

TO WIN 獲得的將是整個世界 **МИР ВБИГРАТЬ**

1999/25

A WORLD

عالم فزوح
UN MONDE A GAGNER KAZANILACAK DÜNYA

UN MUNDO QUE GANAR जीतने के लिए सारा विश्व है **UN MONDO DA CONQUISTARE**

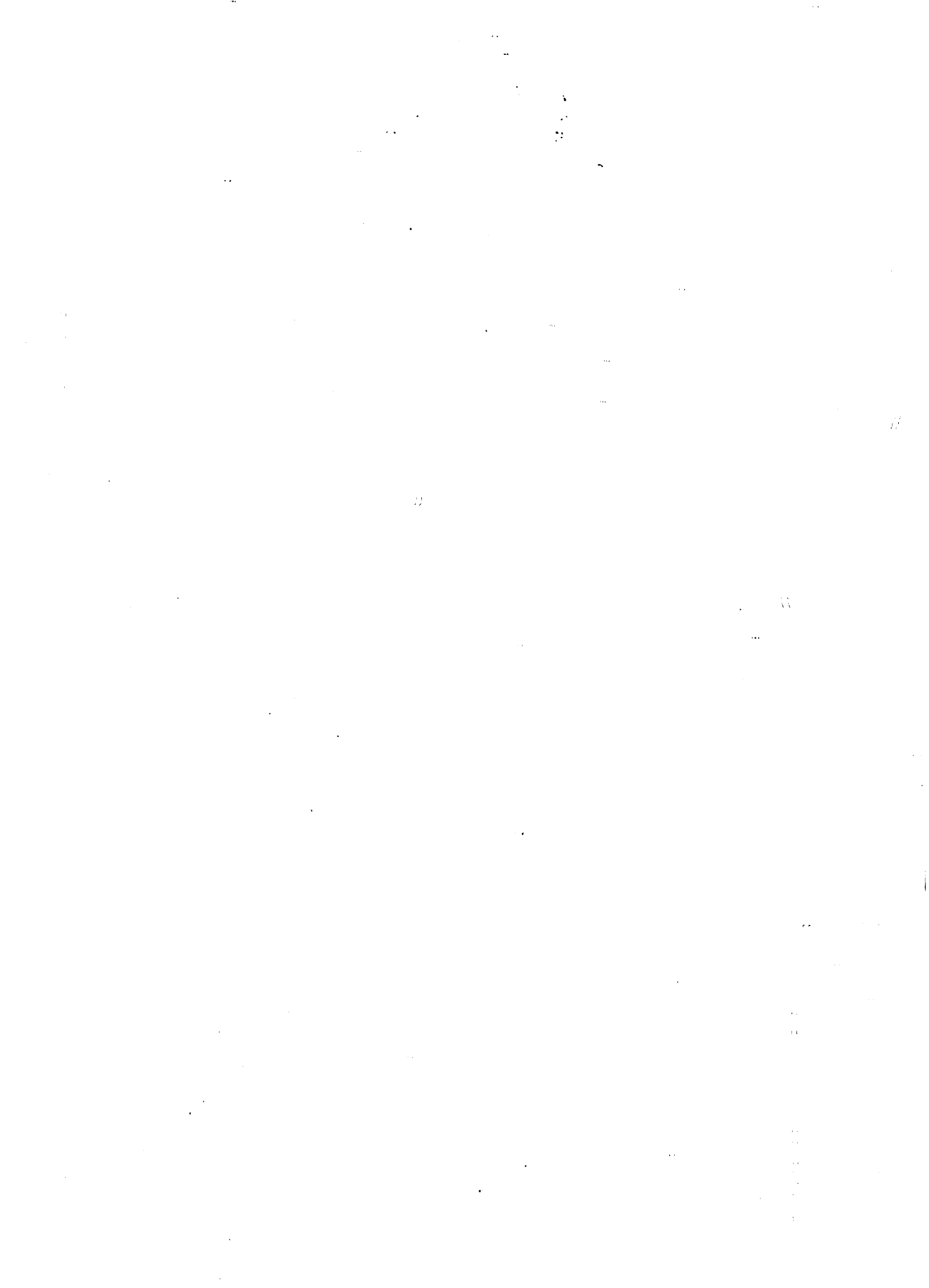
1 October 1949

"THE CHINESE PEOPLE HAVE STOOD UP!"

— Mao Tsetung

INSIDE:
ON POL POT
NATO'S UGLY WAR

جهانی برای فتح **EINE WELT ZU GEWINNEN** বিশ্ব বিজয়



A WORLD TO WIN

Statement on the Capture of Comrade Feliciano

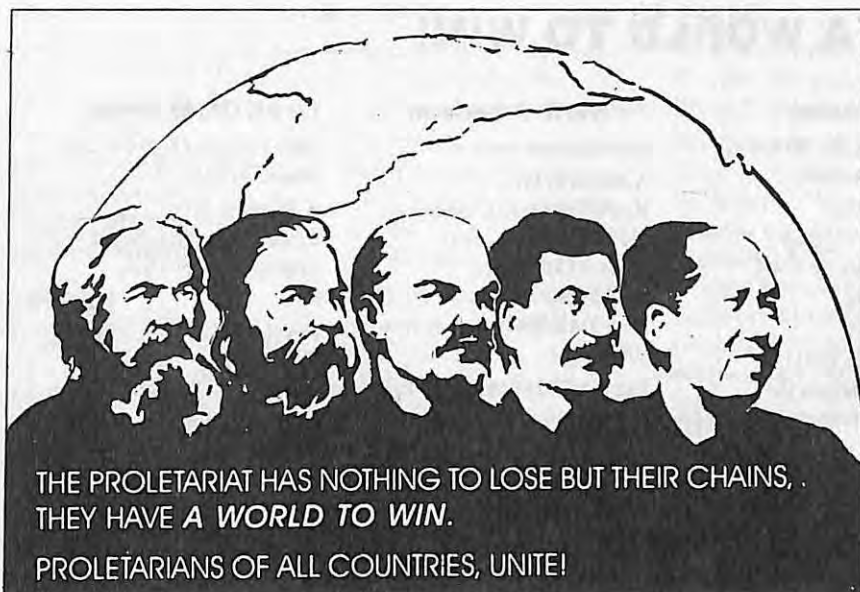
The capture of Comrade Feliciano (Oscar Ramirez Durand) is painful for the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, and for all the world's Maoists, revolutionaries and progressive people.

After the arrest of Communist Party of Peru Chairman Gonzalo in 1992, Comrade Feliciano assumed the responsibility of leading the Central Committee of the PCP through this "bend in the road". Since then the PCP has never faltered in continuing the People's War, showing the highest courage and determination in the face of the enemy, which has mounted repeated intensive military campaigns against the People's Liberation Army. The Party has also persevered despite the Right Opportunist Line that emerged from among the Party's ranks which insists that the war be abandoned in the face of hard blows. This would have meant abandoning the masses of people of Peru, who have always been the source of the Party's strength and its ability to overcome twists and turns. It would have also meant abandoning the cause of the exploited and oppressed of the whole world. It has been the PCP Central Committee's steadfastness and grasp of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism that has enabled it to find the ways to continue to draw on the strength of the people and persist in leading the People's War.

At this difficult moment for the revolution in Peru, it continues to be of vital importance for our cause to draw on the strength of the people in every country possible in support of the People's War in Peru. We call on all those who can be united to oppose the criminal Fujimori regime that has committed so many atrocities against the people and the revolutionaries, including holding Chairman Gonzalo in total isolation for nearly seven years, and to support the resistance of the heroic prisoners of war who are holding out against torture, abuse, horrendous conditions and other forms of pressure to force them to make peace with the U.S.-backed regime. At this time, it is particularly important to oppose the Fujimori regime's efforts to submit Comrade Feliciano to such treatment.

*Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement
15 July 1999*

For more information, contact: BCM RIM/London WCIN 3XX/UK.



1999/25

50 Years after the Chinese Victory

Fifty years on, the historical magnitude of the victory of the People's War in China stands out all the more clearly. An *AWTW* editorial looks back at how Mao and the Chinese revolutionaries pioneered the path and practice that now serves as the basic model for freeing an oppressed country from the grip of imperialism. These lessons will strengthen the ability of those today who are determined to lead the masses in violently sweeping away the old world and beginning to construct the new one. An 18-page photo essay celebrates the courage and revolutionary determination of the Chinese masses who on 1 October 1949 did indeed "stand up".

NATO's Ugly War

The world's media are trumpeting that the US/NATO's so-called moral war in the Balkans is the harbinger of a "new age of humanitarian intervention". Yet the way the US and its NATO allies are waging the war – with the biggest military alliance in human history pounding a small poor country from the safety of miles up in the air – and the hidden agenda for which they are actually fighting reveal that these imperialist humanitarians have very bloody fangs.

What Went Wrong with the Pol Pot Regime

This article sets out to overthrow the reactionary consensus that uses the Pol Pot years in Cambodia to bolster the view that "the more radical the effort to change society, the more catastrophic the results". Instead, the policies and practice of the Khmer Rouge leadership are subjected to an in-depth examination from the standpoint of revolutionary Maoism, with some surprising conclusions.

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1 October 1949

"The Chinese People Have Stood Up!"

"The Chinese people have stood up!" With these words Mao Tsetung announced to the world the establishment of the People's Republic of China on October 1st 1949 from Tienanmen Square in the heart of Beijing. Fifty years later it is natural and fitting that proletarian revolutionaries around the world join in celebrating the triumph of this great epic of history by deepening their grasp of the lessons learned

amidst tremendous sacrifice and ultimate triumph so as to better apply these lessons today.

Chased from the cities by the counter-revolution in 1927, the communists of China, their ranks greatly reduced by the massacres unleashed by the Kuomintang (KMT) reactionaries, took the revolution to China's vast countryside and began a process of struggle that would span more than two

decades and be made up of three distinct wars (the Agrarian Revolution, the War Against Japan and finally the Civil War against the KMT ruling class). In the course of the revolution Mao and the Communist Party of China astounded the world with the Long March and other feats of unparalleled heroism. The victory in 1949 opened a new chapter in the world proletarian revolution by fanning the



struggle of the oppressed peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America against imperialism and opening the door to a whole new experience in carrying out socialist revolution.

Mao established what today seems self-evident: in a country like China the masses of the peasantry, the majority of the population directly suffering under the semi-feudal system, would be the main force of the revolution. But

at that time Mao's view represented only a small minority in the ranks of the communists. It was widely believed that revolution in the oppressed and backward countries like China would come only with the victory of the proletarian revolution in the West and that the revolution in these countries would follow the same path as the Bolshevik revolution, in which the working class first seized power in the key cities and

then took the war against the exploiters to the countryside.

Mao's ability to understand and chart the way forward was based mainly on synthesising the experience of the thousands and thousands of communists and millions among the masses in making revolution. But this treasure chest of experience of heroism, arduous struggle and bitter defeats did not by itself produce the answers to the

problems of the revolution. Other leaders drew different conclusions from the same experience, and very sharply opposed positions, what Mao came to call "two-line struggle", developed over the targets, basic class alliance, nature and path of the revolution in China.

Nor, as both bourgeois scholars and revisionists were later to claim, could Mao be considered a representative of China's peasantry and its age-old struggle. While Mao had great confidence in the peasantry and its revolutionary potential and drew lessons from its past struggles, he was the representative of a different class, the proletariat, which had only recently emerged in China as a result of the penetration of imperialism. Mao was armed with the scientific ideology that corresponds to this class, then known as Marxism-Leninism, which he used to analyse the contradictions in society and sum up revolutionary experience. Most importantly, Mao *applied* Marxism-Leninism to the concrete problems of the Chinese revolution, part of the process through which, together with his leadership in socialist revolution and the struggle against modern revisionism, he developed the proletarian science to new heights, to what we now call Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

Mao understood that in countries like China the need for a democratic revolution against the old feudal system and against foreign domination was crying out. Others before him also struggled against these enemies. China's bourgeoisie, including some progressive representatives like Sun Yat-sen, had led powerful struggles against imperialism and the old feudal society and culture. These efforts mobilised millions of Chinese people from all walks of life, but they were all ultimately defeated and/or betrayed. (The arch-criminal Chiang Kai-shek turned the KMT, which Sun Yat-sen had formed and which was allied with the communists, into a counter-revolutionary machine of terror and repression.)

Mao pointed out that in China the bourgeoisie was incapable of leading the democratic revolution to completion. And the whole history of the 20th century has underscored this truth again and again: in the oppressed countries this class absolutely cannot carry the democratic revolution to victory.

The principal section of the bourgeoisie, the bureaucrat capitalist class, has become the chief vehicle for im-

perialist penetration in these countries; its whole existence depends on protecting and representing imperialism. It compromises with and reinforces all sorts of backward feudal elements in the economy and culture of these societies. The bureaucrat capitalist class is one of the main targets of the revolution, one of the "three great mountains", as Mao put it, weighing down on the backs of the people, together with feudalism and imperialism.

Mao analysed that there was another section of the bourgeoisie, called the "national bourgeoisie", which opposes imperialism and feudalism and which he considered part of the people's camp. But he also pointed out that the national bourgeoisie was weak economically and politically and also had some ties to imperialism and feudalism. It could only support the revolution "to a certain extent and a certain degree", and it could even go over to the side of the enemy under certain circumstances. In no way could this class be entrusted with the leadership of the revolution. Mao's first great "two-line struggle" was against the rightists in the Party who abandoned leadership of the revolution to the bourgeoisie, which led to the disastrous consequences referred to above when the KMT lashed out at the communists and the masses.

Thus Mao fought for the understanding that only the proletariat, through its communist party, could stand at the head of the people and lead the democratic revolution to victory. Mao also analysed this phenomenon from a proletarian internationalist point of view. Mao understood that in the era of imperialism identified by Lenin, the democratic revolutions in the oppressed countries were part of the world proletarian revolution. Only the proletariat and its party could lead such a revolution. Furthermore, this revolution led not to capitalism, as did the old democratic revolutions of the pre-imperialist era, but to socialism and communism. While Mao's thinking was based on the basic analysis Lenin and the Communist International had made of the contemporary world, he was able to greatly deepen this initial understanding based on the rich experience of both the advances and defeats of the Chinese revolution. He used the term "New Democratic revolution" (NDR) to describe the bourgeois-democratic revolution led by the proletariat, an understanding that is basic

to Maoists worldwide.

By referring to "new" democratic revolution Mao was calling attention to the afore-mentioned difference with the old-type of democratic revolution, that the NDR must be led by the working class. The revolution was bourgeois democratic in character in that it was aimed at feudalism, imperialism and bureaucrat capitalism and did not target the bourgeoisie as a whole as an enemy, nor was its goal the establishment of socialism. It was feudalism and imperialism that were putting an immense burden on the people, strangling the productive forces. The basis and necessity existed to unite the entire people against these enemies, including those weak and vacillating allies such as the national bourgeoisie who dreamed of a strong capitalist China free of foreign domination.

The other and related reason why Mao refers to a "new" democratic revolution is precisely because unlike the previous democratic revolutions in the West, such as the French Revolution, the NDR does not lead to capitalism but rather to socialism. Why? In violently sweeping away imperialism and feudalism, the New Democratic revolution eliminates the main obstacles that have prevented a vigorous independent capitalist economy from developing. But more importantly the leadership of the proletariat assures that the NDR will open the way to the second stage, that of the proletarian socialist revolution, whose goal is to establish a socialist society and be part of the worldwide struggle for communism. As Mao put it so brilliantly, the New Democratic revolution opens the door for capitalism, but it opens the door to socialism even wider.

PROTRACTED PEOPLE'S WAR

Joseph Stalin had pointed out in 1927 that one of the specific conditions of the Chinese revolution was that from the beginning the armed revolution was confronting the armed counter-revolution. Mao was to develop this point further in establishing that the basic path of the revolution would be a process of protracted warfare in which the peasantry, especially the poor peasants, would be the main force of the revolution but that the working class through its communist party would be the leading force.

Mao put the problem of seizing

political power by force of arms squarely at the centre of the revolutionary agenda. He summed this up with his famous statement, "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun." His enemies have never forgiven Mao for having said this and still less for having implemented it in China, where the guns of the communist-led army crushed the haughty rule of the imperialists, bureaucrat capitalists and feudal lords. But Mao's statement was simply the succinct summation of what the exploiting classes have been practising since time immemorial. Have the reactionaries ever failed to use violent force to maintain their rule? History has proven that the ruling class preach "non-violence" to the oppressed while they themselves torture, imprison and murder whenever necessary to preserve their rule.

Mao studied both the laws of warfare in general and the particular characteristics of the revolutionary warfare of the Chinese people. He understood that because of the nature of Chinese society it was possible to begin the war even when in an overall and strategic sense the enemy was stronger than the people, and that by waging warfare it was possible to gradually transform this situation until the might of the people's forces overcame that of the enemy and enabled the revolutionary forces to go over to the strategic offensive. The path of protracted people's war enables the revolutionary forces to weather the storms and actively transform weakness into strength. It focuses the strength of the people's armed forces on the enemy's weak point—the vast countryside in the oppressed countries where the peasantry has both a need and desire to fight for liberation. In this way the revolutionary forces could "surround the cities from the countryside", establishing red political power bit by bit in the base areas until the conditions throughout the country, and in conjunction with international developments, enabled the people's forces to go on the offensive and achieve nation-wide victory.

