but group ranks high on shit-list. LRS split into the Socialist Organizing Network (SON) and Unity. SON merged with FRSO to form FRSO/SON. Current respective status of SON and Unity unknown.

Freedom Road Socialist Organization
Freedom Socialist
PO Box 1884
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
\$15 per six issues (1 year)

Self-Description: Worked in Jackson campaign; sees RCP as ultraleft. Seeks unity on program on U.S. see USSR as enemy. *Comments:* Merge of Proletarian Unity League, Revolutionary Workers Headquarters & Organization for Revolutionary Unity-Eurocommunists, Hua Guofengists, Lin Biaoists. Works in Mass organizations. Not a Party. *Further Info:* MT12 (\$6).

HOXHAITES

Marxist-Leninist Study Group
PO Box 25716
Chicago, IL 60625

U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization
Voice of Revolution
PO Box 265; 310 Franklin St.
Boston, MA 02110
\$5 per year

Self-Description: Sells Hoxha books. Hails 9th Congress of Labor Party of

Albania [circa 1990].

U.S.-Albania Friendship Association
PO Box 429
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
(617) 522-7550

Liberation League
Liberation League
PO Box 13851
New Orleans, LA 70185

Self-Description: Does union and anti-white supremacist work.

REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISTS

African People's Socialist Party
Burning Spear Publications
PO Box 15085
St. Petersburg, FL 33733

Self-Description: Believes road to socialism is painted black and the white working class owes the black nation \$4.1 trillion in reparations. Not advancing to armed struggle at this point.

Comments: Takes historical experience of socialism lightly. Sectarian towards other groups.

Further Info: See review in MT8, \$6.

All-African People's Revolutionary Party
A-APRP
Box 3307
Washington DC 20009

Self-Description: Pan-Africanist, Nkrumahist, internationalist; upholds "scientific socialism."

Comments: Not Leninist and not very scientific. Believes in "unity of religion and revolution." Supports all sorts of revisionist and capitulationist groupings like the Communist Party of Cuba and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Further Info: Letter and response MN124 and MT12 (\$6).

Prairie Fire Organizing Committee
Breakthrough
PO Box 14422
San Francisco, CA 94114

\$6 per year (4 issues)

Also: John Brown Book Club

Self-Description: Supports liberation of internal Black colony

Comments: Armed Struggle now. Descendent of the Weather-Underground Organization (WUO. "The Weathermen")

Black Panther Newspaper Committee
The Black Panther
PO Box 519
Berkeley CA 94701-0519

Self-Description: Not a party. Carries on the "tradition of the Black Panther Party."

Comments: Eclectic. Sees Dengist China and Cuba as socialist and advocates Black capitalism; also publishes articles calling for "Black Maoist Revolution." Further Info: Review, MT8 (\$6).



TROTSKYISTS

Revolutionary Workers League
Fighting Worker
PO Box 1297
Detroit, MI 48231
\$3 per year

Self-Description: "Sympathizing Section of the International Trotskyist Committee for the political regeneration of the Fourth International."

Comments: Mainline Trots who believe in local union organizing, infiltrating mass organizations, and front groups.

Spark
2068 N. California
Chicago, IL 60647
\$4 per six months

Self-Description: Run revolutionary history series. Criticize Mao as a butcher.

Comments: Full of government agents, but tame tactics as Trots go.

Spartacist League
Workers Vanguard
PO Box 1377
New York, NY 10115
\$5 per year

Self-Description: Orthodox Trots. Defended Soviet economic organization and invasion of Afghanistan. Reject the concept of National Liberation for the Black nation and other oppressed nations. Believe in "multiracial" working class.

Comments: Subjective and objective agents of the state. Further Info: "Spartacist League..." MT1 (\$3); "Labor Aristocracy Continued," MT2/3 (\$5), "Private Property Next, Sparts?" MT9 (\$6); Review, MT11 (\$6).

Campaign for a Labor Party
Labor Militant
PO Box 39462
Chicago, Illinois 60639

Self-Description: For a British-style Labor party to "fight for the end of domination of big business over U.S. society through nationalization of the commanding heights of the economy."

Comments: Slightly left of the demorats.

Solidarity
Against the Current
Left Turn
7012 Michigan Ave.
Detroit, MI 48210

Self-Description: Founded in 1986, "unconditional defenders of Polish Solidarnosc," revolutionary socialists who are democratic, feminist, anti-racist and stand for "socialism from below."

Comments: Join mass organizations to recruit members. Not open about origins in Trotskyism or about socialist politics

when working in mass orgs. Possibly merging with Democratic Socialists of America and the Committees of Correspondence.

Further Info: "Open Letter to Solidarity" and "On the Origins of the Democratic Socialists of America," MT10, \$6.

International Socialist Organization
Socialist Worker
PO Box 16085
Chicago, IL 60616

Self-Description: Consider ex-USSR state-capitalist.

Comments: Leans heavily towards social-democracy.

