
COMMUNIST REVOLUTION:

*The Road To The Future,
The Goal We Will Win*

**A Speech by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the
Central Committee of the Revolutionary
Communist Party, USA, at the November
1977 Founding Convention of the Revolu-
tionary Communist Youth Brigade**

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Introduction

This pamphlet contains a slightly edited version of a speech by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA. The speech was given at the November, 1977 Founding Convention of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade.

The speech deals from a communist standpoint with many crucial questions, including: the struggle against ideas promoted by the capitalists, particularly regarding "freedom and democracy," divisions between nationalities, and religion; the tasks of the RCYB as a fighting weapon of the working class; and finally, the speech deals with the importance of understanding the situation in this country and worldwide, and the fundamental laws of society, nature, and revolutionary change. It explains how Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought is the basis for grasping these things and for developing methods to advance the struggle for the historic goal of socialism and communism.

On behalf of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, and on behalf of the Party as a whole, I'm very proud to greet this Founding Convention of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade.* The working class has great hopes for its youth, and the Party of the working class has tremendous hopes and tremendous confidence in the youth of the working class, and the youth in general, in this country to be a tremendous force in making revolution and turning the world you might say rightside-up instead of upside-down, because right now it's upside-down and we want to turn it rightside-up. So on behalf of the Party I'd like to say a few things which will hopefully make some contribution to the discussion that has to go on here, the very important discussion that has to go on over the remainder of this convention in order that the kind of unity that has to be achieved can be achieved for this organization to go forward and be a key part in building the struggle of youth and the people as a whole in this country.

Capitalism Has Taught Us To Hate It

First, whenever we do anything we have to look first at what is the situation that we face and what are the conditions that are going on when we're doing this particular thing. We have to take stock, not only of what we're faced with immediately and what's right before us, but the overall and general situation. And not only the situation as it is now, but how it's developing, where it's coming from and where it's going, in order that we can lead it where it has to go and where it is going, but where it needs leadership to go.

What are the circumstances that this meeting is taking place in? Why is this meeting taking place? Why have hundreds of young people come here together, to struggle and unite to form the RCYB under the leadership of the Revolutionary Communist Party? Is it because, suddenly, a brilliant idea was brought forth by one or two people—"hey, wouldn't it be nice if we had communism?"—and everybody jumped up and said, "Yeah, right, all my life I've been reading about it, it sounds like a good thing to me."

Well, that's not exactly the way it's come about. It's come about because of the situation, and the nature of the system that we're in, and the way things have been going and the fact that this system has brought people forward in struggle, forced them to struggle, and forced them to question in the course of that struggle—being beaten down and fighting back time and again—isn't there a better way for society to be? And have people in other countries and other times been able to struggle and make society a bet-

*The name Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB) was adopted by the convention after this speech was given, but we have included it in the text here wherever, in the speech, the general term "young communist organization" actually appeared.

ter way? And if they have, we want to learn about that so we can do it too. Because as one person said to me once, "This system is a great teacher. It's a teacher by what we call negative example, that is, it does all kinds of negative things to the people, but it forces us to learn. And if we don't learn the first time, it'll be glad to teach us a second time, a third time, a fourth time and so on."

This System—Rotten by Nature

In other words, this system has a certain nature to it. The people that run it have a certain stake that they have to protect, and this forces them to come down increasingly on the masses of people, including the broad masses of youth in the country. There's no way around that. You all remember the movie "The Godfather." Marlon Brando made a very interesting comment after that. He said, "Well, I don't think there's anything special about the Godfather, he's just more or less a typical capitalist." And you remember the scene in "The Godfather" when Marlon Brando playing the Godfather died. What was he doing? Shooting somebody with a machine gun? No. He was playing with his little grandson in the back yard, like any good father or grandfather. The point I'm trying to make is that it doesn't matter what the particular feelings are of these particular people that run this country—they're rotten dogs anyway. But that's not the most important thing. Even if they're nice to their kids, even if they go to church every week and all the rest of that nonsense, that doesn't change the fact that they're running a certain system a certain way because it goes according to certain laws, and they have to come down on the masses of people and suck our blood and try to drive us down or else they can't survive, and their system can't survive. And they don't leave us any choice but to struggle back against them. They've never left us any choice.

From the beginning when classes first arose and people were oppressed and exploited, people have had no choice but to fight back. And the history of this country, like every other one, has been a history of people rising up. It's been a history of class struggle—of the oppressed rising up against their oppressors, and the exploited rising up against their exploiters. That's not what they teach you in school, but that's the way it really was and is. Or, if they talk about it they say, "Oh yeah, that was necessary *back then*, but now, you know, we solved all those problems. We had Roosevelt and then we had Kennedy." What I want to know is, if Roosevelt solved all the problems, how come we had to have Kennedy?! They're supposed to have already been solved by the time that Kennedy came along!

You know at least in religion, they always say you got *one* savior, these capitalists give us so many saviors you can't keep

count! Why? Because they want us to keep believing in their system despite everything. They *know* that they're going to have to come down on us and try to suck more blood out of people, and keep us in this position that we're in, and they're going to have to use their whole government, their army, their police and everything, and increasingly so as the system that they're involved in, through its own internal nature and the contradictions with it (which we'll talk about shortly), goes deeper into crisis. And they run up against each other, not only in this country but far flung throughout the world, they're battling with other thieves—these people make the Godfather look like Mary Poppins, that's who we're dealing with.

And our rulers are dealing with people like themselves all over the world; they have divided the world up already and are battling to re-divide it. And they won't think twice when the time comes, and they feel it's necessary to draft millions of young people and put them in uniform, and give them a gun and say, "go out there and kill people just like yourselves, from families like yours from some foreign land, to see which one of us slave-masters will have the biggest plantation in this world." And this is what they got on the horizon for us no matter how much they talk about peace, "detente," prosperity, full employment, and all the rest of the garbage they run. And so people are forced to fight back, and this is the situation that we're faced with in general.

They talk about "full employment," but then the other day Jimmy Carter got up and said, "Well, people will just have to take these low paying jobs, these low minimum wage jobs, that's the way we'll give 'em jobs . . . they're gonna have to take those jobs." And there aren't even enough of those chump jobs to go around. There will be more unemployment, not less, and despite ups and downs and the jiggling and juggling of the figures, that's the way things are going.

To Make Profits, This Is The Capitalists' Law

And the same thing with the neighborhoods and schools, the hospitals—things are falling down around us. And why is that? Because this capitalist system and each capitalist operates out of only one law—how to make the most profit, how to make the most money out of somebody else. And if you can't do that—if you can't beat someone else at this robbery—then you don't do it at all. If one capitalist can't out-compete the others by working his workers to death then he'll go out of business.

Now, you think about the situation. You go into a neighborhood and there's everybody from young boys and girls to old men and women, sitting on a street corner drinking wine and shooting dope into their veins and whatever else; sitting on a street corner while

their neighborhood is falling down around them. And why? Is it their fault, is it that they don't want any better? No, it's because they've been cast aside by this so-called greatest society, like so much garbage to be collected (but they won't even collect the real garbage). And around them, is it that nothing needs to be done? Is it that they couldn't be put to work building up their own neighborhoods? Building hospitals, schools, decent housing, ripping down these slums, mobilizing the people to beat these rats on their heads, and building some decent housing in the neighborhoods of these people? Is it that this doesn't need to be done? Of course not, you know the answer to that.

So, as I said, here we have this situation where you've got millions of people in these neighborhoods with nothing to do but hang out, sit around and be left to rot and die. And if they're young people, they're faced with a future of this for the rest of their lives. And these people can't be put together with the things that need to be done, with the things that cry out to be done—to build the housing, the schools, and the hospitals and fix up the neighborhood. Why can't they? Clearly, as I said, not because it doesn't need to be done, but because there's no profit, or not enough profit, to be made in it for a capitalist. There's more profit to be made in closing down a plant in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, in Youngstown, Ohio, or wherever it may be, and moving it over to some Latin American country, or someplace in Europe or someplace in Asia or Africa, forcing the people there to work for fifty cents a day. There's more profit to be made in that than there is in putting the people to work, to build a decent life and a decent society.

The Ideas they Push are Poison

This is the situation we're faced with and all the time it's getting worse. And it's particularly sharp for the young people. They propagandize you through their schools at the same time as they got their people running through the neighborhoods passing out dope. They propagandize you in the schools and tell you, "You know, this is the greatest country, *anybody* can be a millionaire if they just work at it! If they're just slick, if they just figure out a way to get over on the next man." You know, everything in this system is geared to making money out of somebody else.

Now, I just happen to like basketball. And last year I was watching the University of San Francisco-Notre Dame basketball game. And just to show you how they're constantly pumping this propaganda at us . . . there were these two announcers, and the whole Notre Dame rooting section was all worked up for this game because the U.S.F. was then undefeated and before this game ranked number one. The whole Notre Dame rooting section was just

making a tremendous noise shouting themselves hoarse, and one of the announcers said to the other one, "Wow, listen to all that racket, people are shouting themselves hoarse." And the other guy said, "Yeah, boy, I would sure like to have the right to sell all these people throat lozenges!"

See, this is the way they sneak some propaganda in on you. All the time it's being pumped at you. Everything is a way to make money off of somebody else. And if you can make money off of it, it's good. And if you can't, forget it. It doesn't need to be done! And that's not just because they're greedy (which they are), not just because they're piggish, it's because of the nature of the system—that's the way they have to do it. They have to do only those things which bring more money to them. And they cannot do those things which don't bring them more money, even if the people need them and they cry out to be done.

They'd sooner set up a pornography theatre in the neighborhood than put young people to work to clean it up, because they think they can make a buck in that. And the question cries out, especially to the young people, "What the hell does the future hold? Is this the best that life can be? Is this the greatest of all possible systems? Is this future that they hold out for us the only, the best future there is?" And what do you think? Is it? [Audience—No!]