When Mao set out on this path it was still uncharted. In the furnace of revolutionary practice Mao and the Communist Party of China developed a comprehensive military doctrine of the proletariat. Although the vast area of Asia, Africa and Latin America contains scores of countries with very different conditions, each crying out for

the creative application of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to the particular problems of the society and revolution, the general features of what has come to be called the "Chinese path" describe the basic orientation for making revolution in the oppressed countries. This is why the *Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement* calls Mao's teaching the "basic point of reference" in these countries. Analysing the significant developments that have taken place in the world over the past several decades is indeed a vital task, but this task will only be accomplished by building upon the Maoist foundation, not by undermining it. Furthermore, even in the imperialist countries where the socio-economic formation requires the revolution to follow a different path of insurrection in the cities followed by civil war, Mao's teachings on people's war have universal application.

In the fifty years since the victory of the Chinese revolution all sorts of opposing "models" have been proposed to the oppressed peoples. The Soviet Union, which was captured by a new capitalist ruling class in 1956, became the centre of modern revisionism — those who gave lip service to Marxism but in actual line and practice repudiated Marx and Lenin. Naturally, these revisionists viewed Mao, who had led the struggle to expose their bourgeois nature and oppose them, as their bitter enemy. (Even today the revisionists' filth and slander against Mao has not been completely swept away, even if their heirs are sometimes happy to try to claim Mao as well, even while attacking his teachings.)

The revisionists asserted that there was a "non-capitalist road to development" in the oppressed countries of Asia, African and Latin America which was neither the path of people's war and New Democratic revolution charted by Mao nor the "classical" capitalism promoted by the Western imperialists. In fact, the "non-capitalist road" meant continuing the rule of the bureaucrat capitalist class in league with feudalism. The basic difference was that the ruling classes of these "non-capitalist" countries would be connected to the very real capitalist rulers of the Soviet Union, which had emerged as a major imperialist power challenging the U.S.-led imperialist bloc for world domination. India, the world's second-largest country, teem-

ing with hundreds of millions of oppressed people, was the ultimate example of this counter-revolutionary path. The reactionary social system remained the same, the revolutionary struggles led by the communists were viciously suppressed, and the whole country remained locked into the world imperialist system. It is no wonder that the call "China's path is our path" had such an electrifying effect in that country and others, because it stood for rupture with parliamentarianism, peaceful subservience to the ruling class, and international alignment with the Soviet betrayers.

Revisionism in other forms has also fought Maoism over the basic strategy and character of revolution in the oppressed countries. One brand of revisionism, known as "Guevarism" (after the Cuban leader Che Guevara), covered its opposition to Maoism with some left-sounding phrases about "one-stage socialist revolution". This line denigrated the revolutionary potential of the peasantry and foreswore the waging of a protracted people's war. Instead, the armed actions of a small band of "saviours" would, according to this line, transform the political situation in the country as a whole and lead to a quick victory through insurrection in the city and/or a collapse of the existing regime.

But this line, which appears as a "fast-track" to revolution, is in reality a fast track to capitulation, because it abandons the actual task of mobilising the masses to uproot the old society and make a fundamental break with the world imperialist system. Where this line has been put into practice, it has never led to the establishment of the rule of the proletariat and the people. Generally speaking, this kind of armed struggle is really seen as complementary to a strategy of negotiation and alliance with so-called progressive sections of the ruling classes.

Similarly, after the death of Mao and the seizure of power by the capitalist-roaders in China, more than a few former friends and admirers of revolutionary China jumped on the bandwagon of the anti-Mao forces. Led by Enver Hoxha, then leader of Albania, these forces centred their attack on Mao's teachings on the nature of the class struggle under socialism, but they also attacked Mao's line and practice of waging protracted people's war. Like the Soviet revisionists before him,

Hoxha accused Mao of abandoning the leading role of the proletariat and of "waging war without perspective". Actually, Mao insisted on the essential point: that the proletariat must lead the entire people in making revolution. In this sense he was applying and developing Lenin's famous point that a communist "should not be a trade union secretary but a tribune of the people".

The victory of the New Democratic revolution in 1949 was, as Mao put it, "only the first step in a march of 10,000 li". It had laid the basis and cleared the path for the second, higher and more profound revolution, the socialist revolution. From 1949 onward, the two paths of socialism and capitalism confronted each other in China in increasingly intense and complicated ways. This led to struggles no less heroic than the Long March and victories no less stunning than the defeat of the KMT armies in 1949. The socialist revolution was ultimately defeated in 1976, but not without first reaching unprecedented heights during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966-76, laying the basis for the later advance of the world proletarian revolution, including in China itself. As the Chinese revolution blossomed into its socialist stage and Mao further developed the revolutionary ideology, the full significance of his earlier teachings on the New Democratic revolution came into sharper focus. Mao waged the most important struggle for the liberation of an oppressed nation that the world has ever seen, but he was not a nationalist. His stand, viewpoint and method were that of the international proletariat.¹

The advance of the revolution to its second and higher stage of socialism was only possible because the leadership of the working class had been firmly established throughout the course of the New Democratic revolution. Above all, this meant the leadership of the communist party armed with the proletarian revolutionary science, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

This leadership of the proletariat is not mere words, it cannot simply be proclaimed nor does it represent only the subjective desires of a few leaders. The leadership of the proletariat and its MLM party in the New Democratic revolution has profound consequences for the whole course of the revolution. It affects every question of strategy and

tactics, and takes expression in the policies of the revolutionary forces at every stage of the revolution. In the long history of the revolution in China, the crucial importance of base areas became clear not only for their military role in opposing the enemy but also as a way in which the masses can, under the leadership of the communist party, begin to carry out social transformation. New political power based on the masses of the people, new culture and the beginnings of new economic relations were being forged in these base areas, which became beacons to the whole country and created the conditions for the revolution to continue after the nation-wide seizure of power. Today this experience is being relived in Peru, Nepal and elsewhere.

For example, whether the revolution is able to unleash women to strike at centuries-old patriarchal oppression, or whether such struggle is avoided or even suppressed in the name of "uniting the people", has everything to do with the class character of the revolution and whether the goals of the revolution will go in the direction of a classless society or not. Whether or not there

exists a genuine MLM party that is actively educating and training the advanced section of the masses in the proletarian world outlook and organising them into the party and other organisations has everything to do with whether the struggle will advance to the stage of socialist revolution. Without such a communist party, good intentions are useless.

Fifty years later the historical magnitude of the victory of the people's war in China stands out all the more clearly. The example of what has been already accomplished by our class fills us with enthusiasm to write new chapters in the proletarian revolutionary saga. By deepening our grasp of the lessons of the Chinese revolution, we strengthen our ability today to lead the masses in violently sweeping away the old world and beginning to construct the new one.

FOOTNOTE

¹ A discussion of the experience of socialist revolution in China is outside the scope of this article. It has been dealt with at length in previous issues of *AWTW* — see particularly numbers 7, 14 and 20.

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As *A World To Win* goes to press, the US imperialists and their European junior partners have just completed the second month of the biggest military campaign since the 1990-91 Gulf War. One of the smallest and poorest countries in Europe, Serbia, is being bombed day and night by NATO's massive military machine. The country's infrastructure is being devastated, hundreds of civilians killed and thousands wounded. One Western official boasted that the Yugoslav economy would be set back to its World War 2 level.

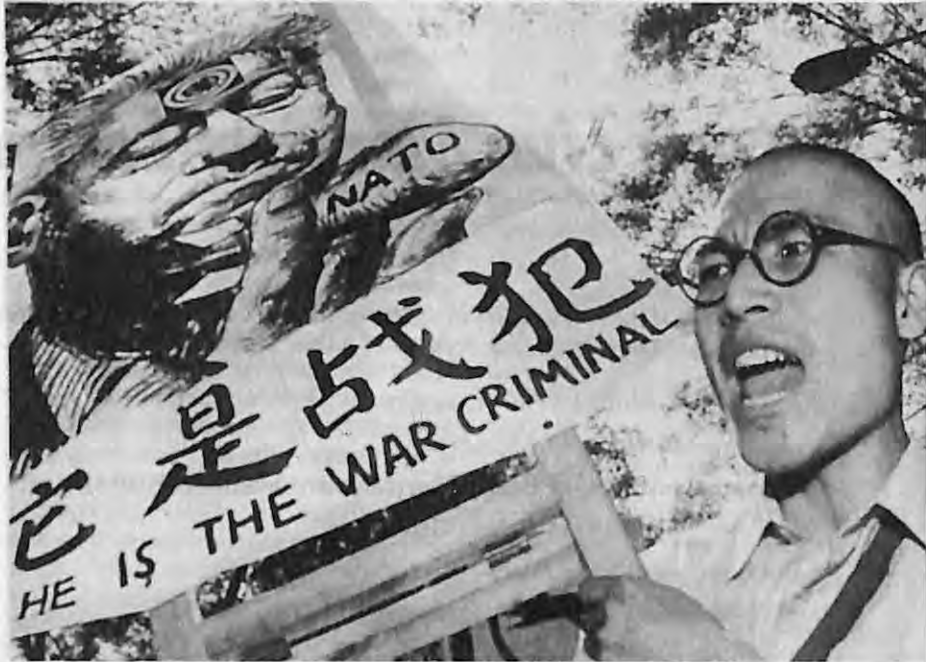
NATO's brutal stomping of Serbia is being waged under the banner of "humanitarianism", namely "saving the Kosovar Albanians". Non-stop footage of the plight of thousands of Kosovar refugees is flooding the world's airwaves. The genuine misery and anguish of those who have lost family members and homes, suffered rape or brutalisation, is being marshalled with all the dispatch and energy that the West's enormous media machine can muster in order to portray the murderous bombs they are raining down on Serbia as a "humanitarian intervention".

Let us be clear from the start: the unceasing pounding of Serbia by NATO has not and will not save any lives. If the first eight weeks of war have shown anything at all, it is that the persecution of the Kosovars has been intensified by the NATO intervention. Indeed, Western political strategists, including NATO commanding General Wesley Clarke, admit that they knew before the first bomb fell that a new wave of "ethnic cleansing" was the likely result of the air war they were planning. The fact that they chose to proceed with their strategy regardless of this, at the terrible price now being paid by thousands of Kosovars, and Serbs as well, is a first telling indication that "saving lives" was not and is not their driving concern.

The US and its NATO allies claim that this war is a product of age-old ethnic tensions in the Balkans, and that more powerful forces "above the fray" have the moral duty to intervene, like some altruistic big brother stepping in to stop a fight among the little kids. As the section excerpted hereafter from the *Revolutionary Worker*, voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party USA, makes clear, this war is not the result of some mysterious age-old tensions

The Balkans

Nato's Ugly War



Above: Anti-imperialist demonstrations erupted all over China after the US/NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. Not since the Tiananmen protests in 1989 have students and people from all walks of life so vociferously taken to the streets. Many demonstrators upheld Mao as the leader who stood up to the US in sharp contrast to today's Chinese leaders who want to join the "big power club" of international exploiters and oppressors.

flaring up, it is the product of the contemporary workings of a capitalist social order in Yugoslavia and its interaction with recent shifts in the alignment of regional and global forces. As the *RW* notes, NATO's portrayal of the source of the war "turns history upside down" and "blames the masses for the suffering imposed on them by capitalism".

Everything about the way NATO is waging this war – its objectives, strategy and tactics – ensures that the bloodshed will continue, and that the post-war future of the Kosovo region will rest on a foundation of forceful

suppression, with the threat of renewed conflict ever present. Indeed, such is already the situation of neighbouring Bosnia, following the Western-sponsored "peace" settlement there. This is because, as the RIM Committee said upon the war's initiation, "the imperialists can only rule the world by means of gangsterism". The way they fight reflects and reinforces a world order where the few rule the many, where the domination of a handful of rich exploiters rests on a vast arsenal of armed forces and police. Anytime anywhere their rule is challenged, their response ultimately relies on their monopoly of



Above: Serbian child celebrates the downing of a US Stealth bomber.

military might, whether the challenge is posed by a revolutionary struggle like that waged by the Vietnamese masses who tried to unite their country and liberate it from Western colonialism, or by a petty tyrant like Iraq's Saddam Hussein, whose regional ambitions grew a bit too big for his imperialist masters, who thus decided to chop him down to size.

A REACTIONARY WAR IS AN UGLY WAR

One feature of an unjust war is the employment of unjust reactionary methods of warfare.

Like the Gulf war, this is yet another case of a massively unequal war, where the modernised, high-tech arsenal of the biggest military alliance in human history is relentlessly pummeling a country whose GDP is no greater than that of a single large Western city like Frankfurt. Based on its overwhelming military superiority, NATO

is conducting its war by massive bombing from the air, incorporating the use of cluster bombs that shred human bodies like a meat grinder, and warheads tipped with depleted uranium which were used in Iraq and have led to levels of leukaemia in children there equal to those found in Hiroshima. Is it really possible to believe that this is an undertaking driven by concern for human life!? The NATO air war targets cities and other population concentrations from miles up, blasting hospitals, buses, trains; most recently, the target list was expanded to include the entire Serbian economic infrastructure, cutting off the population's water and electricity, driving millions into a daily battle simply for survival. And then NATO's spokesmen boast that not one of their airmen has lost his life. As a possible ground intervention looms, the US media oozes with nauseating

chauvinistic concern for the potential loss of *American* lives, while they coldly affirm that the loss of *Serbian* civilian lives is "collateral damage" that is "the inevitable cost of war". They crow that for the first time in human history a type of warfare is being waged where those carrying it out can do so "at a distance", in almost complete safety, or, as one US commentator put it, "the only ones who feel anything are on the ground". Here are the bloody fangs of imperialist "humanitarianism".

The imperialist media is engaged in a huge effort to bring public opinion behind the war. It is a battle-hardened apparatus with vast experience in sweeping under the covers gigantic massacres that are in its interests – such as the hundreds of thousands killed in Indonesia in the CIA-backed coup in 1965 – or blowing up the most minor attacks on its interests into "the greatest atrocities in history". Thus they portray the petty reactionary Milosevic as a big-time criminal like "Hitler" in

an attempt to put the kind of blinders on the people that coachmen put on horses, so that they do not look backwards in history nor left or right to other parts of the world where they would inevitably see the far greater crimes committed by the genuine world-scale criminals that rule the planet today. Instead they are to see only what the imperialists want them to see.

In the same manipulative fashion, satellite dishes dot the Kosovar refugee camps as Western journalists vie for pictures of another suffering refugee to broadcast home, while the families of the imperialists' Serbian victims – now numbering in the thousands – are rarely if ever seen or heard. It is little known that after the West demanded that Serbian TV broadcast six hours of Western footage on the war daily, the Serbian regime retorted that they would agree if the Western media would show just *six minutes* of Serbian footage daily – the West did not take up the offer, but instead blasted Serbian TV off the air.

To justify the mechanised mass killing-at-a-distance, the Western media are engaging in ugly chauvinism. The French daily newspaper *Le Monde* has carried front page articles about the "innate barbarism" of the Serbs, and the American *Time* magazine recently published a piece entitled "Vengeance of a Victim Race" that described the Serbs as "Europe's outsiders, seasoned haters raised on self-pity".

The Milosevic regime's response to NATO has been true to its reactionary character. Those who have been longing to see some real blows inflicted on the Western war machine will have to look elsewhere than Mr Milosevic's reactionary army – the most serious counter-attack they seem to have been able to muster has been not on NATO, but on the largely unarmed masses of oppressed Kosovars. Despite having a more modern military force than Iraq's Saddam Hussein, and more favourable fighting terrain, the Yugoslav high command's efforts thus far have not outshone those of the Iraqi regime – it is likely that, like Hussein, their hearts are not really in fighting imperialist powers whom they only recently made no secret of admiring.

What Slobodan Milosevic is doing to the Kosovar Albanians is a vicious crime, there is no doubt – but anyone who thinks that this is what concerns

the Western imperialists is not squarely facing the fact that all over the world dozens of petty tyrants just like Milosevic routinely treat their subjects in much the same way. Why the Milosevic regime suffers B-52 carpet-bombing while the others receive Western military aid has to do not with any humanitarian concern on the part of the imperialists, but rather their strategic interests.

KOSOVARS – SACRIFICIAL PAWNS IN NATO'S GAME?

Negotiations over the post-war agreement to be imposed on the Serbs and Kosovars are usually reserved for the imperialist masters alone – the Kosovars are not even allowed to watch. And on those occasions when they are permitted to attend, the big powers have systematically subordinated Kosovar interests to their own plans for the region. The Rambouillet Agreement, for instance, which NATO says is the framework for an end to the war, recognises Yugoslavia's national integrity and calls for disarming the Kosovar guerrilla forces. This means the Kosovars may well continue to live under the boot of the Serbian regime. Similarly, US policy on the Kosovo Liberation Army has shifted dramatically, depending on US interests – one day the KLA are denounced as “terrorists”, the next they are portrayed as “heroes”. One NATO commander has already warned that, after the war, the biggest problem facing the West may not be the Serbs but Kosovar guerrillas.

To the US and its NATO allies, the Kosovars are nothing but pawns, good to be trotted out on satellite TV to garner sympathy for their bloody crimes, and to be used as bargaining chips when coming to terms with Milosevic and other regional forces. The NATO war was not started to save Kosovars, they are not even consulted in determining its outcome, and their conditions will not improve as a result.