Freedom Socialist Party
New Freeway Hall
5018 Ranier Ave
Seattle WA 98118
\$5/yr (4 issues)

Self-Description: "The voice of revolutionary feminism."

Comments: Class reductionist, reformist, and opportunist.

Further Info: Review, MT12 (\$6).

NEO-TROTSKYISTS

Socialist Workers Party
The Militant
410 West St.
New York, NY 10014
\$3 per 12 weeks

Self-Description: Support Castroite liberation groups. Publish Cuban speeches. Claims to prefer Lenin to Trotsky where the two disagree.

Comments: SWP practice is consistent with orthodox Trotskyism except where Trotskyist orthodoxy would prevent SWP from tailing a national struggle which SWP sees fit to support. Extreme opportunists. Competes with DSA and social democracy. Largest group on this list. Also publishes Young Socialist.

Workers World Party
Workers World

55 W. 17th Street
New York, NY 10010
<http://www.workers.org>

Comments: Different from SWP only in that WWP attempts to co-opt elements of Maoism into its Trotskyism, while SWP only attempts to co-opt support for non-communist national struggles. Extreme opportunists.

Further Info: "Workers World: Inconsistent Socialists or Consistent Opportunists?" MT4 (\$6); "More Accounting on the Labor Aristocracy," MT10 (\$6).

BACK TO LENINISM

Communist Voice Organization
Communist Voice
PO Box 13261
Harper Station
Detroit MI 48213-0261

Self-Description: "Anti-revisionist." Successor to Workers' Advocate, "the national voice of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA." The CVO opposed the dissolution of the MLP.

Comments: The MLP was a general Marxist-Leninist group. It was class reductionist and supported anything left of center. The CVO is the most theoretical-minded of the MLP splinters.

Further Info: "MLP Statement," MT6 (\$6).



ANARCHISTS

Fifth Estate
PO Box 02548
Detroit, MI 48202

Self-Description: Longtime anarchist tabloid. *Comments:* Strong on environmental issues. Wild, but little idea how

to build a revolution. *Further Info:* Review and "Fifth Estate on the Bolsheviks," MT8 (\$6).

Kick It Over
PO Box 5811
Station A
Toronto, ONT M5W 1P2

International Workers of the World
c/o International Workers Distribution
PO Box 2056
Ann Arbor, MI 48106
\$15.00 per year (monthly)

Self-Description: Represents anarcho-syndicalism in U.S.

Comments: Also called Wobblies.

Further Info: Review, MT8 (\$6); Letter and response, MT10 (\$6); On IWW's place in history: J. Sakai, Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat (\$9)

The Shadow
PO Box 20298
New York, NY 10009

Self-Description: Anarchist newspaper.

Comments: General anarchist news about New York. Excellent coverage of housing struggles. Sometimes anti-imperialist. Focoist. *Further Info:* Review, MT8 (\$6).

SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

Committees of Correspondence
11 John St. Rm 506
New York, NY 10038

Self-Description: Marxist and pluralist. "To advance the true interests of the nation and its people." "Organization of grassroots activism, committed to electoral and non-electoral" activity.

Comments: Split from the Communist Party, USA in 1992. Social Democratic and reformist. Possibly merging with the DSA and Solidarity.

Further Info: "On the Origins of the Democratic Socialists of America," MT10 (\$6).

Communist Party, USA
People's Weekly World
239 W 23rd Street
New York, NY 10011
\$15 per year

Self-Description: For "bill of rights socialism."

Comments: Was the vanguard party within U.S. borders until it sided with Soviet social-imperialism in the Sino-Soviet split. Degenerated as a result of its incorrect decision to base itself in the labor aristocracy and to orient itself around the labor aristocracy's demands. Currently tails Democrats and ignores (or slanders) the revolutions in Peru and the Philippines. A dinosaur.

Further Info: "Internal Anarchism in the International Communist Movement," MT8 (\$6); "Lessons from the Comintern," MT10 (\$6); "Struggle Rages in Imperialist Countries," MT11 (\$6).

Crossroads
PO Box 2809
Oakland, CA 94609

Self-Description: Published by the "Institute for Social and Economic Studies."

Comments: Led by Irwin Silber, anti-Maoist publisher of the Guardian.

Further Info: "Guardian bites the dust," MT4 (\$6).

Democratic Socialists of America
The Activist
15 Dutch St. #500
New York, NY 10038

Self-Description: Work within the Democratic Party. Oppose socialism.

Comments: Pro-imperialist. The furthest right of all groups in this list

Further Info: See the section on social democracy in MT5 (\$6), "On the Origins of the Democratic Socialists of America," MT10 (\$6).

Socialist Labor Party
The People

914 Industrial Ave.
Palo Alto CA 94303
\$4 per year
gopher://gopher.slp.org

Self-Description: Established 1891. Saw ex-USSR as bureaucratic-state despotism. Marxist DeLeonist.

Comments: That's Marxist-DeLeonist, not Marxist-Leninist.