Well, this is what they're trying to say. So naturally people are beginning to question this more and more, as they see that everywhere they turn there's only a "no entrance" sign, and a "no exit" sign. There's no way in and no way out. You're trapped. The only way out is to wait until they stick you in the army and let you go off and come back with an American flag draped over your casket. And some pious speech about how you fought for the glory of the capitalist system—oh, I'm sorry, for the glory of democracy. This is the future that they're offering, so naturally people don't want to go along with this.

People begin to question, "Is this the way it's gotta be? Isn't there some better way? Haven't people made a better life somewhere else? Can't we find some way out of this mess?" And, of course, in a thousand and one ways, the capitalist rulers try to say "No."

They come out in the labor department report saying there's a whole stratum of our young people (and all that other bureaucratic gobbledygook they talk, but basically what they mean is a whole group of young people) who are not going to have a job. They will just have to face that. The capitalists and their mouthpieces admit that for a whole group of young people in a certain age group they can't guarantee them jobs. They won't even be "lucky" enough to work at McDonald's, and we know what it's like if you are "lucky" enough to work in there. So this is the situation that more and more people are facing. And what *could* be done and what *should*

be done, and what cries out to be done stands out sharply against what is being done to people.

It's Criminal, It's Anarchy, It's Capitalism

Well, this is the situation, and we know that it is not going to get any better no matter what they say. Every four years they go through this rigamarole of an election to try and claim that things are going to get better, but they don't. And, they can't. Because as I said, it's the law of their system they have to do that thing which brings the greatest profit.

Why do they have to do that? Because, as has been said here before, you have a small number of capitalists. We don't have a situation where you have Paul Revere sitting up, tinkering away, making metal plates and somebody up in an attic—a cobbler—is making shoes. And somebody else has got a little spinning wheel, a seamstress making some kind of clothes. That isn't the way society runs today. Instead, you've got these large factories—mines, the steel mills—and you've got a handful of people who grab for themselves what they never produce. And, on that basis they force everybody else to work for them. But even so, they can't rest with that. Each of them is in competition with the other, and if they don't produce more cheaply and outsell the other one, they'll be crushed under by the other one. There's no resting for them. Go on, go on. Each of them is driven to compete with others like thieves, which is what they are.

Well, this is the situation. This is where their so-called "great competition" has led things. This is why they can't let up on the people, and the more this situation sharpens up on them, the more that the internal contradictions of this system sharpen up on them, the more they're forced to drive the people down, and to bring people into motion fighting back against them. Now why do they have to do that? Because in their competition with each other, the only way they can beat out the others is to drive the people to produce more. Each of them is trying to beat out the others, driving all their workers to produce more, laying off workers, speeding up the rest of them. Everybody knows this through some situation in their own family and people they know. So the workers are driven to produce like there is no limit to it, just turning out things as rapidly as they can even if they kill themselves in the process. As we know, a worker can have a heart attack on the job, and what's the first thing the damn foreman will do: *run and punch the man off the time clock!* So they won't have to pay him an extra penny in wages! And why? Because of what every worker has heard a thousand times before: "If you don't like it, there's many more people out there who'd be glad to have your job," because the workers are just like a machine to them—a special money-making

machine—and when it stops, they don't put another cent into it.

We have plenty of that stuff out there. I was watching this movie, "Harlan County," and this old-timer was talking about how when he was working in the mines way back when they used mules instead of power-driven hauling equipment. And the boss told him, "Now boy, you use that mule, you be careful so you walk where nothing falls in on it!" The miner told him, "Yeah, but if I do that, I'll have to walk where it'll fall in on me." They said, "Well, we can always get another one of you, *mules* are *expensive!*" So this is the way they look at us. They don't give a damn for the working class of people. Well, that's all right because we don't give a damn for them either!

So they're forced to drive the workers, to lay off some and drive the rest of them until they've used up their life in twenty years. Yeah, they talk about how the workers in this country make so much money. One of these stupid newspaper editors one place was talking about how, "The only problems the workers got despite all these communists talking about how the working class will make revolution, the only problem these workers got is how they can get another color T.V. in their bedroom." Well, I happen to like color T.V. And I don't think it's bad for the workers to have them. But I don't think it's the main problem that the workers have, frankly. I think all that editor did was show the masses of workers just how stupid and ignorant he is.

But they say the workers in this country will never make revolution. "Look at those auto workers," they say, "Look, they make \$7 an hour." They might make \$7 an hour, which ain't nothing these days anyway, but how long can you work on an auto assembly line the way they're driving you these days? What good is it to a man that makes \$7 an hour if your life is all but used up in 20 years on that assembly line? Your family has to live longer than 20 years. What happens to them after you're no longer able to work, and you're shoved out the door, and the plant closes down and you're laid off? And, the way the bosses look at it, nobody wants to hire an old broken down man," who's worth less to them than a modern day mule—a machine.

This is the situation that we, the working class of people, have to face. But the capitalists don't care. "Just drive 'em, go on, go on work 'em faster" as if there's no limit. Then what happens? Well, the way they make profits is by keeping the wages of the workers down to the lowest level they can, just enough to be able to come back to work the next day—and raise a family to do the same after they're dead. So they're having them produce all these goods, and yet people only have so much money—barely enough to get by—and pretty soon you run into a sharp contradiction. You run into the fact that you produce, collectively, the working class can produce a hell of a lot more than it can ever buy under

these economic relations. Because it's being driven on and on by this whole anarchy (they're always talking about anarchy... they're the biggest anarchists there is!) The whole system is anarchy.

In a Youngstown steel plant, they gave the workers a jacket. They gave them a jacket because they set a production record. Just like these gold watches you get when you retire. They gave them all jackets and then two weeks later they laid them all off. This is anarchy! Drive people to produce like mad, then tell them, "Well, we can't use you anymore because you produced too much, and we can't sell it... so goodbye."

Just like the old stories in the "old days," the situation hasn't changed. Down in the coal fields, a young boy was shivering in his cabin, and he turns to his mother and says, "Mama, how come we can't have more heat?" And she says, "Well, we don't have any coal." "Well, why don't we have any coal?" "Because your daddy's out of work." "Well, why is Daddy out of work?" "Because there's too much coal." This is the madness, and the anarchy, the craziness and the criminalness of this capitalist system. But that's the way it goes and that's the way it will go until we overthrow it.

Rockefeller and Dracula

Now you can try to wish it away, you can try to pray it away, you can try to sing it away or dance it away, but it won't change. It has its nature, and things act according to their nature. I'm going to talk about this so-called "human nature" a little later. But systems do have natures. They're guided by laws, just like everything else (which I'll get around to in a minute or two). But it's guided by laws, and I like to use this example:

Now, we know that in the real world that there aren't any vampires. We know this. And yet, still we have these movies and T.V. stuff which everybody gets into watching. And let's say we do have vampires, real vampires. They go throughout the countryside grabbing people up at night, sucking their blood. And you go up to them, and you say, "Now listen Bella Lagosi, Mr. Dracula, whoever you are, don't you know that it's extremely rude what you're doing. And the people in the neighborhood really don't like it. In fact, all throughout the countryside, you're hated and people are forming vigilante groups to hunt you down. You stop all this madness! You'd get along with your neighbors much better." And the vampire would have bitten your neck by the time you'd finished talking!

Now why is that? Because it's his nature, that's the way he lives. By sucking blood (if there was a vampire). Well, in the real world, there aren't any vampires like that, but we're dealing with a whole

class of vampires. The capitalist class, that's what they are, they're blood suckers, and that's the way they live. So if you want to deal with a vampire, you have to learn the laws of how a vampire lives, what is its nature, what are the things that govern how it acts. And once you learn that, you can be free to deal with it.

You don't go up to it and say, "Now, listen here, Mr. Rockefeller," (or Mellon or Morgan or Ford or any of the rest of them) "you know people hate you all over the world. Everywhere you go they throw eggs and spit on you and your name is a swear word in most countries in the world. Don't you know this? Not only here, but you go all over the world, you go into South Africa, you go into Britain, you go into Latin America—you go anywhere you can and people hate you. Because you do the same thing, you suck their blood, you take your exploitation everywhere. Why don't you cut out all this nonsense. Be a good, reasonable guy and share everything with everybody else." Now we know he wouldn't even talk to us in the first place. But if he did, all during this, even if we were running this all down to him, he'd be planning how to do more of the same and worse, and be planning the next war he was going to have us fight so he'd be in a stronger position to do more of the same.

So, if you want to deal with a vampire, you have to learn the laws of how a vampire operates, what is his nature, what's the internal contradictions within it, and how you can deal with it. And there's only one way (we learned this from watching all these vampire movies). You have to track a vampire down during the day when it can't move. You have to get it in its casket, and you have to drive a stake through its heart. That's the only way. That's the only way you can deal with this *class* of vampires. You can't talk them away, you can't wish them away, you can't pray them away. You're going to have to drive a stake through their heart, and it will take masses of people to have the strength to do that. And, it will take science to be able to uncover the laws of how they operate so we can catch them and put it right in there where it hurts.

The Harder They Fall

Well, some people might say, if this is the way the capitalist system goes, how come things haven't been so bad in this country in the recent past as they are now, and maybe they'll get better. Or they say, "We've had problems before. We even had a big depression in the 1930s and that was even worse than this is now. But we came out of that all right. Roosevelt did it." And so on. But how did they really get out of that last depression in the 1930s when one out of four people was out of work? When people were living in cardboard boxes, how did they get out of that?