There are striking parallels between the way that the imperialists are using the Kosovars' plight and their cynical efforts to manipulate the Kurds, particularly in Iraq. US policy on the Kurds has consisted of great fanfare of so-called humanitarian assistance, while in practice coldly subordinating Kurdish interests to the region's

“power realities”. This has meant a policy of fostering dependency on handouts so as to ensure that despite the enormous sacrifices of the peshmerga fighters, their struggle has remained confined within limits that do not threaten fundamental Western interests in the region. Few would argue that there has been any substantial alleviation of the national oppression of the Kurdish people. Indeed, the same Turkish military forces that are being described today by NATO propagandists as “one of the 19 democracies participating in the effort to save the Kosovars” are pursuing a vicious counter-insurgency policy in Turkey of “drying up the sea” of popular support for the PKK Kurdish guerrillas, resulting in hundreds of thousands of refugees, thousands killed and many more tortured and imprisoned. (See the excerpt hereafter of an article by the Communist Party of Turkey [Marxist-Leninist] on Turkey's role.)

At this point, it seems that NATO's plans for the area involve some mixture of partition and protectorate status, somewhat like the “safe haven status” for the Kurds in Iraq. One of the main points of the NATO plan to install tens of thousands of NATO “peacekeeper” soldiers would be to ensure that the big powers will be in a position to handpick a Kosovar regime subservient to their interests. And even in the unlikely event that the Kosovars gain independence as a result of the NATO war, what would that amount to? To answer this, one need go no further back than Afghanistan a couple of years ago, where US “aid” helped bring fundamentalist Islamic forces to power there, resulting in the rise of their Islamic Taleban proteges, with all the attendant horrors of that regime.

Whatever the result of the NATO war for the Kosovar people, it will not be an end to oppression, for those waging the war “on their behalf” are the greatest oppressors in human history. There is a system whose routine functioning means back-breaking labour that drives millions to early graves, where 40,000 children die every single day of preventable disease or malnutrition, because routine medical treatment for Third World children isn't profitable for the pharmaceutical giants like Bayer, Glaxo and Upjohn. It is a system that enforces its rules with scant regard for human cost. In Iraq, the former Assistant Secretary-General

of the United Nations announced that 5,000 children die every month due to the impact of Western-imposed sanctions, which even embargo basic medicines. When this was pointed out to US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright (today one of the key architects of the NATO war), she coldly declared, “the price is worth it”.

This imperialist world is a land of double-speak, where “peacekeepers” enforce oppression at gunpoint, where one power's “ethnic cleansing” is another power's military “collateral damage”, and where, as one US military spokesman infamously remarked during the Vietnam war, “we had to destroy the village in order to save it”.

The NATO imperialists are now declaring a new era where they will fulfil “their duty of humanitarian intervention” anywhere at any time. The French political establishment, world leaders in human rights hypocrisy, have vigorously championed a universal “duty to interfere” wherever “humanitarian interests” are threatened. But everyone knows that no NATO smart bombs will be falling on the US military base in Guantanamo, Cuba, or on British occupation troops in Northern Ireland, no armour-piercing shells are going to rip through Turkish tanks in Kurdistan, no cluster bombs are going to take out the Israeli stormtroopers in the West Bank, and no elite SAS hit teams are going to liquidate the Indonesian death squads sowing terror in East Timor.

UK Prime Minister Tony Blair recently argued that the NATO war is being waged by “a new generation of leaders in the United States and Europe... who hail from the progressive side of politics.... In this conflict we are fighting not for territory but for values.” (*Newsweek*, 19 April). In fact, not even the hype is new. As Lenin observed of World War 1, “the bourgeoisie of each country... is asserting that it is out to defeat the enemy, not for plunder and the seizure of territory, but for the liberation of all other peoples except its own.” Indeed, this proclamation of a “universal duty of humanitarian intervention” is a modernised version of Rudyard Kipling's 19th-century argument that it was “the white man's burden” to “civilise” the Third World peoples, which essentially meant forcibly subjecting them to Western colonialism.



Above: Mass exodus of Kosovars to Albania, with only what they could carry, leaving behind their homes and land.

THE GOALS OF THE US/NATO IMPERIALISTS

As the excerpt hereafter from the Revolutionary Communists (RK) of Germany points out, "NATO is an *imperialist* war alliance". The various powers co-operate on certain goals while pursuing their own different and often conflicting national interests, including through NATO itself. Overall, under the US baton the NATO allies today have a working agreement to come up with some arrangements in Yugoslavia that put an end to the conflicts that threaten to enflame the Balkans and draw in countries even more widely, especially Greece and Turkey. Yet the actions of a NATO member, Germany, were a key factor triggering the outbreak of the various waves of Yugoslav wars in the 1990s, when it made a power grab for Slovenia by unilaterally according it diplomatic recognition to encourage its break away from the Yugoslav Republic. As the stitches holding together the patchwork of ethnic, linguistic and religious

groupings that made up Yugoslavia began to unravel with the collapse of the Soviet bloc and shifting power alignments in Eastern and Central Europe, Germany was in fact simply leading the rush of imperialists and regional kingpins who each sought to grab as much as possible in the fluid situation prevailing then.

Yet while there is some agreement on trying to work out more definitive arrangements that stabilise and contain the Yugoslav conflicts, each power is vying vigorously to ensure that this is done on a basis that is as favourable as possible to its own interests. NATO thus acts through a complex mixture of allying and jockeying for position amongst the various powers, where each one is compelled to repeatedly reassess its own position in regards to constantly shifting realignments in the alliance as a whole, including in relation to various regional forces, especially Serbia, and most importantly to the leader of the imperialist wolf pack, the US. As for Russia, Yeltsin's menaces of a "third world war" and his

bellicose reminder that Russia still possessed the world's second-largest nuclear arsenal were more designed to throw his country's weight around to ensure a favourable position in post-war "peacekeeping" arrangements, rather than to signal any looming intentions to annihilate New York to save his "little Serb brothers". Nonetheless, this kind of gangster brinkmanship can slip out of control, with unpredictable consequences.

The US and its NATO allies also have agreement on acting to ensure the viability of NATO as a military force. With the break-up of the Soviet social-imperialist camp and its military alliance, the Warsaw Pact, the decades-old rationale for NATO largely ceased to exist. The war against Yugoslavia is an effort to expand its role, including to what the Western imperialists call "out of area" operations. The US in particular wants to use the war on Yugoslavia as a key means of extending its influence in the Balkans and eastward. For its part, the "New Labour" governors of Britain are displaying

sickening levels of nostalgia for the old empire. UK Foreign Secretary Robin Cook proclaimed that, "nowhere in the world is so far away that it is not relevant to our security interests", simply rephrasing the old imperial slogan, "the sun never sets on the British Empire". (On the Italian state, see the excerpts hereafter from the statement by the RedWorkers Organisation.)

Finally, the US-led imperialists intend their war on Yugoslavia to be a show of military and technological prowess to intimidate not only their own lesser puppets, as they attempted in the Gulf War, but also the peoples of the world. The US has made sure that the point has not been lost on anyone that it stands alone at the summit of this kind of high-tech warfare. It aims to use this to further shore up its position as leader of the pack, and is warning everyone that it can and will inflict brutal punishment for defying US interests. Indeed, this is a key reason the US turned so quickly to waging war in the first place: because intensifying diplomatic efforts to resolve the Kosovo situation would inevitably have allowed a greater role for the Europeans and especially the Russians. With a military arsenal far superior to that of any other imperialist power, the military option was a stronger hand for the US imperialists, so they played it, not because of humanitarian concern, but heedless of it.

**THE INTERNATIONALIST
ALTERNATIVE – OPPOSING
ONE'S OWN BOURGEOISIE**

Some critics on the left have declared that opposing the war is "posturing" and a "futile exercise"; they deride the impact such a stand can have on the actual course of the war today, when those opposing it are small and scattered, and there is no major revolutionary internationalist force in the Balkans itself. In their logic, there is no choice but to line up on one side or the other – usually this means with their own bourgeoisie, under the "practical" appeal that "the best we can do is hope to help the Kosovars".

Whether born of desperation or cynicism, this "practical" path can only lead to strengthening the hand of the imperialists who are responsible for this war in the first place, and whose rule will only lead to more wars to de-

fend their exploitation and oppression. Revolutionaries and anyone who wants to stand against this reactionary war must expose the imperialists' hollow claims of humanitarian concern for the Kosovars, their hypocritical targeting of Milosevic and their real war aims, and must mount opposition to this war. Anything else amounts to abdicating responsibility to draw a line between the reactionary interests of the imperialists and the interests of the people. Doing this thoroughly requires a proletarian internationalist stand, exposing and opposing the predatory interests of one's own ruling class and bringing to the fore the common interests of all the oppressed of the region and the world. No other stand is worthy of those who represent the class whose destiny is to eliminate all oppression and exploitation.

Nor is this stand some kind of pure but impractical duty. In the early days of World War 1, when the chauvinist hurrahs for the campaigns of the various European powers had drowned out the voices of any opposition, and the revolutionary communists were small in numbers and in disarray, Lenin prophetically pointed out that, while the war had begun between two blocs of equally reactionary powers, it was not written in stone that it had to end that way. Indeed, the NATO imperialists are not all powerful, and everything is not under their control. Their arrogant declarations of their own invincibility are belied by the fact that, at the outset of this war, they repeatedly proclaimed that their vast air superiority would force Milosevic to the bargaining table within a matter of days. They were wrong then, and they are quite anxious not to make any bigger mistakes. Powerful forces have been unleashed whose mix and interaction is unpredictable. War, as Clausewitz pointed out, is the most chaotic of human endeavours. While they may well succeed in imposing their will in some form on the region for a certain time, it is also possible that they will get bogged down and be forced to send in ground forces in unfavourable conditions, raising the stakes of their venture, and confronting revolutionaries with greater responsibilities and opportunities to mobilise against them.

It is of course not NATO's intention to get bogged down in Serbia – the spectre of their ground troops spending the winter in the Yugoslav

mountains undoubtedly fills them with concern. But they have already put a great deal on the line in this war, not least of all the credibility of NATO itself. As US imperialist guru Henry Kissinger put it, "the cohesion of NATO is threatened". Whatever hesitations the various imperialists may have had about getting involved, all agree now that failure to win, and "to be seen to win", would be a disaster.

In these circumstances, and in a world situation marked by rapid changes, it is crucial in the NATO countries to defeat the view that there is no "realistic" choice other than the NATO imperialist war alliance on the one hand or Milosevic and his Albanian-bashing reactionary regime on the other, in order to mobilise the masses to combat the predatory interests of their own bourgeoisie, whose efforts to strengthen their power over the oppressed in the Balkans will only strengthen their power over the oppressed "at home" as well. It is urgent to raise high the standard of proletarian internationalism in order to forge the broad unity needed to fight against this war and spread among the people the understanding that every setback to this reactionary war effort, every blow that NATO suffers, including resistance to the war machine at home and abroad, weakens their own imperialist masters. In the Balkans, too, this kind of proletarian internationalism is vital in order to cut through the dense fog of competing reactionary interests that obscures the common interests of all the oppressed of the region, so as to help bring into being a revolutionary internationalist core. Proletarian internationalism here means opposing not only the main enemy, the NATO imperialists, but also the Serbian regime's oppression of the Kosovars. It is not possible to effectively combat NATO's bullying of Serbia while accepting Serbia's bullying of the Kosovars – or, as Marx put it, a nation that oppresses another cannot itself be free.

Building this kind of revolutionary internationalist opposition to the ugly war NATO is waging brings closer the day when through its own *revolutionary* war, the international proletariat can pave the way for humankind to do away with class society, and in so doing rid the world of what Mao Tsetung called "this monster of mutual slaughter among men". ■

Down with the North Atlantic Terrorist Organisation!

By the Information Bureau of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

NATO's attacks against Yugoslavia once more showed what the people of the world have been experiencing throughout the 20th century: the imperialists can only rule the world by means of gangsterism. Clothed in their business suits, they consume human flesh to accumulate wealth. In their military khakis, they wipe out tens of thousands of people with their arsenals of death and destruction. When not waging open wars, the imperialists protect their bloody rule by waging hidden wars and other kinds of armed suppression against the people in their semi-colonial countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa and even against the populations of their own countries, using secret police, anti-riot police, international police – in short, every type of police.

It is clear that the biggest terrorists in the world are none other than the imperialist powers themselves. For decades the Western imperialist powers used NATO as a vehicle for preparing for world war against their social-imperialist rivals in the Soviet Union.¹ Now after the fall of the East bloc, they are using this massive military machine to bolster their dominant position in the world. First it was Iraq that was turned into a graveyard of civilians and children. And now Yugoslavia. These reactionary wars serve many purposes for the imperialists, not least of all to remind the people of the world that these gangsters will resort to any kind of savagery in order to maintain their world order (this time called a "new world order"), and also to convey the message that the people have no choice but to lay down before them. But the people cannot and must not accept this hideous world order!

For the people the world over, it is necessary to begin to draw some conclusions: as Mao Tsetung said, the imperialists will never put down their butcher knives. Any illusions that those whose hands are dripping in blood will

ever do anything good for the people must be cast aside. The duty of the class-conscious proletarians and progressive strata of the people in the NATO countries is to oppose and resist this war.

The Serbian rulers, Milosevic & Co., are fascist butchers themselves. Their regime is based upon the brutal oppression of national minorities within the country's boundaries. But haven't the British imperialists followed the same policy for hundreds of years in Ireland? Didn't the US kill millions in Indochina? And inside the US itself, will NATO protect Blacks and immigrants from being murdered in record numbers by US cops? Aren't Turks whose backs built so much of post-war Germany being burned in their sleep by fascist thugs in Germany? Isn't the treatment of the so-called Arab problem on the streets of Paris often reminiscent of ethnic cleansing? So what is it that makes these NATO regimes any better than the Yugoslav one? Nothing! Who would want to rely on these NATO powers to be protected? Only the ignorant! Any oppressed people is perfectly able to free itself from oppression. Indeed, relying on international gangster powers will only bring about perpetual slavery.

These gangsters claim the purpose of their war is to stop Serbia's rulers from butchering the Kosovars. But we should not forget the hypocritical lies the US and its pack have used to justify the bleeding of Iraq. They claim the imperialist-imposed starvation is to protect the rights of the Kurdish people. Yet at the same time Turkey's US-trained NATO army, which has waged a bloody war against the Kurdish people there for years, has once again been unleashed against them. The latest chapter of "protecting Kurds" was kidnapping the Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan and delivering him to Turkey's torturers.

There can be no doubt that any genuine revolutionary movement in the Balkans must strenuously oppose the reactionary chauvinism of the

Milosevics. Only by vigorously opposing all forms of national oppression and assuring the right of self-determination will it be possible to unite the proletariat and peoples of Yugoslavia and all the Balkans against their real enemies – capitalism, imperialism and all reaction. To think that the world's biggest reactionaries will bring any progress or light to this corner of the world scarred by generations of imperialist rivalry is worse than an illusion.

It is high time the US and Western European "civilisers" were soundly rebuffed. Rise up against this sickening hypocrisy! NATO has always been a tool for oppression. And the biggest promoters of reactionary nationalism are not petty tyrants like Milosevic, but the US, Britain, Germany, France and Russia. It is they who hold the whole world hostage to their national interests. The proletarians and people in these countries must rise up against *these* reactionary imperialist national interests. Remember the historic struggles waged by the masses in France against the Algerian war and in the US against the Vietnam war, and the bold struggles of the youth in Germany in the mid-1980s against NATO's nuclear missiles, and many others. This glorious legacy must be proudly reclaimed and its lessons learned. The internationalist spirit of opposing the military adventures of *one's own bourgeoisie* must be consciously upheld, practised and raised to a whole new level.

Oppose all NATO aggression in Yugoslavia, Iraq or elsewhere, no matter what the pretext!

Down with the "New World Order"!

¹ Originally the statement said that the Western imperialist powers "created NATO as a vehicle for waging world war against their social-imperialist rivals in the Soviet Union". As some comrades have pointed out, NATO was in fact first created as an alliance against the then-socialist Soviet Union, before it was captured by a new bourgeoisie and transformed into an imperialist power.

Stop the NATO Attack on Yugoslavia!

German, US and all other Imperialists

Excerpt from an April 1999
Statement by the Revolutionary
Communists (FRG)

The federal government [of Germany] and NATO claim that they want to put an end to the "ethnic cleansing" by the Milosevic regime. But they have nothing in principle against ethnic cleansing when it corresponds to their own power plans. In August of 1995 the Croatian Army began an offensive called "Operation Storm". Within just a few days between 150,000 and 250,000 people were driven out of the Knin region of Croatia by this military offensive. For hundreds of years the Serbs of this region had been the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants there. According to the *New York Times* (22/03/99) there is a secret report of the international war crimes tribunal at The Hague documenting this crime, which the report calls "the largest ethnic cleansing of the war" and which included the murder of hundreds of people....

This barbaric offensive [against Croatia's Serbs] was planned and carried out with the political, military and logistical support of the US and the FRG. The ethnic cleansing of the Knin region was part of their plan for a redivision of spheres of influence in the Balkans. According to the *New York Times*, Pentagon lawyers even appeared before the Hague tribunal to argue that this crime was "legitimate military activity".

The NATO war of intervention is not, as some say, the lesser evil for the Balkans, nor is it the only realistic chance to stop mass murder there. This war is a continuation and intensification of mass murder. The first 20 days of this war have proven this in the most terrible fashion.