Socialist Party
The Socialist
516 W 25th
New York, NY 10001
\$5 per year, free to prisoners

Self-Description: Puts feminism, anti-militarism, and the tradition of Eugene Debs right up front. Opposes

Democratic Party, but not the electoral strategy.

Further Info: "On the Origins of the Democratic Socialists of America," MT10 (\$6).

FRONT GROUPS

Movement for a Peoples Assembly
36 East 12th Street, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10003

Self-Description: "People's Assembly will be a mass gathering that will be a platform to launch mass struggle." United front against oppression.

Comments: Set up by Worker's World Party.

International Action Center,

National People's Campaign

Comments: Set up by Worker's World Party.

Refuse and Resist

Comments: Pushed by the Revolutionary Communist Party.

**National Women's Rights Organizing Committee (NWROC),
The Committee to Defend Affirmative Action By Any Means Necessary (BAMN)**

Comments: RWL Front Groups. Split and wreck sectarians.

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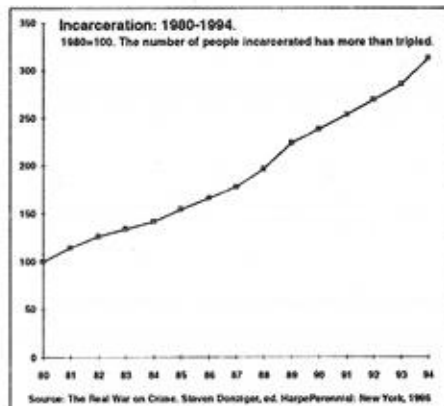
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Get A Grip!

The International Communist Movement has to understand that the workers of imperialist nations — the white workers, by and large — benefit from imperialism in a thousand ways. If you don't agree, prove us wrong.

Find out more... Read MIM Theory 10: "Coming to Grips with the Labor Aristocracy."

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Who Are They Kidding?

Some people think the white working class and the other labor aristocrat workers of the imperialist nations are exploited. Instead of demanding reparations for oppressed nations, these 'socialists' think the white working class needs a raise. MIM wants to know: Who's going to pay for the raise? We think the Third World has paid enough.

Find out more...
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"Coming to Grips with the Labor Aristocracy."

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Anarchists!

Don't give up on ending oppression to maintain the purity of your ideals! Communist revolution isn't perfect. But it's done more than anything else to defeat imperialism and end oppression.

Find our more... Read MIM Theory 8: "The Anarchist Ideal & Communist Revolution."

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Anarchists!

The Maoist Internationalist Movement works for communist revolution — beginning with national liberation struggles — as the best course for a society free from the scourge of imperialist patriarchy.

What do you suggest?

Don't make up a lot of pretty ideas that don't work — and then hold real-world actions to your idealist standards.

Show us something that works better. We want nothing more than to get out of this hell-hole. Where will anarchist strategies takes us? So far, they've gone nowhere.

Find our more... Read MIM Theory 8: "The Anarchist Ideal & Communist Revolution."

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Reparations for the Oppressed Nations!

The history of Amerika is one of theft and genocide. Amerika owes the people of the oppressed nations for labor stolen over the last 500 years.

The existing Amerikan state defends the interests of the imperialists, so it cannot consistently carry out reparations. It reneged on its treaties with the First Nations and its promise to the Black nation of "40 Acres and a Mule."

**There are no rights,
only power struggles!**

Find out more. Read MIM Theory 7, "Proletarian Feminist Revolutionary Nationalism on the Communist Road." Send \$6 to:

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<http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM>**

Liberation for the Internal Colonies!

National liberation struggles with communist leadership have done more to help the most oppressed people on Earth than any other form of organization.

In Amerika today, national oppression of the internal colonies is the foremost issue for revolutionaries.

**There is no time for
failed strategies.**

*Struggle with, work with,
and join MIM, the
Maoist Internationalist
Movement.*

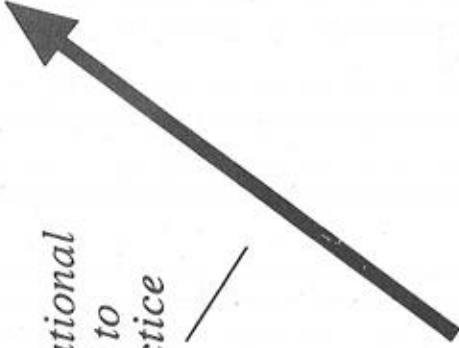
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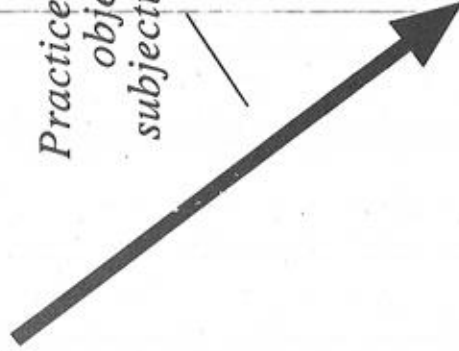
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*Redirect rational
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Knowledge**

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