Well, the way they got out of that, wasn't through old

Roosevelt's so-called "New Deal" (which was the same old dirty deal in the first place). The way they got out of that was by going to war, by re-dividing the world, and they grabbed the biggest chunk of the world they could. And they were slick, they were sitting over here on the American continent, and the war was centered in Europe and they let the Soviet Union and the Chinese people and the masses of people in Europe do all the fighting. They wouldn't even open up a damned second front until 1944! And then when they saw the war was going in a certain way, they moved in and cleaned up on all the spoils and grabbed up everything that everyone else had to abandon because they weren't strong enough to keep it. They even went into the countries which were supposed to be their allies and grabbed up a big chunk of the economy, like Britain and France. And just the same with Italy, Germany and Japan. They grabbed up all the colonies that these countries could no longer hold onto because they weren't strong enough anymore. And throughout Africa, that's why you have all these corporations, U.S. corporations replacing the British in South Africa now.

They strengthened their position after WW2 by playing the role of sitting back during most of the war. You've seen it before, somebody instigates a couple of other people, gets them started, and then when they both just about knock each other out, then he comes in and picks their pockets. This is what they did on a big mass scale. And so for years after the war, every time this system of theirs started running up against a crisis like this, they could shove it back on the people of these other countries that they rammed their way into as a result of the war.

So they were able to hold off for a little while—but everything develops in terms of its opposites. For anything that happens there's something opposite to it, that's the way the world goes. And one particular thing that has its opposite is oppression—wherever there is oppression, there is resistance. This is what has been sweeping the world, particularly the Third World of Asia, Africa and Latin America, since WWII when the U.S. grabbed up the lion's share of the colonies. And besides that, even the other bandits in Britain and France and Japan have started getting back on their feet, and battling them. They're saying, "Listen, we have to get a bigger chunk, not only of our own country, but we're going to go into the areas that you have control of and challenge you, and see who can set up the biggest factory and outsell the other one." But this is still rivalry among bandits in the same gang.

In the meantime, something of great significance happened in the Soviet Union—which was the first socialist country in the world, the first country where the working class captured power and embarked on the road toward eliminating all this madness, eliminating classes and all the inequalities that go with it and was

moving on toward communism. But just because you make that first step of overthrowing the exploiters and starting to build a new society without exploitation, that doesn't mean you're guaranteed a victory for good (and that's something we have to talk about a little bit later). So the Soviet Union was turned back from inside, the fortress was captured from within—right from within the Communist Party at its top level—traitors to the working class and to socialism, and the revolution, took over. On the basis of their leading position, they were able to grab control and turn the country back. Of course, that was a tremendous defeat for the working class, but it also caused problems for our capitalists.

All of a sudden they had this other powerful country coming on the scene at a time when they were bogged down in Vietnam and getting their ass whipped (and I don't care how many times they say they saw the light at the end of the tunnel and finally went to it, they got their ass whipped, that's all there was to it). They started getting it whipped back in Korea—I read a Marine Corps manual from 1951 and it was talking about the greatest victory they'd had in one quarter of the year in 1951 for the Marines in Korea. (You know the marines, they're the "bad" ones. . . . "lookin' for a few good men.") The biggest achievement they talked about (and this is when they talk among themselves, so they have to let the truth out a little bit), and the biggest victory they had in the Korean War, in this particular quarter of the year, was when they made an orderly retreat onto a ship! So they started getting their ass kicked in Korea, and got it kicked *good* in Vietnam.

They were bogged down in Indochina, and the Soviet Union came on the scene and started challenging them everywhere and saying, "You aren't gonna have this all to yourself now, there are two of us here, so we're gonna battle on a world scale and see who's gonna grab it up." And all these things that are coming back down on our rulers now, they try to twist and turn and cast it off to another, but they're having a harder and harder time. It's like they're in quicksand—the more they thrash around and the more they try to wriggle out of it, the deeper and the faster they sink.

A Snake Will Always be a Snake

This is the way it's going. And they call out to us, "Help! Jump in here with me." But we say, "To hell with you, we ain't going in there." See, this is what they want, they say, "You gotta bail us out of this situation." To hell with you! We'll send you in a 50-pound weight so you go down faster. Because what if we did jump in and help them? It'd be the same thing again. "But we will be partners, for the good of the country," they promise. You know the kind of partners we already are, just like the masters and the slaves. That's the kind of partners we'd be, if we help them get out

of it. You know, it's like the old song about the snake that was hurt. You know the lady took the snake in. She nurtured it, she helped it get back to health, and then the snake bit her. When she was dying, she said, "What'd you do that for?" And he says, "You damned fool, you knew I was a snake when you took me in."

That's the way they are. A snake is going to bite you and that's what they're going to do no matter how many times they say, "Take me in and heal me up." No! Every blow against you we're glad for. Anywhere anybody stands up and strikes you a blow, we're glad. And we'll add on to it to bring you down. That's the way we'll do it.

You see, this is the situation. And they try to say, "Well, look here, all the problems are because of the Arab oil sheiks, they're all raising the price of oil. This is a bad thing. And look, after all, these people are nothing but exploiters anyway." All of a sudden they're worried about exploitation! You know, somebody in Venezuela raised the price of oil, somebody in Libya raised the price, all of a sudden they want to give us sermons about how these people are exploiters. We know that. We can recognize exploiters, we've seen *you* long enough. But if those who are exploiters strike a blow against you and in so far as they really do so, on the one hand we'll support them and on the other we'll support the people in those countries to overthrow those exploiters and join together with us in moving forward toward a world without exploiters. And you aren't tricking us. We have confidence that the people in these countries will rise up, and we support them, too, in throwing down people who oppress and exploit them. But at the same time, we know who is ruling over us in this country and we know where we have to have our sights trained.

It's a Mystery We Can Solve

This is how we have to deal with the situation. But to do it gets complicated. We have to understand the laws of this thing. We can't just go on gut feelings, because people can get misled that way. Common sense takes you a certain way, but it doesn't take you everywhere you have to go. Common sense might say a lot of things which in fact are not true. It's common sense that you can put this cup here on this table and that it'll stay there. Yeah, that's good up to a point, but what will happen if that table gets on fire? You can't put the cup there anymore.

The thing is that the table's got molecules within it that are moving, that you can't see. And if you raise its temperature, it won't be so solid anymore. Common sense won't tell you that, at least not all of it, not why and how this happens. You have to discover the laws that actually govern how it goes so that you can't be tricked. We have to have more than common sense, we

have to have more than gut hatred. Of course, we have to have that, too—if we don't have that, we don't have anything. I don't know how we couldn't have it, how could we not hate these suckers?

They go around talking about how, "You communists try to stir up hate everywhere." How the hell can we stir it up? It's already there! All we do is try to channel and direct it and lead it so it can do some good. Because naturally the people hate you capitalists. And if we went around telling them not to hate you, all they would do is turn around and hate us! Well, we're not worried about telling them not to hate you. We worry about how we are going to get organized, and have a correct understanding so that we can channel and direct this hatred, and strike the blows where they have to be struck and keep on moving forward. So we have to have gut hatred, but it's not enough. We must also have a scientific understanding. We have to know the laws of how these things work.

And not only do we have to, we *can*. We must and we can understand, why it is that this system cannot solve the problems of the masses of people, cannot solve our problems, and cannot offer a future to youth. That the *only* future for youth lies, not in trying to work within this system or make a go out of "beat the man at his own game," but beat the man by overthrowing and getting rid of his game. This is what we have to do. But we also have to understand *why* that is true, why must we overthrow this system? We have to learn this so we can go out and educate a lot of other people around this understanding, and also so that our actions can be guided on a correct basis, and we can continue to go forward.

They are going to try and throw lots of tricky things into the game. They'll have lots of people come out here talking about how they're all for us. They'll be "all for us," and especially the more the struggle develops, the more they'll have people out here saying, "Yeah, I'm with that. Socialism, that's a fine thing. Communism that's a great thing." But we're going to have to be able to say, are these false goods or real goods? It was once said by Lenin (who was pretty sharp, because he led a very intense, historic and massive struggle of the working class) that it often happens in the market place that the person who most loudly advertises his goods has the most shoddy goods to sell. The person who calls the loudest sometimes about how he's all with you may be the one who's the most likely to stab you in the back."

How can we deal with this? How can we know what's right from wrong? How can we know what's the way forward and what's the way backward? Well, we have to get an understanding of how this system operates. What's its basic contradiction and how can this contradiction be resolved. We have to understand how mankind and how society has developed from one stage to another. We have

to have, and take up, and use as a mighty weapon the revolutionary science of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought. That is the summed up experience of struggles throughout history. It's been paid for in blood, the blood of the masses who fought and have been pushed back, and fought again and were pushed back, and fought again, and will keep on fighting until they finally push on through. And at each stage we have to sum this up and use this science that's been developed on the basis of that struggle, on the basis of summing up human history. We have to use this so that we can minimize the time that we're pushed back and the distance we're pushed back and we can go forward the fastest and the furthest that we can at each point. So we must have a scientific approach to this whole thing.

Struggle Makes the World Go Forward

And what's the basis of this science? We often say that it's dialectical materialism. Those are two big words. What do they mean? What is dialectics? Dialectics is very important. Dialectics basically tells us that it's a law that everything, everything in the universe—whether it's in nature or society—develops through the struggle of opposing forces, of contradictions, and particularly develops on the basis of the contradictions within itself.

Now, what the hell does that mean? Everything has contradictions within it, this is what pushes it forward. We all have contradictions within us, this is what pushes us forward—between right ideas and wrong ideas, between understanding and not understanding. And it's the struggle between those opposites that enables us to go forward. We might put it another way. We might say, are people here alive or dead? In most cases we'd say alive. But aren't you also dying? Even though you're alive, you're also dying at the same time. And even though you're generally alive, even some cells in your body are dying at any given time. Otherwise you wouldn't have dandruff (which most of us do whether we admit it or not). That's all it is. It's cells of your skin that are dying and falling off. Or when your hair falls out. So at the same time that you're alive, there are cells within you that are dying, and others which are being born and growing. If that weren't the case, you couldn't be alive, you wouldn't be able to be alive and you wouldn't be able to grow.