It is an old tactic of the imperialist big powers to set the oppressed masses of different nationalities against one another in order to safeguard their rule over all these peoples. This tactic has been used again and again, especially in the Balkans. And it is a tried and

true variation of this tactic for the rival big powers to create a situation like the one currently in the Balkans in order to disguise their imperialist wars of intervention as the "restoration of order and peace". We shouldn't fall for such old tricks....

This reactionary "reorganisation" of the population could pacify the "centre of unrest" in Kosovo. This is an important war aim of the USA and FRG as well as France and England. At the same time, the main goal that the USA and FRG want to achieve through the air attacks is for the Yugoslav Army to carry out a coup against Milosevic. They want a regime in Belgrade that is more dependent on the USA and Germany and less so on Russia. Supporting mass murders is never a problem for either the USA or Germany. It is part of big power business as usual.

The Balkans are both a powderkeg and the scene of a very complex power struggle among the big powers. With the collapse of the revisionist pseudo-

Against the US-NATO Imperialist Aggression

Excerpt from *Rosoperaio*, organ of the RedWorker Communist Organisation of Italy, April 1999

The article endorses a national demonstration on 17 April and reports on militant protests throughout Italy against the NATO bases in Pisignano (Cervia) and San Damiano (Piacenza), as well as in Genova, Bergamo, Puglia and Palermo.

NATO is now carrying out a Nazi-type criminal bombardment of Serbia and its present region of Kosovo. The workers and all the people have become the target of a rain of imperialist bombs and missiles, sowing death and destruction, in an attempt to impose terror and resignation....

A position that attempts to equate NATO's war of aggression and the Milosovic regime's responsibility in the ethnic war now going on, that puts

aggressor and victim on the same level in this particular NATO war, may appear "even-handed". But in fact this supports the arguments behind NATO's imperialist aggression, and thus such a position cannot struggle consistently against this imperialist war [this is the position of a number of parties and forces in Italy]....

Italy's role in all this is to serve as an enormous aircraft carrier for NATO as a whole and for Italian imperialism,

Out of the Balkans!

communist Soviet Union and the social-imperialist bloc it was leading, the rivalries among the capitalist classes of the various nationalities in the Balkans broke wide open. Above all, the Croatian and Serbian ruling classes wanted to implement plans for establishing a Greater Croatia and Greater Serbia respectively. These plans were to be carried out at each other's expense and at that of the other nationalities in the Balkans. These ambitions were supported by the world's various big powers, whose own historical struggle for spheres of influence in the Balkans has also once again come into full swing.

In order to realise their traditional claims to power in the Balkans, the German imperialists support the quasi-fascist Tudjman regime in Croatia. To this end the German government consciously encouraged the Tudjman regime to unleash the war in Bosnia.

The goal of German imperialism in the Balkans is to force a redivision of

the spheres of influence there, thereby gaining the biggest possible area of control for themselves. They say that this alone corresponds to their current status as Europe's leading economic power. In the final analysis war is the only means likely to achieve such ends. The redivision that Germany is seeking in the Balkans comes mainly at the expense of Russia, England and France. All three are the traditional allies of Serbia. All three see in Serbia a bulwark against the expansion of German power, which for them — and especially after reunification — is already too big. They also see in Serbia an important factor for stability in the Balkans. Because of these contradictions, the "joint European foreign policy" that they all pretend to be seeking for the Balkans is nothing but a fiction, which heretofore could never really be achieved. "Europe" has not "failed" in the Balkans. The big European powers stand behind the different warring parties and through the war pursue conflicting imperialist

interests.

The feigned display of unity put on by the NATO countries at the start of the attack on Yugoslavia was intended to cover over the sharp contradictions within the war alliance. It is a rule among the imperialists that only those who take part in the bloodletting are allowed to play any significant part in the political decisions. That is why Defense Minister Sharping said that through its participation in this war Germany "had made a great leap forward". The FRG has "now made its complete and final entrance into the community of Western democracies", he said. With this statement he hit the nail on the head concerning the true nature of the "Western democracies"....

[The RKs conclude by calling for a "broad and massive movement of protest and resistance against the war" and against every step in the direction of bringing into being a "Superpower-Germany and a Fourth Reich".]

in Serbia!

following in the footsteps of Mussolini in seeking to capture particular protectorates and economic/political/military spheres of influence, first of all in Albania.

The D'Alema [current prime minister] government is dragging the country to war and fomenting an imperialist, militarist, nationalist and racist culture, using as its transmission belt the social-chauvinists and social-imperialists of the official trade unions and as-

sociations, which are the communications channels between these parties and the masses. This is closely linked to the growing militarisation of social conflicts and the repression unleashed against the unemployed, workers, immigrants, temporary workers and students....

The D'Alema government is not leftist, as it claims, but rightist, even though it is a newcomer to the direct management of the political power of

the ruling class, a reincarnation and further development of the longstanding history of the reactionary and warmongering nature of the social-democrats, of reformism and revisionism, throughout this century.

Against the US-NATO Imperialist Aggression in Serbia!

Against the Rule of Italian Imperialism in this war!

For a revolutionary, proletarian, anti-imperialist mobilisation!

Prelude to Genocide:

How Capitalism Caused the Balkan Wars

Excerpt from the *Revolutionary Worker*, voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party USA, #1001, 11 April 1999

The nationalities living in the Balkan mountain area can unite – and they proved it. These peoples created a powerful multinational guerrilla movement during World War 2 to defeat the German Nazis and Italian fascists who occupied the region for three years. The peoples of Yugoslavia pinned down many divisions of Nazi troops – and ultimately freed themselves, guns in hand, in a communist-led resistance war. Modern Yugoslavia was built out of that unity – bringing together six nations and several other significant nationalities.

There was no reason why a new, progressive, multinational unity could not have been built. The key would have been uniting on the basis of the interests of the masses of people – along the road of socialism and proletarian internationalism. But there was, unfortunately, never any real socialist transformation in Yugoslavia. The leaders of the new Yugoslavia, headed by Josef Broz Tito, betrayed the revo-

lution and took the capitalist road – straight into the embrace of U.S. imperialism. This laid the seeds for the wars of today.

The World's First Experience with "Capitalist Roaders in Power"

By 1948 Tito was sharply criticised by the world communist movement, then led by Joseph Stalin. Meanwhile Tito was praised and supported by the imperialists – who were waging all kinds of warfare against revolutionary and socialist forces around the world. Tito claimed that he would walk a "non-aligned" path between East and West. But in fact, his Yugoslavia quickly became dependent on the imperialists – politically, economically and militarily – tied to the world capitalist market while he huddled under the U.S. "nuclear umbrella"....

According to World Bank statistics, the wealthiest 5 percent of Yugoslav households earned 25 percent of the national income in the 1970s, while the poorest 20 percent of the population earned less than 7 percent. This was one of the most extreme income gaps

in Europe – in fact, according to the World Bank, even India's income distribution gap was not as big!

The northern nations of Yugoslavia – Slovenia and Croatia – were more highly developed industrially and agriculturally. The three southern national areas – Macedonia, Montenegro, and the Albanian region of Kosovo – were far more undeveloped and poor. Serbia, the largest national grouping, is in between North and South and is also a relatively poor area. These divisions within Yugoslavia got even more acute because of the *capitalist* development pursued by Yugoslavia. The rich got richer and the poor got poorer. Over decades, this created a powerful basis for antagonism between the nationalities of the country and for the growth of reactionary nationalism.

Investment flows where the profits are greatest. The industrial northern nations developed rapidly after 1945, while the poorer southern republics stagnated. When the 1990s started, per capita production in Slovenia was three times as high as it was in poorer regions like Macedonia. By 1970 the per

On NATO and Kosovo

Excerpt from April 1999 *Halkin Gunlugu* (*People's Agenda*), and other statements by the Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist) [TKP (ML)]

What Is War?

War is the continuation of politics by other means. This is a very good explanation of what war is about. The conscious proletariat must not forget this scientific reality and must form its view in this light. When the struggle between the oppressor and oppressed people is sharp, classes carry out their policies through the use of guns. Every war thus has a class character. Historically, in certain specific conditions, the exploiting class can carry out a just war that can serve the interests of oppressed

people. For example, the bourgeois class which carried out a war against feudalism. The main principle is, which class or classes does the war serve? Therefore, a war which serves to move society forward is a just war and a war which serves to drag society backwards is an unjust war. We know that there is a reason for the existence of war in the world. Without removing the cause it is not possible to prevent the possibility of war. It is not possible to have capitalism without competition. Different multinational companies compete with each other for international markets and for raw materials. This competition between imperialist multinational companies causes wars either locally, regionally or on a world scale. The imperialist states always need to

gain more colonies or semi-colonies, or to continually keep control of the ones they already dominate. Therefore they always interfere with and occupy colonies and semi-colonies.

From this general perspective, we can analyse the wars that the imperialists, especially the USA, are now carrying out in the Balkans and the Middle East....

NATO and Kosovo

Under the leadership of the USA, NATO claims its actions are to "to provide security for the Kosovo Albanians, to prevent the Serb persecution of the Kosovars, and to force the Yugoslav state's President Slobodan Milosevic to accept the Rambouillet

capita income of the average Slovene was over six times that of the average Kosovar. Kosovo lives in Third World conditions – comparable to Bolivia or Morocco – while in Slovenia the standard of living is closer to that of neighbouring Austria.

The villages in the poorer peasant regions of the south emptied. People went north for lousy jobs and barrack-like living conditions as “guest workers” – within the supposedly “equal” Yugoslav federation. These “guest workers” make up 15 to 20 percent of the Slovenian workforce and are treated like dirt.

The old phoney-communist system of Yugoslavia was based on state capitalism and a complex system of balancing bourgeois national interests. Inevitably, that old federation became strained. Bourgeois forces leading each republic tried to shift wealth toward “their” nations.

Inequality Gives Rise to Political, then Military Conflict

In the 1980s the conflicts intensified because of classic “IMF crisis.” Yugoslavia sank deeply into debt to the International Monetary Fund and other international imperialist lenders – to the tune of \$1.8 billion. The lenders

demanded that capitalist Yugoslavia take “austerity” measures to pay back the debt, and this inflamed the conflict in the country.

The masses themselves were not especially gripped by national hatreds – certainly not at the beginning. Large parts of the population had intermarried. In urban areas people moved away from religion – which had been a form through which national hostilities had been expressed. Many people no longer identified with one or another nationality – but simply considered themselves “Yugoslavs.” Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia was famous for this kind of multicultural fusion. Today, the masses of people there still fondly remember the days when people lived and worked together peacefully. Meanwhile, under the surface, the inequalities between Yugoslavia’s regions and the rival ambitions of the different national capitalist forces within Yugoslavia created conditions for an eruption. When the Soviet Union collapsed, and imperialist power shifted in Europe, it tore old Yugoslavia apart. Warring bourgeois camps sprang out – claiming to protect the survival of different national groups – while they pursued their own interests and sought to divide the people along

national lines....

In 1989 Milosevic made Kosovo a symbol and a starting point of this regional power grab. As he came to power within the Yugoslavian federation he revoked the autonomy that Kosovo had exercised within Serbia. He started to systematically impose a Serbian domination on the Albanian majority of Kosovo. He brutally suppressed a powerful strike among the Kosovo miners, expelled Albanians from the universities, imposed Serbian police and troops on the province – and generally made it clear that his government intended to drive Albanians from Kosovo. There were repeated incidents of police murder, as the cops acted like an occupying force.

All this signaled that military force was being applied to turn Yugoslavia into a Greater Serbia. It greatly accelerated the development of separatist sentiments among the ruling classes of the other nationalities (like Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia). The masses of people feared that they would soon be targeted for their nationality....

This bitter series of Balkan wars is a living example both of how capitalism leads to the domination of one nation over another and how imperialism inflames conflicts among the people into reactionary war.

Agreement”. These NATO attacks have begun a new process whereby the USA imperialists are declaring to all their rival imperialists as well as to the international proletariat and oppressed peoples around the world that they are “all-powerful” and “in charge”. For several years now during the 1990s the US imperialists have obliged their rival imperialists as well as the international proletariat and oppressed peoples around the world to discuss the “New World Order” and US imperialism’s leadership in oppressing the people in the world, such as in Kosovo. So this process is not new. However, the method of oppression used against Yugoslavia (as well as the silence of the USA’s rival imperialist powers, especially the European Union imperialists, against the USA-imposed policy of division in the Balkans) has begun a new process of very sharp and widespread conflict....

NATO and Turkey

It is quite important for us to explain the relationship of Turkey with NATO and the development of its international relations. The Turkish state decided, on the 8th of October in the National Parliament, that, if necessary, it would send its military outside of the country. At that time even the US itself had not said anything about any possible ground operations, but the Turkish parliament took this decision very quietly. Since that time the Turkish military forces have come directly under the command of the USA. It is interesting but not by chance that there was another process that took place at that time in the Middle East, the escalation of the crisis between the Turkish state and Syria. The General Chairman of the PKK, Abdullah Ocalan, on the 9th of October, just one day after the Turk-

ish Parliament’s decision that the military could operate outside the country, was forced to leave the Middle East. At that time, the US had made peace between Talabani and Barzani [leaders of Kurdish factions operating under US hegemony in Iraq’s “safe havens”], and then afterwards the Israeli/Palestinian negotiations appeared. As can be seen, while the Kosovo negotiations were in process, the Turkey/Syria crisis appeared. At the same time, discussion took place concerning the question of Cyprus and the crisis of the S-300 rockets in the Aegean. The “ghost allies agreement” between the USA, Israel and Turkey showed that they were ready for events in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

The Turkish state, which gets the full support of NATO in its oppression of the Kurdish national movement, is a puppet of USA imperialism.

Over the past year there has been a marked intensification of the People's War in Nepal. The people's revolutionary forces, led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), have grown both quantitatively and qualitatively and have proven themselves capable of dealing blows to the enemy.

On the 27th of October 1999, the CPN (Maoist) announced the beginning of the fourth military plan. The Party appealed to all the leftist, progressive, patriotic and democratic forces as well as to different nationalities and masses from the oppressed regions both to help implement the fourth plan of building base areas and to participate in the revolutionary state power locally. Higher levels of military actions were launched on the very day this plan was introduced, and thousands of posters and flyers were distributed throughout the country.

Some enemy strong points have been captured and the political power of the masses has increased in large areas of the country, especially the Western region where the People's War is strongest. The *Jana-Ahwan* weekly reported that a CPN (Maoist)-led guerrilla platoon successfully accomplished a raid on a police post. The report says Maoist guerrillas captured seven rifles, one Chinese pistol and more than 300 rounds of ammunition from a police post at Chiriagar in the Western Region. The post was raided at 1:00 in the morning on 3rd March. During almost two hours of fighting seven policemen, including a sub-inspector, were wiped out and another was injured seriously without a single loss on the Maoist side.

In other instances demoralised enemy forces have surrendered to the people's fighters. The CPN (Maoist)'s policy of releasing captured enemy forces unharmed has been widely praised throughout the country and stands in sharp contrast to the indiscriminate killing of the reactionary state, which has lashed back at the people by intensifying its policy of naked terror.

Government statistics say that 815 have been killed in the fighting as of May 1st, the great majority in the previous six months when the government terror campaign, "Kilo Sera 2", was unleashed. While the government claims that most of those killed have been "Maoists", a great number of the casualties are a result of government

Three Years of People's War in Nepal

terror directed at the civilian population. In addition to the militarised police, which until now have been the main vehicle for combating the revolutionary forces, there have been increased instances of regular army personnel being assigned to take part in police operations. Helicopters are used to transport enemy troops against the guerrillas.

The struggle reached a particularly intense level in May 1999, as the ruling class mobilised all of its efforts to hold an election for parliament. The CPN (Maoist) called for a boycott of parliament and stepped up its campaign to build base areas in the countryside.

As we go to press, only initial reports, mainly from enemy sources, are available. Even the imperialist press commented that the election rallies in the capital "were sparsely attended". In the countryside the boycott was even more widespread, and it is reported that election observers from various Nepalese parliamentary parties were afraid to go to the remote areas and "filed their reports from the capital". Even the government only dares claim a 30% election turnout in "the Maoist affected areas", and no doubt that figure is highly inflated by widespread fraud and ballot stuffing, as was reported to have occurred elsewhere.

Newspaper reports also indicate some very significant military engagements during the election. In what sounds like a spectacular action, a unit of some 40 Maoist fighters fought with police in Takukot Village Development Committee in the Gorkha district in central Nepal on May 22. The battle lasted three hours, and according to press reports five police were killed and one people's fighter was martyred. As they left, the guerrillas destroyed

the police post with a bomb and took away several rifles. In addition to the squads and platoons made up of full-time men and women guerrilla fighters, many of the military actions have involved large numbers of irregular fighters and masses. The widespread and ever-deepening incorporation of the masses into the People's War has been illustrated in countless examples big and small. Some press accounts talk of hundreds of people taking part in assaults on enemy institutions.

Many other forms of mass activity have taken place as well, such as *bandhs* (general strikes), conferences, seminars and torchlight processions. A large number of publications have sprung up that support the People's War.

It is worth noting that the imperialist press found it necessary during the elections to depart from their policy of totally blacking out developments in the People's War. They acknowledged that dealing with the Maoist-led insurgency had become the principal political question for Nepal's parliamentary parties.