Everything grows on the basis of contradictions and struggle between opposites, and particularly the opposites right within it. Nobody here is going to live forever. While we're alive today, all of us at one time or another are going to die. And that's not a terrible thing. In fact if everybody was alive since mankind first was around, it'd be awfully crowded

People are going to come into this world and they're going to go

out of it. The question is, are they going to consciously understand what human existence is about, what society is about, what level it's at and how to move it forward? Or are they going to be *forced* to struggle only on the same level, to be spinning our wheels, to be digging ourselves deeper in? Or are we going to take that struggle and go forward by grasping the laws that govern things?

So we have to understand dialectics; we have to understand at any given time whenever we look at anything what are the opposing forces here. What are the conflicts within this thing that can push it forward; what are the contradictions within it. When we apply that to anything we can see that it can explain things that are otherwise unexplainable. Can you walk on the water? No, despite the Bible, nobody can. But if you lower the temperature of water and slow down the movement of the molecules within it and turn it to ice, you can walk on it.

Can you make a car that can go down the street out of rocks? You can't. At least I haven't seen one. But, if you've mastered the laws of fire, and subject that ore to a high enough and intense enough and correct temperature, you can transform it into steel, which you can use to build a car. And that's because that water or those rocks have contradictions, within them; they have motion within them, they have things moving against each other in them. They have molecules and the different elements that make up matter. And by grasping that we can use those things, we can master those laws and make those things useful to human society. And in fact that's what mankind is constantly doing, and has done since we first formed together in society.

We Make It, They Take It

The same thing applies to society. What moves society forward is the contradictions within it. When you have any society, you've got to look inside and see what are the contradictions within this society. What are the conflicts within it? What's moving it forward? What gives it its motion? What tells you how it's going to go? What are the laws governing it?

In any society today the most basic contradiction that you have to look for is the class contradiction. For example, you can't just talk about America—America this or that. "Imports are bad for America"—bull, they're bad for the capitalists in America. Particular capitalists. Even other capitalists like them. You've got to always look and determine what are the conflicting interests here. There are conflicting classes, there are different classes opposed to each other and they have different interests. You can't look at society and say it's one thing. You have to look at the struggle of opposing forces within it. And the basic, the main contradiction of opposing forces in this society is the struggle between the working

class and the capitalist class.

Now why is that? Why isn't it something else? Because the nature of this system is, as I've said before, that a handful of people own all the means to make wealth: the land, the machinery, the factories, and all the things the land has underneath it, the raw materials and so on. They are few, a handful, and as they beat out each other, fewer and fewer own all these things. On the one hand, these means of production—factories, land, materials and so on—are privately owned. But on the other hand, the labor that's done to produce all these things and the products made and the wealth that comes on this basis are produced collectively and socially by the masses of working people. And this is the basic contradiction in capitalist society: That the labor to produce all these things is done in a socialized way, with highly developed machines and technology so that as I said, masses of goods can be rapidly produced. But on the other hand, you've got individual owners, private owners, capitalists, who grab all these things and control them individually and battle each other, and throw the whole society into anarchy, as I said.

This is the basic, the fundamental conflict that's going on in society. It takes shape as a class struggle between the working class—which represents that socialized labor—and the capitalist class—which represents that private ownership which is holding back the further development of society. Because if we swept society clean of capitalists, the workers could collectively plan and produce the masses of goods and services that we need and distribute them among ourselves on a rational basis. We could begin to provide a decent life for everyone, and employ everybody fully and plan society in a rational way to do all that.

You see, we had so many students active in the sixties (I was involved in the student movement of that time). Now this was a very powerful and positive movement. But some of these students in the sixties got a little crazy, along with other intellectuals who were sitting in the universities, and they came up with these theories about how the problem is machines—that machines are bad. It's machines that are causing all the problems of modern society and alienating people. Well you see, it was half true and half not true, what they were saying.

We have to divide this statement into its two opposites, too. On the one hand, under capitalism people are slaves to the machine. The machines don't work for us, we have to work for them. We're nothing but an extension of those machines and the tempo of our work is even controlled by the tempo of those machines. But on the other hand, that's not because the machines are bad, that's because of who *owns* them and how they're *used* under capitalism. That's the problem. The machines could be a very good thing because they could rapidly produce the kind of wealth we need, and

enable us to continue to expand the economy. The problem is that they're in the wrong hands. They're not in the hands of the people who produce them, but in the hands of those that don't do anything but force others to work on them to produce to make them rich.

You know, they always say, "If you work hard, you can get ahead in this country." And they say the chance to get ahead by working hard is what gives people incentive and makes the country push ahead, it's why this country is so powerful, they say. Well just exactly the opposite is true. Because if that were true, the whole society would have gone down the drain a long time ago. Because the people on top, who run it, don't do a damn thing! In fact, in this society, the further you are away from the process of actually working, the more removed you are from that the more control you have and the more wealth you have. The more you work and the harder that you work, the more you just build up the wealth of these people that just turn it around and use it against us.

So this is the basic conflict. And the problem is not that people work, or that the machines are there, it is that the machines are in the wrong hands and people's work goes not to benefit society but to enrich an exploiting handful. And the solution to it is complicated, but it's also simple. It's complicated because we have to understand all the things that go into making up the struggle to bring about that solution, but it's simple in the sense that there's only one thing that basically needs to be done, and that's to build up our own armed forces—yeah, that's what we're talkin' about. Building up the armed forces of the working class, but first build up the political consciousness of the masses of people until they see the need to rise up and arm themselves, organize into our own armed forces, take on the armed forces of the capitalists, overthrow them and take control of society, take control of those machines that our own labor has built and all the factories and everything else, all the wealth we produce. Start using it rationally for the benefit of society. So the answer is complicated, but it's also simple. And dialectics, understanding the basic conflict in society, enables us to understand that.

The World Is the Way It Is—And It's Changing

But we can't have just any kind of dialectics. We must also have materialism. Our dialectics have to be materialist. And what does that mean? You know they say: "Communists are materialists." The priests and preachers they get up and say, "Communists are materialists, they don't believe in the spiritual." Well it's just more bull! We understand that people have ideas, that they have hopes, dreams, aspirations. How could we not understand that?!

We're the ones that got the hopes and the dreams and the aspirations! All you got is a bunch of corruption, and putrid degeneracy.

We understand that. But the point is, we understand that the ideas that people have, in order to be correct, in order to be able to move things forward, have to correspond to the actual material world that exists outside of us. Like I said, you can walk on water if you correctly understand the laws of water and transform it into ice—as long as it is solid. But you can't do it just by wishing to do it. You can only do it by bringing certain things to bear on it. And you cannot do it by saying, "Water, become ice." So our ideas have to conform to the actual development of the real world. And that's what we mean by materialism. Of course people have feelings, hopes, dreams, aspirations, thoughts and these can play a big role in changing things. But these ideas, hopes and so on arise on the basis of certain conditions that people are faced with in society. And in order to move things forward, these ideas have to conform to the actual conditions that people are faced with and enable them to grasp the laws that actually govern how things develop, and, on that basis, move things forward.

So this dialectical materialism means nothing other than that we base ourselves on the real world and how it develops, both in nature and society. And at the same time, we don't look at it statically. We look within anything to see the internal contradictions within it, and how it's moving and developing and where it's going. And when we do use that method to examine capitalist society, we can see that in fact it's got to move forward to a higher form of society. This is inevitable. And until it does, it will continually throw people into crisis, continually bring on wars, continually deny any kind of decent future for the great majority of people. And generation after generation will rise up and struggle against it, as they always have until they finally overthrow it and finally eliminate it.

This is a law, whether the capitalists like it, whether we like it or anybody else likes it. This is a law because society has advanced to this stage. Because there is no other way society can move forward at this point. With these massive means of production that there are, and the collective work that's required to work on them, only the working class can own and control them in a way that can make society move forward. And until that step is taken, there is no way that society can move forward. And therefore, that question of how to do this and move society forward will continually confront people, continually slap us in the face until we make this revolution and carry it through. And that's why we say that revolution is independent of man's will, and is inevitable, that is, it is bound to happen sooner or later.

The Working Class, the Revolutionary Class

We say that revolution is independent of man's will and is inevitable, because it's the next step that society has to take. Because it's not like in the old days, people scratching out a living from picking berries, and hunting game with crude stone implements. And it's not possible any more to produce the products and use the machinery that mankind has built up through his efforts and struggle, unless you do it collectively. And this is why the working class, being the representative of socialized labor, has to be the leading class and is the most revolutionary class in modern society.

We have to understand this. You take a bunch of small shopkeepers, they might be oppressed and pushed down, but they have a different outlook, stemming from their material position. They have a different outlook than the workers. They are their own boss, and they want to try to get richer. Now they're not able to most times—they're pushed down and held down, but their idea is, how do you make more money for yourself and beat out the next guy to do it? By speculating, by hiring other people to work for you. Everybody knows that's the way you make more money, by hiring other people to work for you. Or if they don't know it they learn it pretty quick.

I remember I was working on the longshore out West for a little while, and there was this young guy down there who said to another guy who had been working there about 35 years—and didn't even have any teeth left—"I hear some of you guys down here are millionaires." It was kind of funny, but the older guy smiled back at him with no teeth and said, "Man, you're crazy. The only people that are millionaires are the ones that don't work down here! We're the ones working to make the millionaires."

So you see, the point is that the working class has to work collectively, and the only way the capitalists can get rich is by making the workers work for them. But how do they do that—how do they bring the workers together? The kind of machinery that we got—massive assembly lines and so on—you can't have one person go up and say, "Well, I'll tell you what, I'll take this particular fender piece home here and fool around with it. I won't work on an auto assembly line, I'll take it home." It isn't going to work. Here you are working on an assembly line and you got three feet in front of you. What are you going to say—this three feet in front of me, this is my assembly line piece and I'm going to take it home? It doesn't make any sense. You can't do anything with it. All it'll do is make you tired carrying it home. So in order for anything to be done this kind of thing has to be collective labor. People have to work together. The working class—unlike any other class—works together in this modern socialized labor, on these modern

machines, which can only be utilized in this way. People can only work on them if they work in a cooperative way.

This is why the working class has power, because it's concentrated there, because it is exploited directly there, and because it works in a socialized way and because of all this it has the ability to grasp the need to socialize the ownership of these things to bring them into harmony with the way people work on them. To get rid of the disharmony in the fact that people have to work socially but on the other hand the ownership is private. To get rid of the contradiction and the anarchy and the fact that working socially people can produce masses of things but the people can't really benefit from them, because individual capitalists grab them up and battle each other and throw so much onto the market that the people have been forced to produce until they can no longer buy things. So you have a situation where the auto workers are laid off because there's too many cars produced.

Socialist revolution—overthrowing the capitalists and taking over the means of production—is the only way the problem can be resolved, and until it is it keeps forcing itself more and more violently on us. Unemployment, crisis, decay and war. Over and over again. As I said, there's no way to get around it and get over this unless we unite, rise up, and recognize what has to be done, and do it.

So understanding things from this materialist standpoint, and from this dialectical standpoint, we can look at the actual way society's organized and see how human society's developed to this point, what it is that's pushing it forward and how it is that this is the next inevitable step that mankind has to take, that through all of the history of human society and the various forms it's gone through, it's all built up to this point, to the inevitable socialist revolution.

Yesterday's Dreams, Today's Tasks

For the first time, what in the past could only be the dreams and schemes of philosophers and thinkers, and well-wishers and do-gooders, the idea of eliminating injustice and poverty and the gap and gulf between rich and poor, for the first time in the history of mankind, that no longer is merely a dream, a scheme, of the well-wishers and do-gooders. For the first time the means to do that are right before us. For the first time in the history of human society, we have the ability to bring about what mankind has struggled to bring into being up to this point. And the only thing that stands in the way is the capitalist class and the private ownership system and its division into rich and poor, and the other divisions and inequalities of class society that are left us.

So the first step is that we have to rise up and overthrow the

capitalists and their state—their armed forces, and their whole government apparatus—and take control of these means of production that we have worked up through our own labor. And the next step is that under the rule of the working class we have to march forward and eliminate step by step the inequalities and the divisions, whether between races and nationalities, men and women, workers from one part of the country and another, people in the city and the countryside, workers of different skills, so on and so forth, we have to move forward, with control of society in our hands to eliminate these things until we achieve what is not just a dream or utopia, but is the scientific truth—that mankind will in fact advance to really move fully onto the stage of human history and eliminate classes and achieve communism. This is what we have to see—it's not only a dream before us, but a reality that has to be brought into being. That inevitably will be brought into being, but it requires conscious leadership and conscious forces to lead the masses of people and arm them with an understanding of how to fight to bring this into being.

So if that's our goal, I'd like to just touch on a few things that are sometimes raised and said—by the people that run this country—and also some confusion that they create among the people themselves about the question of communism and communists. Because we understand that communism is at once a philosophy which explains how the world is going and how it has to go and at the same time when it is achieved it will be a complete social system that means the elimination of exploitation and all oppression.

Those things are true, but masses of people still don't recognize that. And the bourgeoisie, the capitalist ruling class, works very hard to keep people from recognizing that. Because they have no stake in eliminating exploitation and oppression, and the inequalities and divisions and the gulf between rich and poor. Why the hell would they want to do that? They're the handful that benefits from it, so they're going to fight it tooth and nail to keep it, not only by using their army, police, courts and everything else, but by spreading all the rotten ideas they can to keep people confused. We have to confront them on both levels. We have to go out and actively engage them in struggle, and at the same time we have to struggle with them in the realm of ideas to clear up the confusion that they've created. And here are some of the things they say or that people raise, and I'd like to speak to them.

Sometimes people say, "Well, if we have communism that's no good. You communists, you just tell everybody what to do. Then everybody has to think alike, they all have to act alike, they all have to have the same things exactly, and nobody'll have any freedom. And besides that, you try to brainwash people."

Brainwashing

Well, I'd like to start with the last point first. The way I look at it, is that the brain is like everything else. If it's dirty, why not wash it? And all the capitalists have been doing is dirtying people's minds up. Telling us that it's just natural for you to have to get over on somebody else; that the only way you can get ahead is by beating the next man out; that the best thing in the world is looking out for number one and to hell with everybody else; and that this is just the way things have to be and that this is the best possible system there could be.

So naturally, this is a lot of muck that they spread around, through their educational system, and on their television and everything else, (and believe me, I'm not saying you shouldn't watch television, but we should subject it to critical analysis.) Even while we're checking out "Good Times" and everything else, we should see what are they trying to say. We can still watch "Good Times," and at the same time we can get a scientific understanding of what they're doing. So what're they doing with their education and their television and everything else—they're brainwashing, they're just dirtying up people's minds. So why not clean them up. Why shouldn't we get a healthy mind, instead of a corroded mind which they try to give you through their educational system and the television.

As for the fact that they say, "Oh, everybody will have to do what they're told, everybody'll be dictated to, everybody'll have no rights and be pushed around." Do they mean to say we're like them? Do they mean to say we're like the capitalists, because this is what they do every day? You're describing nothing but the capitalist system.

Oh, you capitalists talk about democracy—but what is this democracy you're talking about? See, when I was in school (I don't know how they try to put it over on you all now) but when I went to school they used to say that the cradle of the democracy that we have was in Greece, thousands of years ago. Ancient Greece, that was the best example of the democracy that we have now. And I had to get out of school to find out they were telling the truth, despite themselves. What I found out after I got out of school was that Greece was a slave society, where 90% of the people were slaves and there was democracy only for a small handful of slave owners, and that's exactly the kind of democracy we got right here in this country. Democracy for the rich people and slavery for the masses. Well, I found out that despite themselves, despite them trying to tell lies, they were telling more truth than they knew.

Political Power and Armed Revolution

But isn't this what they prove to us every day? What were they proving at Kent State? Oh, they said "You communists, you talk crazy talk. Mao Tsetung said 'Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.' He's a violence-prone maniac." But what did you prove to us at Kent State? What kept that fence and that building from coming down* if it wasn't the violence, if it wasn't the barrel of a gun, that you capitalists used. So you were teaching us a lesson that it's a truth indeed, that political power ultimately comes out of a barrel of a gun.

What were the capitalists doing with those people at the International Hotel?† Did they go there and say, "Listen, you know we would like to discuss this very calmly and we think the tenants should move out." Yes they did, and the tenants said, "Go to hell!" So what happened then? Then came the guns, then came the power of their state, their armed forces. Then the mask of democracy came off and the real dictatorship came out front. And this is one example of how all their so-called democracy is only democracy as long as you don't try to challenge the way things are, and as soon as you do you will see the truth: that political power comes out of the barrel of a gun. But they got one problem, well, two.

First of all, there's only so many of them, and not very many at that. Second of all, they're a bunch of sissies, and they can't do any fighting themselves. They can't do any fighting on their own. They're not going to start a war and go fight it. They're not going to . . . Rockefeller's not going up to Brezhnev and say, "Listen, why don't we all go down to the battleground and we'll fight it out to see who'll carve up the world." No! They're going to put the Soviet workers, the American workers, and the French and Japanese and Hungarian workers and so on in uniform and say, "You go fight it out!"

*The fence was built by the authorities at Kent State to protect the gym they were building on the site where four students protesting the Vietnam war and the U.S. invasion of Cambodia in 1970 were killed. The building of the gym on that site gave rise to massive protests, reaching a high point in the summer and fall of 1977.

†The International Hotel, in Chinatown, San Francisco, saw 70 elderly tenants fight for nearly 10 years to stop the owners of the building from evicting them. The eviction did take place finally in August, 1977, but only after 400 San Francisco police were called in to attack thousands of supporters who were outside the hotel. The landlords, city government, and courts had tried to defeat the anti-eviction fight for years, but they had failed. Thus, they finally had to use their "last resort": the armed might of the ruling class.

But they got a problem. To do this they have to give us a gun, and that's very dangerous for them. They do a very dangerous thing, they give us a gun. And when they give it to us, the question always is when somebody's got a gun, what's his consciousness, what's his understanding? What's going on in society? That's what will determine how he's going to use that gun. When they start out in a war they may have people intimidated and threatened and confused, but as the working class rises up and begins to take matters into its own hands, including these kinds of matters, capitalists have to be saying to the young kids, like the young people here, "Go into the neighborhood and shoot down your father and your brother and your mother and your sister."

What is going to happen? People are going to turn against them, and we're going to organize that too, we're going to rise up and we're going to win over as many as we can of their armed forces to our side, and show these soldiers where their real interests lie—just turn the barrel of that gun right around and you'll be doing what you should be doing.

And I'm going to say it whether they want me to say it or not, because it's true, it's what's got to be said. Sometimes people say, "Why do you talk like this? Even if you're right, don't you know they're going to come and arrest you, and especially if what you say is true, they're going to come down on you." Some people say this to us in the Party, they ask, "Why do you get up there and make these speeches and say these things. Yeah, I might agree with you, but you shouldn't talk like that, because they're just going to come down on you."