While the People's War is based mainly among the poor, especially in the countryside, the united front of all the progressive classes is being built up. A major conference of representatives of the oppressed nationalities was held in Kathmandu itself, which braved the enemy and supported the people's revolutionary forces. A mass organisation carrying out struggle among the Newars, a major nationality that inhabits the Kathmandu valley, carried out a highly successful *bandh* in Kathmandu on March 5. The purpose of the strike was to protest government repression, which under the guise of fighting the People's War has blanketed whole sections of the minority nationalities.



Above: 10-15,000 people from all corners of India sweep through the streets of Delhi in solidarity with the People's War in Nepal.

Actions have been taken against the Indian domination of Nepal's economy. For example, the call to stop Indian lorry operators, who have long dominated Nepal's transport industry, has been widely hailed by the emerging national bourgeoisie in that sector. Similarly, it has been announced that no Indian films are being shown in Nepalese cinema houses, in response to a call for a boycott of Indian films.

NEPAL SOLIDARITY FORUM

Although the Indian ruling class is one of the main enemies of the people of Nepal, the People's War is already generating enthusiasm and support among the masses in neighbouring India. India and Nepal are very intertwined. The Indian ruling class exercises a great deal of control over Nepal (and the main party representing this influence, the Nepalese Congress Party, was declared the victor in the parliament elections). Millions of Nepalese live throughout India. In this light it is of utmost importance that supporters of the principal Maoist forces of India have joined together with other revolutionaries and progressive people to form the Nepal Solidarity Forum.

The first act of the Solidarity Forum was to organise a major demonstration in India's capital of New Delhi on February 6th, the third anniversary of the initiation of the war. After a number of cultural presentations, a march started off down the streets, led

by an 8-metre red banner. According to reports, the "wide streets of Delhi were paralysed", as 10-15,000 participants from different corners of India swept through, heading towards the Nepalese Embassy. The air resounded with slogans denouncing the fascist Girija government in Nepal, Indian expansionism and imperialism, demanding an end to the killing of innocent people in Nepal, and supporting the People's War. Although police blocked the march for one hour, the spirited marchers persevered until they succeeded in holding a rally at the Nepalese Embassy. The action represented a great success for the just formed Forum organisation.

At the rally at the Embassy, speakers representing the main trends in the Indian revolutionary movement stressed the interrelation between the struggles in Nepal and India. They called on the people of India to oppose Indian expansionism and pointed out that the peoples of Nepal and India faced a common enemy. One key task of the Solidarity Forum is to inform world opinion of developments in the People's War, and it is publishing a regular bulletin with that aim.

One outstanding feature of the CPN (Maoist) has been its internationalist line. From the beginning the Party has stressed the links with the proletariat and the oppressed peoples of all countries. The statement from Comrade Prachanda, Secretary-General of the CPN (Maoist), on the occasion of the third anniversary of the People's War,

said, "We congratulate the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, the fraternal parties and organisations within RIM, the revolutionary parties and organisations and revolutionary masses in India and the world over who have displayed the great ideals of proletarian internationalism whole-heartedly by helping the People's War morally and materially, and we firmly reiterate our commitment to advance on the path of fulfilling our obligations as a contingent of the world proletarian army."

The same statement from Comrade Prachanda concludes: "Today Nepalese society is passing through the sharp birth-pains of a period of transition. The old system is striving to turn the country into a complete slave of imperialism and expansionism by shattering all the economic, social and political sectors; whereas the Nepalese people, by means of People's War and different forms of mass struggle, are adhering to the great and painstaking task of establishing the foundation of an independent and self-reliant economy, exercising the people's democratic power from the grassroots, developing people's culture and social relations, and eliminating all sorts of class, national and regional exploitation. In this historical period of the destruction of the old and construction of the new, there is no other obligation higher than that of advancing in the united struggle to build a New Nepal with a self-sacrificing shattering of all sorts of illusions and by achieving victory against cowardly and capitulationist ideas. To that effect, our Party appeals to all the leftists, progressives, patriotic and democratic forces as well as all the masses of the country, on the historical occasion of the Third Anniversary, to help the great process of People's War by all means, to build an alternative revolutionary government from the grass roots, and to develop a united revolutionary struggle centrally through boycotting the so-called parliamentary election of the genocidal and national betrayers."

Much of the information in this article comes from the most recent bulletin published by the Nepal Solidarity Forum. For copies of the bulletin write to Raibaghini, Tangrakhali (Canning Town), 24 Pgs(s), 743329 W.B. India

To the Central Committee, Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)

Statement by the Committee of the
Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

1 February 1999

Dear Comrades,

On the occasion of the third anniversary of the initiation of the People's War in Nepal we send you our most heart-felt revolutionary salute.

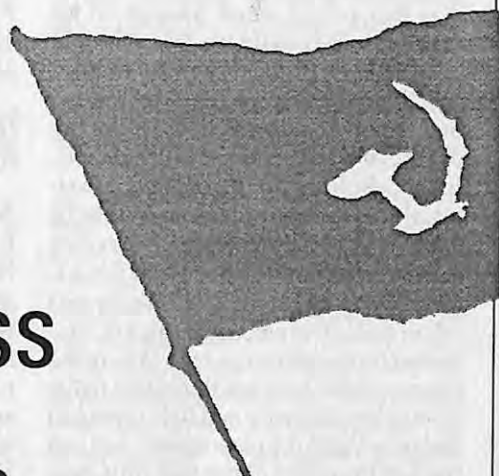
Three years ago the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), under the leadership of General-Secretary Comrade Prachanda, took the bold and courageous step of calling forth the masses of people to rise up guns in hand against the mountains of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Since that initial glorious beginning, the revolution has been sinking deeper and deeper roots among the masses of Nepal, especially the poor peasantry. Under the leadership of your Party, the validity of the path of protracted people's war is once again being demonstrated. The correct Marxist-Leninist-Maoist line has grown stronger in the course of combat with all forms of revisionism and opportunism.

Since June 1998 your Party and the revolutionary masses of Nepal have confronted a vicious assault by the armed might of the reactionaries. Hundreds have been martyred. Yet in the face of enemy terror the revolution continues to advance, incorporating wider and wider sections of the women and men of Nepal and dealing powerful blows to the enemy. We are confident that the masses of Nepal, under the leadership of your Party, will step by step surmount every difficulty. As Mao said, "the road is tortuous, the future is bright".

Comrades, the struggle you are waging has importance far beyond the borders of Nepal. The participation of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) in the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, the concern and assistance given by your Party to the advance of the communist movement in the South Asia region and throughout the world, even at difficult moments in your struggle, inspire us. The Committee of RIM and the CPN(M) will continue to march forward as in the past, united by our all-powerful ideology, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and determined to accelerate the development of the world proletarian revolution.

Interview with Comrade Inez

Shining a Light in the Darkness of Peru's Prisons



Interview conducted at the request of *A World To Win* with Comrade Inez, who had herself been imprisoned in the notorious Chorrillos women's prison in Peru. —AWTW

Some initial words:

I want to start by thanking people for the opportunity to express before public opinion the things that I have gone through personally, but that go beyond just me. Therefore, throughout this testimony, I will try to reflect upon the situation that is being experienced by thousands of political prisoners in Peru, who are truly survivors of Nazi-style concentration camps, created to annihilate them, not just physically, but also morally. For me it is a duty to denounce all of this publicly and this is the reason for this interview.

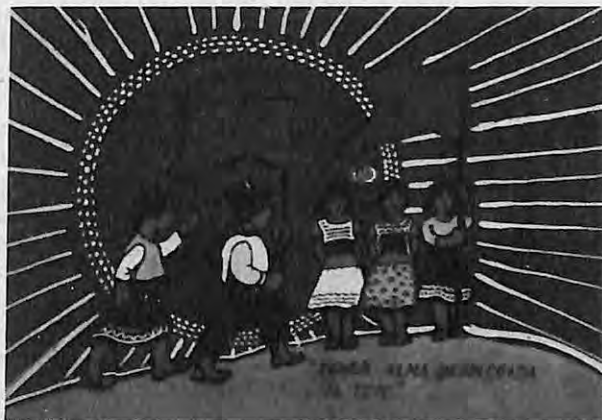
Q: How is it that the political prisoners in Peru are able to survive the conditions that they have been subjected to?

A: The political prisoners of the Communist Party of Peru (PCP) have years of experience of the repressive apparatus of the old Peruvian state and have drawn many lessons in order to resist and continue fighting, even under the worst conditions. Because of this and in accordance with what the Party and Chairman Gonzalo has taught us, we convert the black dungeons of reaction

into shining trenches of combat, giving substance to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, Gonzalo Thought, principally Gonzalo Thought. Three tasks are carried out: to fight, to mobilise and to produce. In this way, the prisoners are organised into the party, army and front within the trenches, and assume the all-around carrying out of the three tasks. One question that cannot be overlooked is the high morality of our class which is put to the test in this situation, demonstrating that we are superior to the reactionaries and their sinister dream of annihilating us, not only physically, but principally annihilating us morally. This — never! They have not and will not be able to do this! A clear expression of this is that the plans of the Party continue to be carried out while fully taking on our condition as prisoners of war: Defending the leadership against the genocidal and country-selling dictatorship!

Q: Before going on to other details, what are the conditions under which the prisoners carry out their daily activities? Describe the cells in which they are confined.

Below: Art from the prisons of Peru



A: The conditions of confinement are similar to what we know about the conditions in Nazi concentration camps. There are three Pavilions. Pavilions B and C have the same structure, having been especially constructed for this regime of "maximum security". Pavilion A has smaller cells and more overcrowding, but has an open regimen. The cells measure 1.5 x 1.5 metres, built totally of concrete, with two cement platforms that serve as beds, one toilet inside (which is an open well), and a water tap (from a basin). There is a gate with thick metal bars aligned in such a way that only one finger can fit between the bars. The bars are covered with a metallic panel that covers 30% of its surface. The cells are aligned in groups of eight, and face on to a passageway which is approximately 80 centimetres wide. The walls

of the passageway have oblique openings that permit some passage of air and light diagonally, so that the light only reaches the passageway. In each cell there are two or three detainees. Some of the detained are the mentally disturbed who remain in isolated cells. In the whole prison there are approximately 17 of these prisoners. Similarly, they also put some people who refuse to give in to the servitude that the authorities try to impose in to these isolation cells. The electric lights are controlled by the prison guards. Along the passageways there are florescent lights of very low intensity and light (opaque) that only lights the passageway and just reaches the edges of the bars (this generates serious vision problems, producing mydriasis, in other words, dilation of the pupils).

Q: What goes on day to day in the prison?

A: The detainees remain in their cells 23 hours a day. Throughout the night the prison guards carry out periodic armed patrols in order to "verify any situation"; their purpose is to harass the prisoners and prevent them from sleeping. The final night patrol of the guards is at 6am and this is the time that the prisoners get up. We proceed to carry out the cleaning of the cell, and to prepare ourselves for breakfast, which is either fruit or yoghurt, prepared by the detainees themselves and which depends on what our families are able to bring us during visits. At 8am the detainees of Pavilion A come by with a cup of Quaker Oats for each prisoner. This usually contains camphor to sedate the prisoners. They also give a small piece of bread. At 9am the guards come by to make a roll call, at which time the prisoners are made to stand next to the bars, to try and humiliate them. Some are taken to the "workshops" (larger cells), according to the discretion of the prison authorities, in general the detainees carry out artisan work. At 10am the outings into the yard start in groups of four cells at a time. This continues until 5pm when the last group is allowed out. The amount of time they are allowed out is less than that established by regulations. Restrictions on outings to the courtyard are a frequent punishment. At 1pm the "lunch" is distributed (more explicitly the "genocidal bowl") which generally consists of a cup of semi-cooked rice

infested with worms and potato stew. At 6pm they give out a liquid, supposedly made with herbs, to which they add camphor and other substances.

Q: What kind of medical attention do they receive?

A: During the day the butchers of the health service come by, guards of the National Penitentiary Institute, who after a ten day course are supposed to be trained to give injections and prescribe medications. They work in complicity with the chief-butcher who is supposedly a doctor but carries out the actions of an intelligence officer. These include interrogations, physically abusing women prisoners, blackmailing them with their treatments (and shows a lack of the most minimal measures during his supposed clinical examinations).

Outings to the "tópico" (which is a small examination room with only an examination table and almost no equipment) are supervised and approved directly by the Colonel and are used as a mechanism to promote servitude. Those who do not submit to this blackmail are not permitted visits to the "tópico" and are restricted from any necessary medical attention. In the rare cases of "medical attention," they deal with illnesses by giving out placebos or analgesics, without treating the underlying medical conditions, a situation which produces a worsening of these illnesses and generates medical emergencies that put the lives of the detainees in great danger (as in the case of appendicitis and gallbladder infections). In some cases they have even carried out medical experiments with the women prisoners (the case of Mrs Soledad Flores and Soledad Espinoza who were the subject of unnecessary laparoscopies at the Loayza Hospital). The detainees are removed from the hospitals after being operated on without being released by the doctors and transported back to the prison without the necessary conditions for their post-operative recovery being guaranteed in any way (as happened with Mrs Rosa González Pérez, who after being operated on, was taken immediately back to the prison, where she developed a serious infection that almost cost her life).

The medications are administered at

the whim of the "technicians", who ignore the dosing schedules prescribed by the doctors and even try to make the prisoners take vaginal suppositories by mouth. Lithium is denied to prisoners with psychiatric problems, in an effort to create a highly tense situation among the detainees. The "social assistants" (actually agents of the state) use the psychiatrically ill prisoners to create hostility against other prisoners, provoking punishments, including submitting prejudicial reports that can be used as criminal records against the prisoners in their legal proceedings. Prisoners with serious medical conditions like cancer are denied appropriate and timely medical attention, in an attempt to annihilate them. The rare cases of transfers are denigrating, brutally savage and inhuman. The detainees are taken shackled by the hands and feet, with a metal bar joining the two sets of shackles, and they are forced to undergo examinations by doctors while in this shackled condition, even for gynaecological exams.

Q: What kind of illnesses are most often seen?

A: A variety of illnesses exist that are the result of the inhuman conditions in the prison. For example, there are frequent contagious infectious diseases and gastritis and ulcers are recurrent and affect almost all the detainees. We have to emphasise the role played in this by the "genocidal bowl" that we receive. The poor lighting that we are exposed to produces vision problems, and although the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) assumes the cost of buying eyeglasses in some cases, they only do this when there is a prescription given by an optometrist, something that does not happen in the majority of cases because we have no access to an optometrist. Numerous diseases of the skin exist. There are epidemics of mites producing scabies which is impossible to control or eradicate since the boiling of clothing is not permitted. There is also a high incidence of tuberculosis and hepatitis. There are some cases of meningitis and these are made worse because of the numerous complications resulting from lack of treatment. No measures are taken by the penal authorities to disinfect areas to prevent the spread of infections. Those who suffer from conditions like cancer do

not receive adequate treatment. The older women prisoners have no special treatments addressing their difficult situation. Prisoners who find themselves pregnant receive no adequate pre-natal or post-natal care. It should be noted that some find themselves pregnant as a result of sexual assaults that they have suffered. The new-born find themselves imprisoned along with their mothers since it is often complicated for them to be taken in by the families of the detainees. Dental problems are also widespread since there isn't even the most minimal attention to dental care. To all this we should add the broncho-pulmonary infections, the constant colds that result from humidity and cold that exist in the zone of Chorrillos, which is along the coast.

Q: What is the daily attitude of the prisoners that allows them to overcome this situation?

A: The attitude of the compañeras is based on a revolutionary optimism, which belongs to our class, in knowing that we are worthy daughters of Chairman Gonzalo, of the Party and of the Revolution, a living example of the prisoners of war who have given their lives in defence of the revolutionary cause, of communism, and because of this we are also prepared to be part of the price that must be paid. We are strengthened by a profound conviction that the revolution will win, that victory is our sweet sentence, our only one – one in which the condition of being a prisoner is seen as only transitory. In daily life it is reflected in the joy of carrying out our tasks, in our songs and in our dances, that for the reactionaries is a huge affront and a clear proof that they will never subdue us. So, we always come together, especially in the celebration of very significant dates, as well as on the birthdays of the compañeras.

Q: We know that there are not only communists, combatants and activists detained in the prison, but also masses who have been brought there. How do these masses confront this situation?

A: We should start by understanding that in this prison, the activity of the Party has enabled the building of a Shining Trench of Combat, where we fight politically and ideologically

against imperialism, revisionism and reaction. In this way it also becomes a school for all the prisoners. The masses get close to and recognise the leadership and authority of the Party that strengthens them ideologically and politically – which arms them against this sinister plan of the reactionaries to annihilate them. The love of the masses and the Party is great, powerful, indestructible.

Q: What can you tell us about the judicial process?

A: Well, as the world knows, in Peru there is no respect for the judicial rights and guarantees of political prisoners and prisoners of war. They continue to try the prisoners in military courts that are both judge and litigant (this has even been recognised by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission). They have continued to use anonymous testimonies (witnesses who have themselves “repented”) to condemn the detainees despite the fact that the reaction itself has recognised that these testimonies lack any probative value and that the very “law” that created these “repentant” witnesses was itself repealed. The trials are not public. Today they have “repealed” the faceless tribunals, but the detainees are still blindfolded or hooded, which amounts to the same thing. Lawyers have been imprisoned, are being pursued, or are part of a sinister list that the National Intelligence Service (SIN) has in order to attack them. Therefore no form of legal defence exists. Lawyers still cannot interrogate witnesses such as the prosecution's own police agents or military who participated in the arrests. All those who are found not guilty by the military courts are then tried again on the same charges by civilian courts. The sentences handed down or the accusations of the prosecutors are not substantiated by anything except police reports. There is no evidence provided to condemn the accused, the sentences are not substantiated and the arguments of the defence are not even taken into account. To this we would have to add the fascist control by the state over the so-called “judicial power” – which is each day more obvious, so that even reactionaries, like the genocidal Belaunde, have recognised it publicly. To sum up, the detainees are brought before sham trials, truly Roman circuses where the thumb

of the genocidal accusers decides the situation of the prisoners. There is no possibility of legality here.

Q: What do you think of the Ad Hoc Commission?

A: This reactionary scheme was created to clean up the image of the genocidal regime. Its members are unconditional servants of Fujimori and the military. They act in co-ordination with the political police DINCOTE and SIN. International pressure and the exposures conducted by progressive people have revealed the unlawful persecution of the masses and the people. The reactionaries have been obliged to create a mechanism to blunt these exposures, but in practice this has not changed the basic situation. In reality, it has seriously complicated the situation, because when this Commission refuses to give consideration to a case, it has the effect of “justifying” the logic of the condemnation of this prisoner; besides, there are no guarantees with regard to Commission decisions. Even Father Lansier himself has pointed out that he has many cases of prisoners who have no proof against them in their judicial records – in other words, their detention is clearly arbitrary and unjust, but the Ad Hoc Commission has not approved their cases because they say that they know the prisoner belongs to “red sendero” (based on information from DINCOTE and SIN). The practice of the Ad Hoc Commission is even more sinister than that of the courts. Here no form of defence exists whatsoever. Prisoners are submitted to police interrogations without having a lawyer present. They confront prisoners with “those who have repented”, or they even look for proof against the detainees in their hometowns or homes. They call on neighbours and others to accuse them (this is under coercion). They do not take the time to study the judicial records since they only use these as reference points. They have “investigative” teams that are really intelligence agents. They only admit certain cases presented by non-governmental organisations that co-ordinate with DINCOTE and that are as obsequious as this Commission is. This Commission has reached extremes of immorality. They have received many big contributions from international foundations, which have not been used on behalf of the prisoners but instead

for the benefit of the members of the Commission, or in some cases for certain servile individuals who have been liberated by them. Another example of their immorality is the sexual favours openly demanded by Lansier the Priest himself, who behaves like a sexual pervert toward the women prisoners. This game is catered to by women prisoners who support the peace accord, those of the MRTA and those "who have repented". Lansier and his clique have a great deal of power and control over what goes on in the prison — they control it jointly with the Police.

Q: It is known that in the prison there are those who are calling for a peace accord. What arguments do they have to support their position?

A: They put forward that Chairman Gonzalo has made a call to the Party to sign a peace accord. They base this on some letters supposedly presented by Fujimori, which they take as credible. They say that conditions to develop the People's War do not exist, that there is no clear leadership, that the leadership of Chairman Gonzalo is not there; that the leadership of the Party is being usurped, that the course put forward by the Party will lead to the defeat of the People's War, that the actions are not being developed like they used to be, that the position of continuing is "rash and militarist", that the Party is leading the masses into genocide because the leadership is incorrect and that without the direct and personal leadership of Chairman Gonzalo the People's War cannot develop. They call for ending the People's War — that is their slogan. They propose to surrender to a general amnesty for all the political prisoners. That is what is central for them. That is what they put forward nowadays, all the time, everywhere, through their slogans.

Q: What is the situation for them, the ones who support the peace accord? Do they face the same conditions as the rest of the prisoners? What is the attitude of the authorities with respect to those who are calling for a peace accord?

A: They have facilities such as access to the authorities, they have frequent contact and dialogue with them (like with the Ad Hoc Commission). Father

Lansier, representative of Fujimori, visits them constantly and co-ordinates with them. Their organisation is permitted and openly recognised. They co-ordinate and participate in the activities organised by the prison authorities. They are enthusiastic participants in the championships — contests organised by the prison directors. They are always doing Peruvian dances to entertain the authorities, for the genocidal Colonel Ernesto Castillo Leon and his agents of SIN, who are always coming to the prison. They play volleyball with them. They do not denounce the genocidal conditions in the prison, on the contrary, they have a very good relationship with the guards for whom they even do their laundry.

Q: How do the supporters of the peace accord act with respect to the rest of the detainees?

A: Every woman prisoner who arrives at the prison is subjected to tortuous harassment in order to try to break her and have her join their ranks. They utilise any method they can to try to accomplish their goals. They have physically assaulted the compañeras. The harassment is constant. Generally the newly arrived women prisoners are put into cells with these individuals. Here they dedicate themselves to harassing them twenty-four hours a day. If they cannot convince them, they try to break them down psychologically. They repeatedly rattle off their peace accord gibberish. The compañeras resist and then they are openly denounced by the defenders of the peace accord. In front of the guards, they accuse them of things so that the guards will punish them. In front of the social assistants and other authorities, they ask them to become informants against those who have remained firm. They look for every opportunity to provoke them, including organising "searches" with the guards in order to steal and destroy their belongings. They publicly snitch on the compañeras from the Leadership, doing this in front of the agents of SIN, the Ad Hoc Commission, Father Lansier and the genocidal Colonel Castillo. For example, the Ad Hoc Commission uses the information provided by the peace accord prisoners to process the cases and prevent the release of compañeras. Father Lansier has pointed out publicly that there are many detainees who have no evidence

against them in their judicial procedures but who they cannot free because they have been informed (by the peace accord prisoners) that these compañeros have remained firm.

Q: What is the attitude of the compañeras who put forward upholding and advancing the People's War with respect to the prisoners who put forward the peace accord? Is there two-line struggle with them, and what form does it take? What is put forward in response to the arguments that they make?

A: In the first place we must clarify some concepts. The two-line struggle goes on inside the Party, it is the motive force for the development of the Party, it is its motor. But it is impossible to develop a two-line struggle with these prisoners who have separated themselves from the Party, by their own choice. It would be absurd to do so. We, particularly the Party, according to what I understand, consider them revisionists, capitulationists and traitors. We combat them under the political guidance of "Combat Imperialism, Revisionism and Worldwide Reaction, Inseparably and Implacably!" We take this up within the task of sweeping away revisionism. We understand them to be part of that colossal heap of garbage that needs to be swept off the face of the earth. Keep well in mind that it is being demonstrated very clearly that the black grouplet is collaborating with the reaction — it is completely out in the open — they act in collusion with each other to snitch on and harass the compañeras. I believe firmly that they are part of the genocidal plan against the political prisoners and prisoners of war — this is how they act. It is important to denounce the fact that it is they who poisoned the tea water on more than one occasion, but the actions of the Party made them abort their sinister plan. It is also important to see who these low-lives are — who their delegates are. Many of them are snitches, wretches who took up the sinister repentance law. They even turned in masses; in this way they are all used by the prison authorities as their representatives. Another question which is important to clarify is that the Party has taught us to distinguish, that besides the heads of the black grouplet, there exist some detainees who have been duped and threatened into follow-

ing this revisionist nonsense about peace accords; they trick them by telling them that they are going to be freed. This is seen clearly in the public betrayals seen among them. Many have left their ranks in order to gain the benefits given to "the repentant" who are among the common prisoners or in areas where there is a more lenient regime being applied.

With respect to the arguments that they put forward, they are very absurd and weak. They say that they uphold the peace accord in order to defend Chairman Gonzalo, but their conclusion is amnesty for prisoners with the exception of Chairman Gonzalo – since "the reactionaries will not accept that point". What are they struggling for then? They are doing this only because they cannot stand up to the prison conditions, because they seek their own freedom. The sinister accusation that Chairman Gonzalo is the author of these letters is unfounded and inconsistent. None of them say that they have met with Chairman Gonzalo personally. Although there are public statements from them, none of them have left the prison for that purpose. They themselves have admitted this in front of the masses and compañeras who they have tried to force into submission. So the only thing on which they base themselves is the proof given by Fujimori – his trick video. They deny the conditions for continuing to develop the People's War. They don't see that these conditions intensify every day and that there is a developing revolutionary situation that is on the rise. This has been demonstrated in six years since the bend in the road – since the detention of Chairman Gonzalo. They don't understand the deepening of the class struggle, the deepening poverty of the masses, nor do they see how the masses are fighting and resisting.

With respect to the leadership, we must point out that we continue being under the leadership of our beloved and remembered Chairman Gonzalo – this has never been denied by the Party – very much to the contrary, his leadership continues and this is demonstrated by the way the accords and plans that were left by Chairman Gonzalo have been fully carried out – what was established by the III Plenum of the Central Committee. The way forward has been clearly defined

by Chairman Gonzalo; he repeated it clearly to the whole world in his masterful September 24th speech [from prison – see *AWTW* 1992/18]. The Central Committee clearly continues what was established by Chairman Gonzalo. Furthermore it has assumed firmly and resolutely the defence of the life of Chairman Gonzalo – this has been established as the political guidance for the period that is developing. Another question of great importance is to see that the leadership sustains itself with a Thought. The core of Gonzalo Thought is in the Party documents, principally in general political line that was established by the First Congress, in the party basis of unity. If we understand these things clearly, we can see that these peace accord prisoners are trying to negate the First Congress, are asking that the basis be laid for a Second Congress, in other words they want to deny the general political line and Party basis of unity. Why? Because they want to negate Gonzalo Thought, that is, negate the leadership. They miserably accuse us of "militarism", but say that, "today's actions are not like the ones of the past". In the first place, both things are wrong and besides, they contradict each other. Actions are on an ever higher level. Just look at how positional and mobile warfare has developed more and more in the countryside. The reaction has admitted that they cannot defeat us. It has already been 5 years since 1993 which was when they made their first attempt, 3 years since 1995 which was their second stage. In the countryside there are ever larger actions. That there is no great fanfare on the part of the media about this is because that is part of their reactionary plan for low intensity warfare. Secondly, there is no such militarism – it has never been fallen into. Those who only talk about actions are the ones who have only militarist criteria. Another wretched invention is that the Party is leading the masses into genocide. What a sinister accusation! The Party is the one that defends the masses. In my judgement persisting in the People's War is the only way to do it. What other way would there be in the face of air bombardments, for example? The base areas, the Open People's Committees, are defended by means of People's War. The supporters of the peace accord call for dismantling the commit-

tees and base areas. In other words that they be turned over to the hands of the reaction. And for what? So that the reaction can gorge itself more on the blood of the masses and complete its genocidé. It is precisely they who want Chairman Gonzalo to remain imprisoned – they want the reaction to eliminate him, to assassinate him; but they will not accomplish this because Chairman Gonzalo continues to resist and fight from his trench of combat, and besides, it is the actions of the Party, the People's War, that keep the reaction from concretising their sinister plan to assassinate him. The remaining inventions of the black grouplet are so base and wretched, and at the same time absurd. We have demonstrated it and we will continue to show it, not only in words, but principally in deeds, with the People's War.

Q: Any concluding words?

A: I want to reiterate my joy and thankfulness for this interview. I hope that it serves in continuing to develop the struggle for revolution in my country, as well as, and particularly, for the defence of the lives of the political prisoners and prisoners of war, most especially in defence of the life of Chairman Gonzalo. I want to join in the Party's gratitude and recognition of the communists of the whole world, of all the revolutionaries, of the international proletariat, and of the men and women of the world of good conscience who have assumed firmly and decisively the defence of the life of Chairman Gonzalo, the defence of the Peruvian people, and the support of the People's War – the only road for revolution. I want to particularly express my acknowledgement of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement and the International Emergency Committee, who are leading this struggle. I want to invite and insist that we continue to struggle in this battle. We have to strengthen it even more. Equally, I want to reiterate my commitment to it, to the world proletarian revolution, to the great wave that approaches. One final request: I would like for this interview to be published as widely as possible in its entirety, so that the world knows of this testimony. I hope that it facilitates an understanding of what is happening in my country. Thank you very much. ■

May 1st – Set Your Eyes on the Goal of Communism!

Statement by the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

This year the international proletariat is holding the last May Day of the century. As was the case at the turn of the last century, there is no part of the globe where our class has nationwide power. Yet our class has gained the experience of carrying out successful proletarian revolutions and building socialism in vast areas of the world. In the passing century, our class fought the most momentous battles of humanity's entire history, battles that changed the course of history completely. Our class carried out three earth-shaking revolutions to establish socialist countries and move the world to a new epoch of communism: the October revolution in Russia in 1917, the October revolution in China in 1949, and finally the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, begun in 1966. It was in the process of these epic battles and in the midst of these momentous proletarian revolutions that the revolutionary science of Marxism was enriched and became Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM).

Today, we have lost both our great socialist bastions where the proletariat held power. World imperialism and new capitalist classes within these socialist states fought tooth-and-nail to overthrow proletarian rule, first in Russia in 1956 and then in China in 1976 in the aftermath of Mao Tsetung's death. These defeats, as well as our victories in revolution and socialist construction, concentrate the two opposite poles, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, of the present epoch – the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. Standing at the threshold of the 21st century, the capitalist/imperialist system continues its restless and ruthless pursuit of profit – subjecting the majority of the world's people to vicious exploitation, squeezing their labour, stealing their very lives, promoting a dog-eat-dog mentality and carrying out extermination, mass murder and the enslavement of entire peoples to protect its profit machine. Our class worldwide is fighting to abolish bourgeois rule and to establish proletarian rule once again in as many parts of the world as possible, to establish socialist states as base areas in the larger fight for a whole world without classes – communism.

Imperialism has not and cannot do away with the material basis for proletarian revolution. Even today, when US imperialism is boasting of its success, conditions for huge sections of people in large parts of the world are sharply deteriorating. Even in the most advanced imperialist countries, unemployment, homelessness, and state brutality are on the rise. Today's situation can only worsen for the masses, as new waves of crisis inevitably sweep through the imperialist system. The East Asia crisis is a taste of what is in store around the world.

But the masses are resisting imperialism's vicious exploitation and oppression. The reactionary client states of imperialism in the Third World are fortifying their police states, but still are facing new waves of struggle and resistance from the people, which have already led to the collapse of long-established reactionary regimes, such as in Indonesia and Zaire.

The imperialists develop their international "policing" apparatuses to hound and bully the revolutionaries, as when they kidnapped the Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan. But this repression only fuels the flames of anger and revolt and breeds new generations of revolutionaries around the world.

At the same time, too often and in too many countries the struggling masses are leaderless and fight blindly, without the liberating ideology of MLM. This only makes it easier for bourgeois and reformist forces to derail their struggle and betray their hopes, ultimately trading the sacrifices of the masses for a share of power in the reactionary system. In contrast to that stands the People's Wars in Peru and Nepal and the advance of armed struggle under the leadership of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties more generally – this constitutes real progress towards our goal of winning state power for the proletariat. Yet these advances, however crucial, are still not commensurate with the international proletariat's goal of "winning the world". In most countries of the world there is still no vanguard proletarian party to lead the rebellion of the masses towards genuine revolution and the establishment of new socialist states. This great weakness is related to the restoration of capitalism in the ex-socialist states and the degeneration of communist parties into the swamp of revisionism and reformism in many parts of the world. To reverse this trend, 15 years ago Maoist forces from around the world formed the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) as their embryonic centre. The formation of RIM was a product of going against the tide of revisionism and opportunism that engulfed the international communist movement in the aftermath of Mao's death and the restoration of capitalism in China in 1976. Many communist parties followed the Chinese revisionists and ended up betraying the proletariat, and many others were caught up in confusion and centrism between revolution and reformism. But the parties and organisations who went against the tide and took the bold step of forming RIM as a step towards forming a new Communist International fought vigorously to overcome this crisis and re-build the international communist movement on the basis of MLM. This process has prepared and steeled the MLM forces to organise and lead the coming waves of world revolution. RIM must be further strengthened to be able to spread Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to every corner of the planet and to help form new MLM organisations and parties wherever they do not exist. Building and strengthening such vanguards is a burning task if the coming waves of revolution are to yield real advances on the road to communism.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the earth-shaking revolution in China in 1949, led by Mao Tsetung, which freed a quarter of humanity from the clutches of semi-feudalism and imperialism. The legacy of proletarian revolution is a nightmare for the capitalist/imperialist powers and their reactionary clients in the Third World. But it is a source of power and inspiration for the proletarians and oppressed. RIM calls upon the proletarians and oppressed peoples the world over, especially all MLM parties and organisations, to mark the end of the 20th century by celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Chinese revolution in a resounding way and by proudly reaffirming the "old" idea that the proletarians around the world must resort to (in the words of the *Communist Manifesto*) the "forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions". With power in its hands, the proletariat can embark upon building a new world in which no private property is used to exploit the labour power of the workers, in which no division of labour can be a source of privilege for some and misery for others, in which no difference of race or sex can be the cause of social superiority, and where, at last, humanity, unfettered by classes, can enter into voluntary association in order to create the wealth and well-being of all.

**Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Victory of Revolution in China!
Down with Imperialism and Reaction!
Form MLM parties wherever they do not exist!
Fight for power for the proletariat and people – Towards a new communist world!
Long live People's War in Peru, Nepal and around the World!**

¹ The original version of this statement omitted the word "nationwide". As some comrades have pointed out, this would not take into account the political power constituted in the base areas where protracted people's war is taking place.