We say it because it's true. Because we rely on the strength and the consciousness of the masses of people. And that's what's going to determine how things are going to go in this country and not a handful of chumps sitting in the courtroom or the police. Yeah we have to have tactics and take things into account and say things carefully and in the right places at the right time, but fundamentally the masses of people have got to understand where this process is going, and if we don't tell them, who's going to—the capitalists aren't going to tell them this. So it's our responsibility, it's our duty as the Party to say this openly to the people, and this is what has to be done.

And why not? People are killing and shooting each other up and cutting each other up every day in the neighborhoods, throughout the country. Young kids, 12, 11 years old are killing each other. Why should our blood keep on flowing for these capitalists? If there's got to be blood flowing, if they're going to try putting us in war and sending millions of us off to die, why shouldn't we say openly that if blood's going to flow it's not going to flow one way, it's going to flow for us for once. This is the way we look at it and we're not going to say anything less. Because it's what has to be

said, it's true, and it's the way the world is moving, and nothing they can do can stop it.

Communists are the Opposite of Fascists

Then some people say, "Well, you're just like the fascists." No, we're not just like the fascists. Fascists are nothing but pigs rooting around in the garbage for the capitalists. That's all the fascists are. Fascists are the agents of the capitalists, who do their dirty work, and the ones who the capitalists turn loose as their crisis gets worse and the ones they even allow to take hold of the reins of government and rule for the capitalists when their so-called democracy can no longer fool the people, and they have to rule by open and direct terror. That's who fascists are.

Between the communists and the fascists there's been nothing but complete antagonism, hatred, and bloodshed ever since the two have existed. Because the communists stand for the working class and rising up and overthrowing the capitalists and eliminating all the evils of capitalism, whereas the fascists represent capitalism in its most perverted, naked and ugly form. And if we're the same as the fascists, how come whenever we've come to power we've dealt with them, and whenever they've run society on behalf of the capitalists they've dealt with us? How come we fight each other in the streets, and have to kill each other off, which we do? It's because we stand for two fundamentally opposed things, and represent two fundamentally different classes. It's not one small group against another small group, both just bands of terrorists. It's one group representing the most perverted form of a handful of exploiters, and another group representing and organizing and leading the masses of people to rise up and rid society of exploiters and exploitation. There's all the difference in the world.

Who Will Dictate to Who?

"Yeah, but you're both dictators," some people say, "you both want to have dictatorships." Again, there's all the difference in the world. Yes, we do want to have dictatorship. "You're dictatorial," they tell us. Quite so, we are dictatorial. We believe the working class should dictate to the capitalists, no bones about it, and we'll say so openly. That's the difference between us and them.

They don't dare come out openly and say that they're going to dictate. They don't get up and say, "The United States of America is the great experiment in history. It's the greatest capitalist dictatorship that has ever existed." They won't say it! Why? Because they *are* exploiters, they *are* a handful of people who have to rule over the majority to enforce exploitation, and so they don't dare say so openly. And what are *we*, the working class? We're the ma-

majority of people, who represent the future of eliminating exploitation and oppression.

Our dictatorship, the dictatorship of the *proletariat* (working class) is different than the capitalists' in two ways. First of all, when the workers dictate over the capitalists, it's the majority of people who are not exploiters, who are the producing people, the laboring people who make everything in society that's worthwhile, dictating to a handful of exploiters who want to continue to be exploiters, and new groups that crop up that want to do the same. And second of all, your dictatorship is only to keep a system, in which there are divisions between people and inequalities among people, going.

Our dictatorship is to carry forward the cause of revolution until we eliminate all differences, all inequalities, all exploitation, all oppression, and any basis for it, until we get to communism. And when we get there, there won't be any more need for dictatorships, so there won't be any. But not until we get there, not one day before that, will we stop dictating to the capitalists and those who want to be capitalists.

Do you think the working class of people who have suffered so long under this system, who've had to cry mother's tears over their kids, who've had their backs broken, who've been sent off to war and suffered all this indignity and all this oppression under this system, do you think that when the working people rise up and finally take control and start putting an end to all these wrongs, that we're going to be so stupid as to turn around and say to the exploiters and would-be exploiters, "Here, you can have a go at it again"? Do you think we intend to shed our blood to get rid of the system only to turn around and give it back to the capitalists, old or new, so that they can bring back all the misery of capitalism? Yes, we're going to dictate to the capitalists, and if they don't like it that's good—that tells us we're doing the right thing.

Socialism is the Transition to Communism

But there is a problem. How do we keep that dictatorship from becoming the dictatorship of a handful as it did in the Soviet Union? Once it was the rule of the working class, aligned with the working peasantry in Russia, millions and millions of people ruling over the handful of exploiters. But it's true, a handful of people within the leadership of that, within the leadership of the workers' own Party and government, turned that around into its opposite. Why? Because of the contradictions within that society too.

Again we have to understand and use dialectics and look to the contradictions. Because while the capitalists had been overthrown, while their private ownership had been eliminated, all the ine-

qualities left over from capitalism had not been eliminated. That takes a long time, a long struggle, both to move against these leftovers and the forces benefitting from them and to educate the people, to eliminate these differences, to raise up people who can both work with their heads and with their hands, to change the whole educational system, and the nature of the whole production process, the whole way people work, in order that we can eliminate these inequalities.

That takes a long time and a hard struggle, and at each step there will be some people who will resist it. And this is another reason why we can never give up our dictatorship, because those people who will resist it have to be forced to go along with it. Because we're not going to have so-called democracy the way they talk about it. There can't be any democracy that's above classes. As long as you've got classes, and the basis for classes, if there's democracy for one group, there cannot be democracy for the other group. If there's democracy for the exploiters to exploit, if they're free to do that, there can't be any freedom and democracy for those they exploit. And if the exploited and oppressed have risen up and overthrown their exploiters and oppressors, then they cannot allow them freedom.

At each step in the struggle to move from socialism to communism, to eliminate classes and all social inequality, there will be people who will resist eliminating the basis for new exploiters to arise. If the struggle against them is not handled correctly, yes, a handful of them can get in. Even ones who have arisen within the Party of the working class itself who have a higher position, a more privileged position in the new, socialist society, they can turn this thing around. And that can only be solved by one method, not by prayer, not by wishing it away, and certainly not by giving up, but only by continuing the struggle to eliminate the basis for that happening, to eliminate the differences that exist *even* under socialism, even though we've made tremendous strides, even though the working class has the power in society and owns the means of production, and is moving forward to communism, where the basis for those differences will be eliminated.

This is what socialist countries confront, and what the people in them come up against, and this is why there has to be continued struggle, and why we have to continue to exercise dictatorship over would-be exploiters and continue to transform society until everybody is capable of being a scientist, a worker, an administrator, a planner, and an engineer all at one time, which is not a dream, but which is quite possible. All of the inventions that have been made in the history of mankind that have moved technology forward, all of them, were made on the basis of working people's experience, and many of them were made directly by the workers themselves.

These people who are scientists, engineers, technicians, planners, administrators—they came out of their mama's womb naked, just like the rest of us. And they are in no way naturally superior to anyone else. It's the capitalist system, and its educational system, which says that only a few can be in those jobs and on the top and the rest have to be prepared for the army, McDonald's, the steel mill, the unemployment line. That's the way we're educated, the different groups. That's why we have people who work only with their brains while the majority of people work with their hands, and are not allowed to fully develop their minds and use them fully together with their hands.

And so under socialist society, we have to exercise dictatorship over the people that want to keep the educational system that way. And at each step we have to transform it so from the time kids are three years old, they learn how to use machinery and to produce and at the same time they learn how to plan and build, and do all the things that are necessary to grasp and master all the laws of engineering, science, chemistry and everything else that go into building a machine and to planning the building of it. And it is quite possible. It is quite possible, and in fact it's inevitable that this will happen, that people can master these things. There's no God-given reason—well, first of all, there's no God, which I'll talk about in just a second. There's no "natural" reason why people cannot learn this. It's simply in the way society's organized, and that's why we have to continue to make revolution until we've transformed all that and eliminated these divisions and inequalities.

Man Can Master Nature

Well, that gets to the next question. People say, "You are a bunch of Godless atheists." That also has to be divided into two parts. First of all, as to the fact that we're Godless—yes, we are. But that doesn't make us any different than anybody else. Everybody's Godless because there is no God! What makes Communists different is that we consciously grasp this fact and we're actively atheists (*a-theist*, "a" means without and "theist" means believer in God, so we're without belief in God).

This doesn't mean we don't believe in freedom of religion—every socialist country allows people the right to believe or not believe. Why? Because the way that people are going to learn that they don't have to rely on the supernatural is that they see that they can take matters into their own hands in confronting society and changing it, and in confronting nature and changing it so they can master it step by step. Man can never have complete mastery over the rest of nature, but step by step he can gain more and more mastery. As people see this, they will come to recognize that

there's no need to rely on the supernatural. And as society is transformed so that people don't have to believe in another world to have a good world (but they can start building a good world here) people will themselves, through struggle and discussion and persuasion, come to see that there's no need to rely on something other than nature itself, and man's ability to transform nature in order to move ahead and progress.

This is our attitude toward the question. We look at religion not simply as something which is wrong, but as something which is used to spiritually enslave people. To keep people from rising up and taking matters into their own hands. It is something which has always been promoted by the exploiting classes because they have a stake in keeping people believing that there must be another way to solve problems than rising up and struggling, and that there must be another world than this one where things will be better.

And why do people believe in religion, masses of people, at this point? The answer is not too difficult. Because almost everybody wants to think there's got to be something better than this, and there's got to be something more than what you can see immediately around you to make things better. And that's true: for the masses of people under the capitalist system the world is rotten and terrible and relying on the capitalists can only make it worse. So people turn to religion because they don't yet see that there's another way, there's a way to overthrow capitalism and take mastery of society and move forward.