Abdullah Ocalan Must Be Freed!

Statement by the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

18 February 1999

The Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) strongly condemns the kidnapping of Abdullah Ocalan, chairman of the Kurdish Workers Party, and the murder and repression of the Kurdish masses protesting his arrest.

The kidnapping of Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) leader Abdullah Ocalan marks another bloody chapter in the imperialists' long-standing effort to crush the Kurdish people's struggle. This was the culmination of a coordinated manhunt by the world's secret police forces. Ocalan was hounded and pursued from one country to another. A U.S.-orchestrated Turkey-Israel rapprochement originally drove him out of Syria. In Russia, the neo-KGB contemptuously dismissed the Russian Parliament's welcome of Ocalan and sent him packing, allegedly after consultation with the CIA. The Netherlands refused him entry to plead the Kurds' case before the International Court of Justice. And the highly guarded secrecy surrounding the basic facts of his kidnapping in Kenya itself stinks of reactionary intrigue and conspiracy.

Beneath the thinnest veneer of parliamentary democracy, Turkey is a torture state, ruled by a military utterly beholden to the U.S., Germany and other imperialist countries. London bobbies, Paris gendarmes and other police forces across Europe made the support of their governments for the Turkish regime brutally clear by their bloodthirsty attacks on the Kurdish youth demanding Ocalan's freedom. When Israeli goons shot and murdered three Kurdish youth and wounded many more, this latest act of Zionist terrorism was backed by the U.S., which justified it by calling the PKK "terrorist". What is the difference between the PKK and armed organisations in other countries whom the U.S. labels "freedom fighters"? The most important distinction is whether a group fits in with U.S. imperialist interests.

The many thousands of Turkish and Kurdish revolutionaries who have passed through that country's hellholes in recent years have a saying: they are in the small prisons within the big prison that is Turkey. Amnesty International and other human rights groups have denounced the widespread and systematic torture of those in the hands of Turkey's legal system, not to speak of the government death squads that simply murder opponents in their homes or offices or on the street. What does it say about the Turkish system of justice that every day now thousands of Kurds are putting their lives on the line simply to demand a UN commission to ensure Ocalan will not be tortured and killed? After all, the oppression of the Kurds is the law of the land in Turkey. It is still forbidden to teach the Kurdish language in school. Kurdish parliamentarians and poets languish in prison merely for discussing Kurdish rights. The Turkish ruling classes' true intentions for Ocalan are seen not in their feeble lip-service to legal procedures but in the fact that they have promised a "short, swift" trial, turned away his Dutch lawyers at the country's borders, and arrested 350 members of the pro-Kurdish parliamentary party.

Turkey's rulers and their Western backers are dancing with joy. But their pompous boasts are already being drowned out by the cries of outrage and defiance that are rolling through Europe's urban centres. A new generation of Kurdish youth has risen to fight oppression, and they have fully demonstrated their unquenchable thirst for liberation. What 50 years ago was a problem confined to a remote corner of the former Ottoman Empire is now rocking the capitals of Europe, and the Kurdish cause is gaining the sympathy and support of millions. The shantytowns of Turkey's cities, swollen with Kurdish refugees from the military's counter-insurgency war, are seething. Turkey's rulers and their imperialist backers will, as Mao Tsetung said of all oppressors, surely know no peace. Abdullah Ocalan must be freed from their clutches.

Notes on the

Worldwide Campaign to *Raise Funds for RIM!*

By the Information Bureau of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

The campaign to raise funds for RIM has begun to strengthen a web of internationalist support among the oppressed and their allies in other social classes stretching across the continents. Although not all reports are in, and the campaign is in different stages in the different countries, some glimpses of the struggle to carry out the campaign reveal a tremendous international effort and the enthusiastic participation by many revolutionary masses and supporters of the parties and organisations united in RIM.

The campaign is centred on a call for a half-day's wages in all countries, "no matter on which side of imperialism's tentacles you are born". This is a way of taking into account the vast inequalities in standards of living in rich and poor countries. In Nepal, one of the poorest countries in the world, the average daily wage comes to 20 US cents or about 13 pence in rural areas, and twice that in the cities. Here, where the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) is leading a People's War against the old state, now in its fourth year, over 150,000 people in the Western rural areas alone, where the People's War is strongest, gave one-half day's wage to support RIM. The high stakes were not lost on either side: one comrade was martyred in the course of carrying out this campaign. The sacrifices made to strengthen RIM were, according to reports from Nepal, connected to great enthusiasm for the Movement, and many eager questions from comrades and others about the latest developments in RIM and in other countries, including the rest of South Asia. The goal in Nepal is to double the amount raised so far.

In India, comrades of the CPI

(ML) Maoist Unity Centre went to several different areas. Most who contributed were casual workers from the rural areas, although some women garment workers also contributed ½ day's wage, which in that part of India comes to 34 rs or just under 1 USD. The comrades also went to very impoverished slums. At one of these, near Mumbai (formerly called Bombay), people at first reacted angrily when they heard about a fund collection, but after its purpose was explained they were very keen to hear about the People's War in Nepal and other revolutionary news. Most of the men were out of work due to lockouts or redundancies. In another region, middle-class salaried employees, some of whom read *A World to Win*, contributed a half-day's wage.

Bangladeshi peasants mobilised by the Proletarian Party of Purba Bangla (PBSP) participated in the campaign by giving quantities of rice. Across the globe, comrades in Mexico overfulfilled the goal they had set for the campaign, through a variety of public and less public activities among different sections of the masses. They carried out agitation in the universities, went canvassing door-to-door in proletarian and other districts, and mobilised peasants to make handicrafts for sale. A public cultural and political event was held in the capital, at which supporters gave generously.

Colombian comrades report that there is much affection for and great expectations of RIM in their country, and that the campaign has brought new people closer to the Revolutionary Communist Group (GCR). They organised a semi-public exhibition of the history of proletarian revolution in three cities, attended by more than one thousand people. This was accom-

panied by a major distribution of information and propaganda on the Movement in working-class and other neighbourhoods, partly in order to build a broader audience for the exhibition. Now they are developing a slide show to take out the half-day wage campaign.

Comrades and supporters in the United States successfully carried out the fund drive, raising significant sums through the half-day wage campaign and donations from different sections of the people. RIM was introduced to thousands of new people, from the kick-off effort on May 1st 1998 to the final push on International Women's Day, March 8th 1999. One form of fundraising popularised was collective projects (yard sales of second-hand clothing and books, bake sales, making and selling dinners in neighbourhoods) organised together with the masses. Especially in the early stage of the fund drive, these projects helped broaden the base of forces who could then take out the campaign to others, beyond their own individual contributions. Bilingual banners of the planet breaking its chains were taken to local parks on the weekend, and people were encouraged to pin money on them as a show of support. Many people stepped forward to donate. In one area, donations came from a wide range of people — from basic, multi-national immigrant proletarians to youth active in various recent protests.

In Europe, comrades united in RIM jointly organised a fund-raising concert in Duisburg, Germany, just after the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the *Communist Manifesto* in December 1998. This internationalist event brought together revolutionary supporters of RIM from Turkey,

Kurdistan, Peru, Iran, Denmark, Afghanistan, Germany and other countries (see box).

Even where there are not yet Maoist parties or organisations in RIM, individuals and small groups of sympathisers in Holland, Greece, Spain, Portugal and the UK actively carried out the campaign by going to supporters and to revolutionary masses with flyers and other materials like the cassette tape of revolutionary music *We Only Want the World*.

In the course of carrying it out, the international campaign to raise funds for RIM has begun to answer many of the questions and helped to settle the ongoing debate and struggle that inevitably comes up in stretching to successfully wage a battle of this nature, so vital to the growth and development of RIM's work. What does internationalism mean when it comes to raising funds — to what degree can we "afford" to spare time and resources to support RIM, that is, the world proletarian revolution in its own right, when there are so many urgent needs in building the movement and organisation in a particular country? How much of a basis among the masses themselves exists to support such an international movement? How to involve the poorest of the masses whose heart is with the campaign? How to struggle with middle-class allies to give as much as they can and to mobilise their friends and contacts to do likewise? Overcoming obstacles through debate over these and other questions, understanding the long-term benefits of training the people in internationalism within one's revolutionary base and learning how to tap the ideas and enthusiasm of the people for revolution to develop new ways to raise money, including out of the enemy's sight, are all important aspects of bringing a strategically important campaign such as this to a successful conclusion. Letters and reports on these continuing activities are welcome.

Aim high and go all out to raise funds for RIM!

Letter from a comrade in Denmark - 16 December 98

Revolutionary Concert to Raise funds for RIM

"Waking early in the salon the following morning, all of us joined together to clean and prepare the place for the concert. People in the kitchen went into action to prepare breakfast; the sound system was set up and the musicians and performers practised. There was a great feeling of excitement and anticipation, a thundering celebration in support of RIM, of what has been achieved and what will be achieved, and in honour of the comrades who gave their lives for the revolution. The overwhelming feeling was that everyone was going to go all out to make this the best revolutionary concert/ revolutionary cultural event possible. This is serious business: as Mao said, in revolutionary art we must be 'red and expert', revolutionary in meaning and of a high quality. Some performers not originally scheduled also stepped up on stage and took part.

"The concert began with a great battle dance from the Peruvian comrades and revolutionary Peruvian music. The rest of the concert included revolutionary music from Turkey, Kurdistan, Denmark (songs in English and Farsi), some great radical rap and poetry and revolutionary marches. People danced, participated, shouted slogans in the breaks between performances. Comrades introducing the groups did so with great energy and really kept the whole event rolling, and apart from

some technical problems with the sound everything went well. The book tables were also active selling books, posters, records, tapes and magazines.

"A speech was given, informing comrades of Mumia Abu-Jamal's situation, and one comrade quickly drew a large poster of Mumia which everyone was called on to sign for the campaign to free him. Long queues formed rapidly. Comrades in the kitchen made great sandwiches, which kept everyone going. Everybody in the salon was actively engaged in the concert, whether performing or supporting the artists, and all the performers were cheered loudly. The salon was full of red-hot energy, young and old comrades together, songs sung in different languages, a transfer of style from East to West, West to East. Internationalism. Art against the system, Cultural Revolution. I was glad to be there. Proud to be a part of it. Thank you to all the comrades who worked to make it happen.

"The spectre of Communism manifested itself in Duisburg! Alive, Red and Dangerous!

Workers of all Countries Unite!
Long Live
Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!
Victory to the People's Wars
Raging in Peru and Nepal!
Long Live the Revolutionary
Internationalist Movement!"



Reports from the *Communist Manifesto* Seminars in India and Germany

People gathered in cities around the world last year to commemorate a great threshold in the struggle to liberate humanity: the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*, by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. This document marked the emergence of a scientific understanding of the basic principles of proletarian revolution. For the first time, after countless generations of sacrifice and struggle, the masses of oppressed now had a vision of a new world that was not only beautiful and inspiring – a world without war, without suffering, without man's inhumanity to man – but also imminently realisable. Since then every generation of the bourgeoisie has sought to bury the *Manifesto* through ridicule, suppression or revisionist "improvement" of its revolutionary content. And every generation of proletarians has sought to uphold, deepen and apply its basic truths in order to hasten the end of the old order.

Meetings were held to commemorate the *Manifesto* on every continent. Inner-city youth from the New York ghettos, peasant women from Nepal's outlying villages, intellectuals from Paris to Dhaka, political refugees scattered around the world, from Peru, Afghanistan, Turkey, Iran and many other countries, all gathered to pay tribute to this milestone in the revolutionary struggle, and to learn how to carry that struggle further. *A World To Win* itself sponsored two conferences organised by parties and organisations that are participants or friends of the Revolutionary Internationalist Move-

ment – one in Duisburg, Germany, in the heart of the Rhine industrial region on 12 December 1998, and another in the Indian metropolis of Calcutta on December 13th. Following are brief reports on these seminars, as well as the entire speech prepared by the RIM Committee, presented at both events.

CALCUTTA

More than 500 people gathered in the Muslim Institute Hall, re-named the Paris Commune Hall for the day, to commemorate the *Manifesto*. The area around the hall was covered with posters giving its clarion call, "Workers of all countries, unite!" The poster could be seen throughout the city and as far away as Bombay, Delhi, Punjab, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and in distant villages in West Bengal. Calcutta is known for its heroic revolutionary tradition and undaunted struggles against revisionism, yet it is also a city ruled by the imperialists, often through their revisionist lackeys, the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

When *AWTW's* proposal for the seminar reached the principal Maoist forces in India, they readily offered support. Immediately an Organising Committee was formed, which included *AWTW*, Struggle Forum for People's Resistance (SFPR), Lok Sangram Manch, Porattom, Chamakda Lal Tara, and supporters of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). Other organisations like Ei Desh, Agronee and Naya Isthehar also

participated in organising with equal vigour. Many of these groups are closely associated with the main Marxist-Leninist-Maoist organisations in India. Postering and leafleting in different parts of India in regional languages like Punjabi and Malayalam were done by Lok Sangram Manch, Chamakda Lal Tara and Porattom. The poster and leaflet were designed and printed centrally in English, Bengali and Hindi. Comrades from all these organisations worked to assure the programme's success. This was a new and challenging task, since currently India's Maoists are not united in one organisation. In spite of that, supporters of almost all the Maoist organisations joined in a spirit of unity, where comrades did their best to handle the inevitable complexities.

The day began with the hoisting of the Red Flag at a short rally outside the hall. The atmosphere was charged with thunderous slogans in a host of languages. The convenor stressed the need for the Maoist forces in India and world-wide to unite, then all the participants joined in paying tribute to the martyrs of all countries. Two minutes silence was observed. The Communist anthem "The Internationale" then filled the air in Bengali, Hindi, Malayalam, Punjabi and Nepali jointly. Everyone present instantly felt the vastness and depth of the impact of the *Communist Manifesto* not only in India but around the world.

The seminar began with the election of a six-member Presidium. The seminar papers were distributed, and

a message was read out from comrade Suniti Kumar Gosh, a Maoist revolutionary intellectual, earlier a Central Committee member of the CPI (ML) and editor of the Party central organ *Liberation*. Comrade Gosh was unable to attend the Seminar due to physical disability. His message linked up the development of Marxism from Marx to Mao Tsetung, showed the continuing relevance of the *Manifesto* and wished the seminar success.

In his introduction to the RIM Committee speech, comrade Asit Kumar Sengupta emphasised the development from Marxism to Maoism and how Lenin and Mao had taken basic tenets of the *Manifesto* and developed the theory of the party, the people's army, the united front and proletarian dictatorship. He also stressed the necessity for a new type of communist International, through protracted ideological struggle.

Introducing the paper for the SFPR, comrade Chitta Ranjan Das highlighted the lessons of the *Manifesto* and showed how Lenin, Stalin and Mao developed Marxism. This paper, entitled, "Hold High the Banner of the *Communist Manifesto*! March Forward Along the Path of World Proletarian Revolution!", expressed the need for a communist International but argued that the time was not yet ripe to form it. The speech also underlined the crucial role of the fight against revisionism, pointing out that, "since its emergence, Marxism has had to carry on intense struggle at every moment against revisionism". Comrade Vavara Rao, the General Secretary of the AILRC, described the universal and immortal importance of the *Manifesto*. He showed the development of Marxism through Lenin and Mao and concluded that "Marxist thought has further developed into Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, or Maoism". He too expressed the necessity for a Communist International, but held that with the class struggle led by communists still at a relatively low level, it is inevitable that crystallisation into an effective international body will take time. And he also cautioned that, "it would be well to consider certain historical facts in the rise and fall of such centres, drawing lessons, before undertaking any new formation".

Comments from the other convening organisations were lively but also stressed the existing unity around

MLM of the participating forces. Questions from the audience mainly related to the international experiences of the Maoist forces and their applications country-wide.

Various cultural organisations from Bihar, Bengal, Punjab and Nepal sang revolutionary songs in their native languages during the programme break. The revolutionary singing of comrade Parveer Singh, a young lad from Punjab, assured the audience that the torch of the *Manifesto* would continue to blaze.

The Maoist forces who gathered during the seminar felt drawn more closely together, and building unity based on MLM while carrying on the necessary struggle to achieve it was the prevailing theme. Indeed, this was why they responded so positively to the proposal to organise the seminar in the first place. At the seminar's conclusion, the delegates felt that their collective efforts had pushed forward this unity process. They returned to their respective field of activities with a keen sense of their common revolutionary heritage — and their common revolutionary future.

DUISBURG

The weekend of December 12th and 13th was devoted to commemorating the 150th anniversary of the *Communist Manifesto* and to a concert for the world-wide fundraising campaign for RIM in Duisburg, Germany. The conference was called by AWTW and both events were organised jointly by the Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist) [TKP (ML)], the Union of Communists of Iran (UIC), the TKP ML (Maoist Party Centre), the Revolutionary Communists of Germany (RK), and the Peru People's Movement (MPP) of Europe.

Comrades from the different organisations active in Germany formed leafletting teams and went out to different areas to poster and to build for the conference. They found there was a high level of interest among people of different nationalities and among various sections of the masses. Some reported that perhaps the best response to the flyer was at the high schools, where often 10 to 20 students would gather around the agitators and lively discussions would ensue about the content and current relevance of the *Manifesto* and the question of

proletarian revolution and communist society in general. On a number of occasions students themselves took flyers into the schools to distribute further. Interest was also widespread among foreign-born and German proletarians, activists from the social movements as well as political veterans.