Related to this point, religion holds sway among the masses of people because in general they're not yet armed with a scientific understanding of nature and society. This has always been true. Religion has taken root among mankind *always* where man's ignorance has been. Because at any given time, though all things are knowable, there's many things we don't know. We can learn things step by step, but we don't know everything all at once or at any time and we never will.

And this is why in ancient times people worshipped lightning. Now if I stood up here and did that now you'd think I was crazy. But in ancient Greek society they believed that lightning was Zeus, the greatest of all the different gods, throwing down bolts, lightning bolts from the sky. Why? Because they didn't understand the laws of lightning. They didn't understand that it was electricity and what caused it. Once man grasped the laws involved and understood that, he ceased to worship lightning. How could he worship something that he could master? How could it be above him and superior to him and supernatural, if he could master it?

The same thing with water—people used to believe in the gods of water, and they prayed to them to prevent floods or to prevent a drought and have water come. They prayed to the rain and all the rest of it. But if people understand that there are laws governing

these things, and if they can grasp these laws and use them to master nature, once they've freed society from the capitalists' control and the chains that capitalism puts in the way of that, then people will by themselves, through discussion and struggle, without force, step by step give up religion and the need to believe in it.

So this is why, on the one hand, yes, we are Godless and atheists, and we openly proclaim that, on the other hand, this is why we believe that people's right to believe has to be protected. But in order to be emancipated, we not only have to emancipate ourselves in the material world, but as part of doing that we have to emancipate our minds, we have to do the two in connection with each other, or we cannot emancipate ourselves in the material world. So we have to cast aside superstition, which includes religion.

Now, I don't mean to offend anybody, but this is the way I look at it, this is the way communists look at it. It's an interesting thing to check out—every religion in the world believes that every other religion is superstition. And they're all correct. Each of them is superstition. It's the most sophisticated form of superstition. Why is it still propagated among the people? Because, the exploiting classes benefit from it. And everything that's tended to strike against religion, no matter how true it was, and how correct it was, the exploiting classes, at least as soon as they were fully entrenched in power, have at first resisted it, even if they've sooner or later taken it up and used it themselves.

Science Liberates, Religion Enslaves

Back a while ago (probably in your school they at least taught you about this), Copernicus and Galileo and others made a discovery that startled and shocked a lot of people, and was brought forth in the face of bitter resistance from the church and the powers that be. They discovered that, after all, the earth was not the center of the universe, and that man was not residing at the center of the universe, put there by God to be the link to God, through the church, and that all the rest of the universe did not in fact revolve around the earth.

Now today, most people accept that as a fact—the earth goes around the sun and not the other way around. And anyway, who said that man is the center of the universe? Nobody held a meeting and elected him. There's millions of galaxies, and more than that of planets, and they're all moving and revolving, and the earth is in no way the center of the universe. Galileo, and Copernicus more so, discovered this, by discovering and utilizing new scientific advances in astronomy.

But when they brought this forth (even though today everybody says, "Yeah, the earth is not the center of the universe, and the

earth is not flat, it's round," and all this), all these things were resisted bitterly at first and for as long as possible by the church and by religion, because these discoveries struck at doctrines that the church and religion had enforced on the people, and had brainwashed into the people in order to keep them in their place. "Everything has a place in the universe, and your place is under the heel of the feudal landlord," including the church which was one of the biggest feudal landlords in the feudal society. "Your place is under the heel of the exploiters." So the exploiters said—in those days the feudal landowning exploiters who then ruled society. And so they hounded Copernicus, and they drove Galileo to his death bed.

And yet at the same time, or shortly thereafter, a new class of exploiters in particular took up these scientific discoveries, and used them for navigation. Why? Because they needed to. Because the different capitalists who were developing needed to take their goods thousands of miles away to trade them and out-sell other capitalists from other countries. And that's why Columbus, by the way, went around the world. Not just to see what was out there, but his trip was financed because different capitalists developing as merchants wanted to sell their goods all the way around the world, and they had to make use of this astronomy and this navigational science. But even so, this didn't stop them from trying to keep the masses of people in the dark and enslaved by religious superstition.

And so it is today. Every advance of science challenges religion, and calls it into question. One time a guy told me, "Man will never get to the moon." I said "Why not?" "Because it's written in the Bible," he told me. I said, "Well, O.K. then, if man does get to the moon, will you admit that the Bible is wrong and that there's no God?" "No." I said, "Well, why not?" "Because man can never get to the moon!" I said, "But if they do?" "Yeah, if they do then I'll accept that." So a couple of years later I went back, and man was on the moon. What'd the guy tell me? "You don't really believe they went to the moon, do you? That's just all that nonsense on the television. That's an idiot acting it out in some studio. You know that. They didn't really go to the moon."

But in fact they did. And everybody has to recognize it who wants to move forward and live in the real world. This guy told me they don't have satellites in the sky. How can they transmit television from Japan to here instantaneously all the way across the world if they aren't bouncing those rays off the satellites? So society moves forward. Each advance of society, each advance in science helps lay a further basis to emancipate the people, and challenges those forces that want to keep the masses of people enslaved spiritually in order to keep them enslaved materially.

So, while we recognize and uphold the right of people to freedom

of religion, at the same time we have to struggle and help people to be emancipated, and to emancipate their minds and recognize that the transformation of society and of nature depends upon man himself and that man is the maker of his own world and there is nothing else besides man and nature and man's ability to grasp the laws of nature and transform it. And this is a tremendously emancipating thing, when we can recognize and shake off the shackles that have been embedded in our minds as well as on our bodies in one way or another.

Communism Means the End to Inequality

I could go on and on over other things that are raised, except that I know the time must be getting late. So I just want to deal with one other question that's raised, and then try to get on to the last point and sum up. People say, "How do we know that socialism will really solve these problems." In particular, people ask, "How do we know that the working class won't be sold out and we won't get just a new group of exploiters. How do we know, that, for example, you won't have 'white people's socialism'? Just a different thing, but with the white people still on top of the Black people, and Chicanos and the Puerto Ricans. All the rest of them will still be on the bottom, while the white workers will be up there on top?"

Well, first of all, there is no way that we can guarantee that just because we've overthrown the capitalists and taken control of factories and other means of production that some new capitalists won't arise and they won't come back and snatch it away from us. There is no guarantee other than the fact that unless society moves forward on the road of socialism to communism, it will continually be thrown into crisis and people will continually rise up and make revolution over and over again, or as Mao Tsetung said one time, "Fight, fail, fight again, fail again, fight again until victory. This is the logic of the people." That's the only guarantee we have, that wherever there is oppression, there is resistance, that people will continue to struggle. And that the advance of society at this stage of its development demands that it move forward through socialism to communism.

But there is a way that we can fight to prevent socialism from being betrayed. And that way is to do exactly what we're beginning to do, to get a grasp of the basic science of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought, of the science of revolution, and arm broader and broader masses of people with it, so that they themselves can consciously take up this struggle, and transform society and nature, and continue to do so even after they've overthrown the old exploiters.

Can there be such a thing as "white people's socialism," where

all the white workers get ahead while all the minorities are still on the bottom? No, there cannot. Not just because I say so, but because there cannot be any such thing as socialism which doesn't move forward to eliminate every inequality. If inequalities are allowed to continue to exist between different people, they will inevitably grow into class differences. But more than that, if these inequalities are not narrowed and eliminated step by step and as fast as actually possible, then not only will there be classes—which is inevitable under socialism, that there will still be classes—but the exploiting class, all those who have the ability and the desire to bring back the system of exploitation, will win out. Then you will no longer have socialism, you'll just have capitalism again.

Socialism by definition and socialist revolution means you have to move on to eliminate the differences, not only between nationalities, but between workers with different levels of skill, differences between people who are mainly intellectual workers and people who are mainly manual workers, people who live in the city and people who live in the countryside and so on. Unless you move on continuously in the direction toward eliminating those things there will no longer be socialism. Out of those differences and inequalities new capitalists will arise and say, "Just as it is correct for whites to be over Blacks, it is correct for me to be over you, because I'm smarter than you." Out of the same laws and processes and the same soil that those inequalities grow out of, between nationalities and races, so too do class differences arise and develop, and class antagonisms develop, and if these are allowed to grow and are not rooted out step by step, then socialism will be, temporarily, overthrown and capitalism restored.

This is why it is absolutely and only in the interests of the working class to move forward and eliminate every kind of inequality, until as I said, people can be workers, scientists, administrators—people of all nationalities, men and women—until the social inequalities and the evils that flow from them have been completely eradicated. Otherwise, unless that's the direction that you're moving in, there can be and there is no socialism, and there certainly can be no communism, which is our final goal.

The masses of people have to be armed to understand this, because these contradictions will still be around for a while, even under socialism, and all these problems will not go away in one day, or one year. But, systematically, we will move to eliminate them, and that's the only way we can keep going on a socialist road towards communism. And this is exactly why it takes the masses of people being armed, having a grasp of revolutionary science, and understanding the contradictions, both that exist now and that will still exist after we've overthrown the capitalists and the working class is in power. It's only by the broadest masses of people being armed and taking this up that we can continue to ad-

vance on a revolutionary road. It's only by the broadest masses grasping this, and having a leading core, organized as a sharp weapon, a Party, to lead them, only in that way, with a class-conscious section of the workers to lead the rest of the class, and with masses of people having a basic understanding, only in that way can we take even the first great step, which is to rise up and seize power. And certainly only in that way, by deepening the process, can we continue to advance toward communism.

Communism Represents the Bright Future— It's Not Something to Hide

And this is the last point I want to make before summing up. People say, "Yeah, all this is true. But why won't you call it something else, other than communism. Why don't we not talk about it so much among everybody else, because you know it causes a lot of problems and arguments and a lot of people don't see this yet."

Well, let's look at this. First of all, why don't we call it something else? It wouldn't matter what we'd call it, the capitalists would still hate it, and still paint it as people eating babies and raping women, and everything else. We could call it "Discoism," and if it stood for what it stood for, which is the elimination of classes, exploitation, and oppression, the capitalists would still hate it just the same, and do everything they could to make it a dirty word, as they do with communism now. And, as I said, we should clean things up that the capitalists have dirtied up. We should understand that communism is the inevitable and the bright future, not only for the youth, but for the masses of people. We should take it out boldly. Now, I don't mean that we should become revolutionary "Moonies" and revolutionary Hare Krishnas and act like fools, and go around acting like we got the new religion. No, exactly, it's not a religion, it's a science. But it's also a system that lies ahead that is inevitable, that we're marching toward, and despite twists and turns and setbacks, nothing can keep us from achieving it. It's the future and it's truly bright. Why should we not take that out openly and explain that to the people? Proudly!

If we don't do that, how are they ever going to believe us? How are they going to believe that we think it's a bright future if we go around and shudder about it and don't want to put it out openly to them? They're not going to believe us! Why should they believe us? And that doesn't mean we just walk up to people and say, "Communism, can you dig it?" And if they say, "No," we say, "Well, later for you," and go on. We have to unite with people in struggle, in fighting back against this man-eating system.

The Tasks of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade

The organization that we're forming has to have three basic tasks, which will all contribute to the goal of revolution and communism. One, it has to unite with and lead the struggles of youth around all the things that come down on youth in this society, around all the sharp contradictions, whether it's the question of jobs, police murder, discrimination against minorities, rotting neighborhoods, the junk that's peddled in the neighborhoods, being dragged off to war, or the battles people wage on the job—where young people are able to get a job—or whatever else it may be. That's the first task.

The second task is we must unite masses of youth together with the broad sections of the American people, fighting at the side of, and as an ally of, the working class in the all-around and overall struggle against the system.

And the third thing we must do is we must go out and struggle openly in the realm of ideas with people. The capitalists don't sit back and not spread ideas. They spread them every day. They tell people lies every day. They dirty people's minds every day, like I said. We have to go out there and boldly take them on, on that front too, and explain to people what the real nature of this society is, where it has to go, and what the bright future really is.

You know Mao Tsetung once said, and I think he said a very profound truth, "If you want others to be strong, you must be strong yourself." If you want others to stand up to this system, we have to set an example. We are armed with an understanding, it's not that we're better than anybody else. Communists are not "better" than anybody else. Nobody is born better than anybody else, and nobody fundamentally is better than anybody else. But we have begun to grasp a crucial, life-and-death understanding, we've begun to grasp these laws and see where society's going.

So if we want others to stand up and continue to fight and to grasp these ideas and to put them into practice and change the world, we've got to be bold, and we've got to be strong. We've got to forcefully put these ideas, this great truth, forward. If we want others to see that this is the future, we've got to present it as the future and fight for it openly and boldly as the future. And this is the third and very important task in this organization. So these are the three main tasks this organization must carry out, along with the "internal" task of training members of the organization itself as revolutionary leaders, developing them as communists.

Revolution and Communism, Necessary and Inevitable

So I guess in concluding, having said all that, I hope that I've provided some basis to help people to get into lively discussion and

struggle, because we have a lot of work to do here. We have a lot of questions to thrash out. We have a lot of questions to decide in terms of what we're going to do as well as what we're going to unite around and how we're going to unite around it. Because, as I said, they're always saying that communists make everybody march just the same, all in unison, everybody has to think exactly alike, but that's not the case. On the one hand, there is only one objective world, and it is knowable, though step by step, and there are certain laws to everything, and everybody can grasp them and has to grasp them more and more deeply in order for things to go forward.

If you want to fix a car there are laws of mechanics you have to master and apply. If your ignition system is messed up and you're fooling around with your radiator, you're not going to get anywhere. But on the other hand, understanding there are basic laws, how to apply them, how to deal with all the different contradictions that are involved, that takes a lot of people's ideas—and the more, the better. How to get at the ignition system, what's the best way to deal with it, what parts do you need and what parts can you fix up yourself, what ones do you have to replace? These and a hundred other questions come up in changing anything, and especially so in changing society, and transforming it, and making it run in the interests of the people, and organizing it so that it will.

On the one hand there is unity, great unity because there is actually an objective reality that's knowable, and there are objective laws which we can continue to discover, and use to transform the world in the interests of the people. On the other hand there's great diversity, because even in discovering those laws, people have to battle and argue about what they are, and what's true and what's not true.

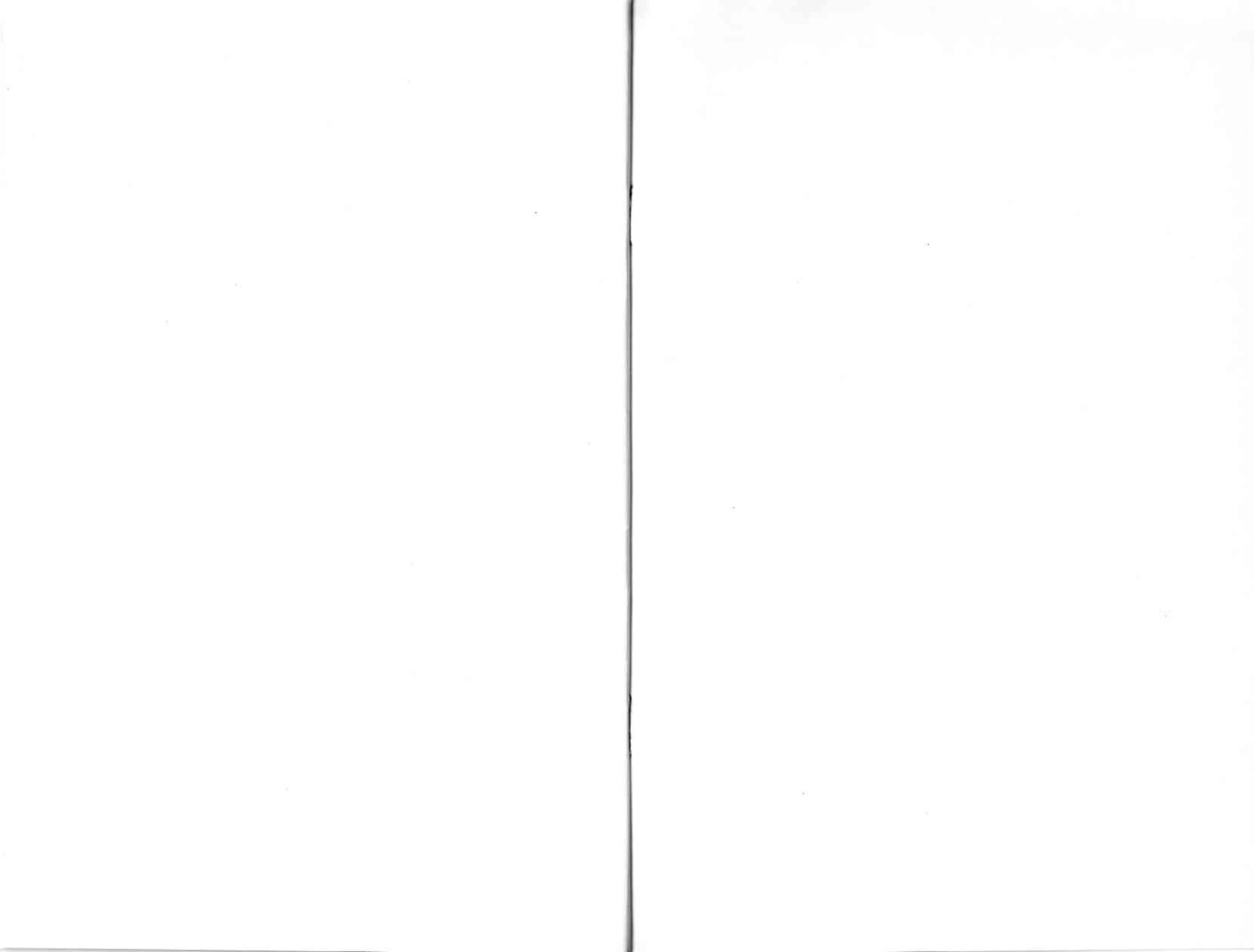
And second of all, in applying them they have to battle and argue and discuss and try to come to more unity and keep on doing that step by step as to how to do this. So whenever we have basic unity, and we take up the science of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought, we have to have a lot of struggle about what it is, how it applies, and how to use it to change the world. That has to go on here and it has to go on continually through the life of this organization that we're founding. And it will go on all through socialist society, and it will go on in communist society, and it will go on as long as there is society. There will always be contradictions, there will always be right and wrong, there will always be disagreements, and that's the way that things will continue to move forward.

But the point is—all these problems, all these contradictions—how much steel are we going to produce under socialism as compared to how much coal and cement and how much lumber

we're going to cut down, how many schools are we going to build, and how many crops do we have to grow, and how do we get them from one place to another—do we in this room know the answers to all those problems now? No, but I say this, those would be great problems to be dealing with. And those are the problems that we are going to be dealing with once we've taken the first great step, of overthrowing the capitalists and establishing the rule of the working class, and moving on with socialism towards communism.

This is inevitable, as I said, it's the way things are going, and we're beginning, we're taking a further step here toward that goal. The first and most important step in building revolutionary organization was taken with the formation of the Party, but another great step is being taken here with the formation of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade. And for this step to be as great as it can and must be, and to go as far as it can, everyone's got to get fully into the process, has got to apply themselves to grasping and to using in a concrete way, both today and for the life of this organization, this great revolutionary powerful science of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought, which unleashes the strength of the masses, so that they can achieve the great goal which it proclaims and shows us is not only possible but inevitable, the great goal of communism.

[Thunderous applause!!]



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