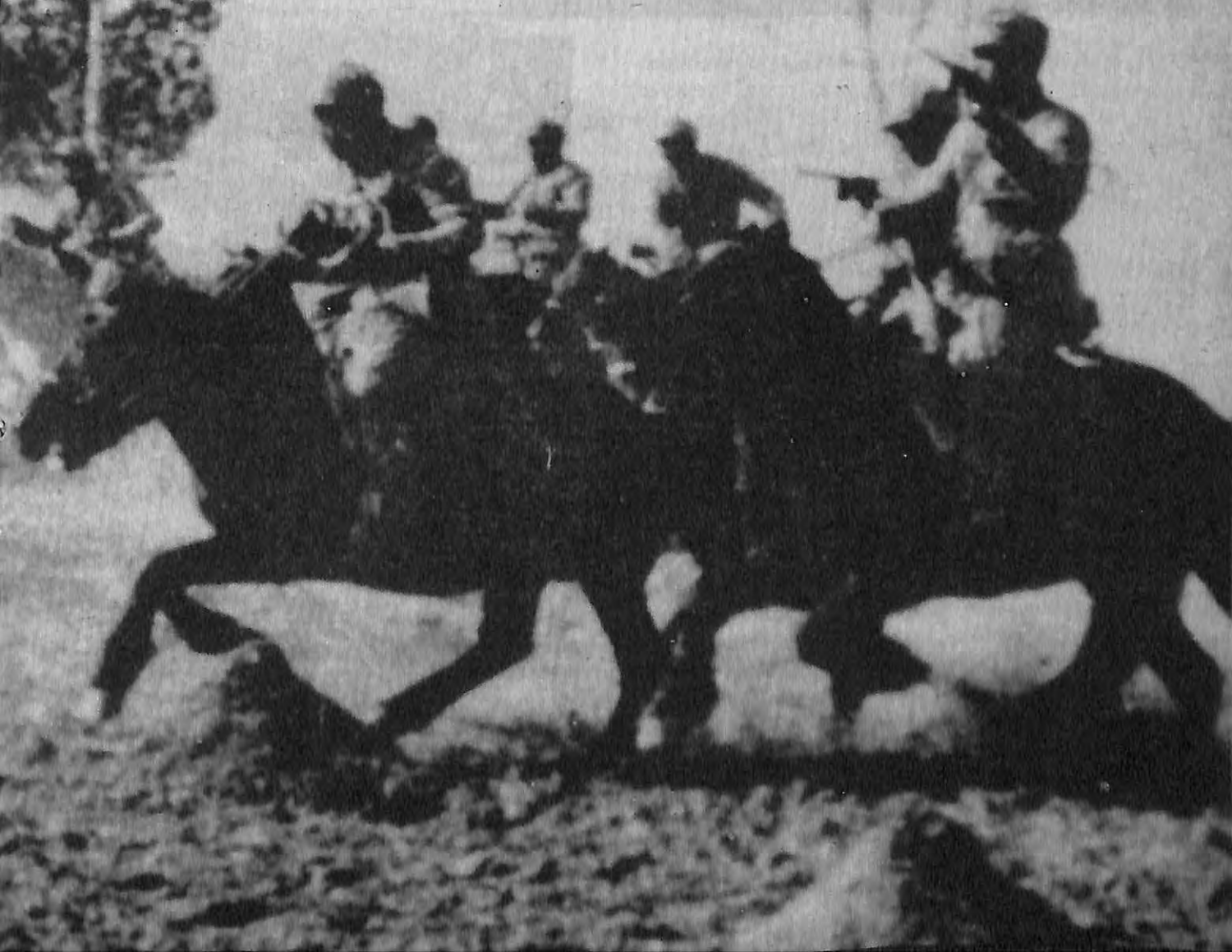
On the weekend itself, a boisterous international mix of about 350 revolutionaries from Turkey, Kurdistan, Germany, Iran, Peru, Afghanistan and the Philippines as well as from a number of other countries but living in Europe showed up to take part. At the front of the hall hung a huge brightly painted RIM banner of the world shattering its chains with the slogan "Workers of the World Unite!" The stage area was decorated with an enlarged cover of the *Manifesto* flanked by portraits of Marx and Engels. A translation system made possible the simultaneous presentation of the speeches in German, Turkish, Farsi, Spanish and English.

Participants felt that the conference was marked by the revolutionary spirit of the *Manifesto* and that it made a real contribution to upholding and spreading the basic message and principles of the *Manifesto*, including as these have developed today into Maoism. A high level of political unity and genuine internationalism and a lively and comradesly atmosphere, punctuated regularly by revolutionary chants ringing out in different languages, set the tone for a day of presentations: first, the CoRIM speech, on the development of MLM as a science and the *Manifesto*'s relevance today, followed by presentations on the Chinese Cultural Revolution by the TKP (ML), on continuing along the path of the martyred Turkish communist leader Ibrahim Kaypaykkaya and people's war by the TKP ML (MPC), on the possibilities for making revolution in Germany by the RKs, and a document by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Peru read out by the MPP in Europe. A message of solidarity delivered by José Maria Sison, who was founding Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines, was enthusiastically received by the audience. Many wished that there had been more time for discussion and debate.

With fists held high, the conference concluded with the singing of the "Internationale" in many languages, the language of internationalism. ■

The seizure of power by
armed force, the settlement
of the issue by war, is the
central task and the highest
form of revolution.

– *Mao Tsetung*



Several hundred million peasants will rise like a mighty storm, like a hurricane,



To most observers, even many revolutionaries, Mao's prediction above seemed mad – it was widely believed that the misery of China's millions had robbed them of hope. Yet Mao used Marxism to dig beneath the surface to point out that wherever there is oppression, there is resistance. And one thing China definitely did not lack was oppression. – *AWTW*

I think back on the eleven years of factory inspection in Shanghai, and of all the crude exploitation seen. The long lines of weeping children, many only nine or ten, stirring the basins of silk cocoons in silk filatures, the dead-weary apprentices with beri-beri swollen legs in the dark sweat shops of back alleyways, the exploited contract labour working their twelve-hour shifts in cotton mills, and all the rest of the filthy oppression the system brought in its train. Then the end of the road for prostitutes thrown up by an utterly wicked society, whose life amongst the cheap brothels on Foochow Road averaged two years. The callous, bloated rich and the incredible poverty of the poor. – *Rewi Alley, New Zealand writer and poet, for many years chief inspector of factories in Shanghai*

The bodies floating down the river. Leaning against the ship rail, I could see them bobbing up and down. I asked the bosun whose bodies they were, where they had come from. He shrugged. Not with indifference but with resignation and with great sadness. 'Who knows? All are different. Some just died but no money for burial. Some jumped into the river out of great sorrow. Some were thrown in by their enemies. There is famine up the river and many thousands die each day. There are bandits. There are soldiers who are no different from bandits. These days, many girls are sold into the Houses of Joy and some prefer the river. China is sick and that is why there are many bodies in the river. – *Dr. Joshua S. Horn: Away With All Pests*



a force so swift and violent that no power, however great, will be able to hold it back. They will smash all the trammels that bind them and rush forward along the road to liberation. They will sweep all the imperialists, warlords, corrupt officials, local tyrants and evil gentry into their graves. — *Mao Tsetung*

The peasants, as we saw them, were dying. They were dying on the roads, in the mountains, by the railway stations, in their mud huts, in the fields. And as they died, the government continued to wring from them the last possible ounce of tax. The government in county after county was demanding of the peasant more actual poundage of grain than he had raised on his acres. No excuses were allowed; peasants who were eating elm bark and dried leaves had to haul their last sack of seed grain to the tax collector's office. Peasants who were so weak they could barely walk had to collect fodder for the army's horses, fodder that was more nourishing than the filth they were cramming into their own mouths. Peasants who could not pay were forced to the wall; they sold their cattle, their furniture, and even their land to raise money to buy grain to meet the tax quotas. One of the most macabre touches of all was the flurry of land speculation. Merchants from Sian and Chengchow, small government officials, army officers, and rich landlords who still had food were engaged in purchasing the peasants' ancestral acres at criminally low figures. Concentration and dispossession were proceeding hand in hand, in direct proportion to the intensity of hunger. The actual physical brutality and indignity with which the tax was collected was sickening, but the corruption that went hand in hand with its collection was worse. — *Theodore H. White & Annalee Jacoby: Thunder Out of China*



'Golden Lilies'. Footbinding was introduced in the 11th century and spread from the ranks of the wealthy to those of more modest means and even to much of the peasantry. Girls as young as three or four would have their feet bound tightly with bandages, folding all the toes except the big toe under the sole to make the foot slender and pointed. After a couple of years, the big one and heel were brought together, bending the arch, causing constant pain and hindering free movement. The sight of a woman teetering on her little points, moving her hips from side to side 'like a tender young willow in a breeze' to balance herself was believed to have an erotic effect on men. The ideal length was three inches. — *Jonathan D. Spence & Annping Chin: The Chinese Century*

For over a hundred years, the imperialists dominated China. – The British even waged the Opium Wars in the 1840s to force the Chinese to continue the opium trade, which resulted in millions of Chinese becoming addicts and much of the country's wealth going into the coffers of Britain's merchants and bankers. A series of what were called "unequal treaties" were then imposed on China; parts of its territory were ceded to foreign powers (eg Hong Kong went to Britain), and national sovereignty was compromised. The US forced

China and the other imperialists to accept the "Open Door Policy", so-named because it handed them an open door to come in and exploit China on the same terms and conditions as the established European imperialists. This imperialist domination culminated in the occupation of China by the Japanese in World War 2 and the subsequent US effort to impose their puppet Chiang Kai-shek following the war.

– AWTW



May 4th Movement Protests

In May 1919, a great movement, spearheaded by China's students, called the May 4th Movement, arose to oppose foreign, particularly Japanese, domination of China. – AWTW



The Japanese colonialists were arrogant and overbearing towards their imperialist rivals, but they treated the Chinese with viciousness. Curses, kicks and lashes were distributed liberally on the slightest provocation, or even on none at all, and it was easy to sense the smouldering hatred the brutality aroused. At that time, in that place, the Chinese were powerless to resist,

but elsewhere in China the Communist armies were regrouping, and a weapon was being forged which would smash the mighty Japanese military machine and humble the arrogant conquerors. – Dr. Joshua S. Horn



Beijing students of the May 4th Movement



Lu Xun (1881-1936)

Lu Xun dedicated his life to serving the people. He was a poet, a writer of stories, a woodcut artist, and a revolutionary leader in the arts. Living through more than half a century of struggle between revolution and counter-revolution, he said "writers in the present resistance are fighting for the present and the future; for if we lose the present we shall have no future". – *AWTW*

A Poem

A host of dark, gaunt faces in the brambles,
 Yet who dare shake the earth with lamentation?
 I brood over our whole far-stretching land
 And in this silence hear the peal of thunder.
 – Lu Xun, 1934

In the world today all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines. There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes, art that is detached from or independent of politics. Proletarian literature and art are part of the whole proletarian revolutionary cause; they are, as Lenin said, cogs and wheels in the whole revolutionary machine....

Our purpose is to ensure that literature and art fit well into the whole revolutionary machine as a component part, that they operate as powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people and for attacking and destroying the enemy, and that they help the people fight the enemy with one heart and one mind. – *Mao Tsetung*

By the 1920s, the Chinese revolutionaries, inspired by the October revolution, had summed up the need to form a revolutionary communist party and launch armed struggle against the reactionary regime. But for several years the views guiding revolutionary warfare were influenced by an incorrect analysis of the nature of China and the way war should be waged in an oppressed country. After suffering a series of defeats, the revolutionary armed forces were surrounded by the reactionary armies and seemed to be facing imminent doom. Mao, who had been forging a more correct analysis of Chinese society, played a key role in coming to the rescue of the fledgling Red forces, and helped them execute a daring escape "so as to fight another day". Yet their valiant escape had nothing of a passive retreat about it – it proved to be the turning point in the People's War, as, under Mao's leadership, the Party not only developed a correct line for conducting the war, but also managed to stun the reactionaries in China and worldwide by leading the Red forces to repeatedly evade the reactionary army, who were superior in manpower and arms. In so doing, they sowed the seeds of revolution all along the tortuous path the Red forces followed in their march across China. – AWTW

The main body of the First Front Army left the Central Soviet at the beginning of October 1934 for a journey that would take it 6,000 miles through twelve provinces, over eighteen mountain ranges and across twenty-four rivers... Although many had been killed on the way, others had been left behind and these had spread the word of Marxism, building on the favourable impressions that the Red Army had created.

By the time they reached Shaanxi only 8,000 men were left, one in twenty of those who had started the journey. The survivors had travelled a distance equivalent to that from London to Hong Kong in only 13 months. It is the longest sustained army march in history; they averaged one skirmish with the enemy per day, including 15 days of major battles, with 235 day marches and 18 night marches and only 150 days of halt. – Dick Wilson: China's Revolutionary War



Reply to Comrade Kuo Mo-Jo

— to the tune of Man Chiang Hung

On this tiny globe
A few flies dash themselves against
the wall,
Humming without cease,
Sometimes shrilling,
Sometimes moaning.
Ants on the locust tree assume a
great-nation swagger
And mayflies lightly plot to topple
the giant tree.
The west wind scatters leaves
over Changan,
And the arrows are flying,
twanging.

So many deeds cry out to be done,
And always urgently;
The world rolls on,
Time presses.
Ten thousand years are too long,
Seize the day, seize the hour!
The Four Seas are rising, clouds
and waters raging,
The Five Continents are rocking,
wind and thunder roaring.
Our force is irresistible.
Away with all pests!

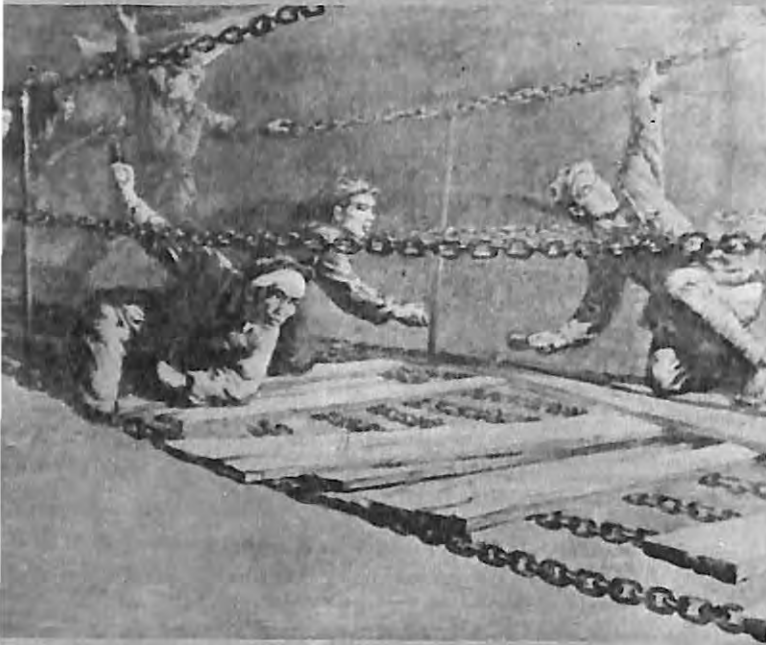
— Mao Tsetung

毛泽东



The crossing of the Tatu River was the most critical single incident of the Long March. Had the Red Army failed there, quite possibly it would have been exterminated. The historic precedent for such a fate already existed.

— Edgar Snow: Red Star Over China



North of the Tatu River the Reds climbed 16,000 feet over the Great Snowy Mountain, and in the rarefied air of its crest looked to the west and saw a sea of snow peaks – Tibet. It was already June, and in the lowlands very warm, but as they crossed the Ta Hsueh Shan many of those poorly clad, thin-blooded southerners unused to the high altitudes perished from exposure. Harder yet to ascend was the desolate Paotung Kang Mountain, up which they literally built their own road, felling long bamboos and laying them down for a track through a tortuous treacle of waist-deep mud. 'On this peak,' Mao Tsetung told me, 'one army corps lost two thirds of its transport animals. Hundreds fell down and never got up.'

— Edgar Snow

Platoon Commander Ma Dajiu stepped out, grasped one of the chains, and began swinging, hand over hand, towards the north bank. The platoon political director followed, and after him the men. As they swung along, Red Army machine guns laid down a protecting screen of fire and the Engineering Corps began bringing up tree trunks and laying the bridge flooring.

The army watched breathlessly as the men swung along the bridge chains. Ma Dajiu was the first to be shot into the wild torrent below. Then another man and another. The others pushed along, but just before they reached the flooring at the north bridgehead they saw enemy soldiers dumping cans of kerosene on the planks and setting them on fire. Watching the sheet of flame spread, some men hesitated, but the platoon political leader at last sprang down on the flooring before the flames reached his feet, calling to the others to follow. They came and crouched on the planks releasing their hand grenades and unbuckling their swords.

They ran through the flames and threw their hand grenades in the midst of the enemy. More and more men followed, the flames lapping at their clothing. Behind them sounded the roar of their comrades, and, beneath the roar, the heavy THUD, THUD, THUD of the last tree trunks falling into place. The bridge became a mass of running men with rifles ready, tramping out the flames as they ran. The enemy retreated to their second line of defences. - Agnes Smedley (quoted in China's Revolutionary War)

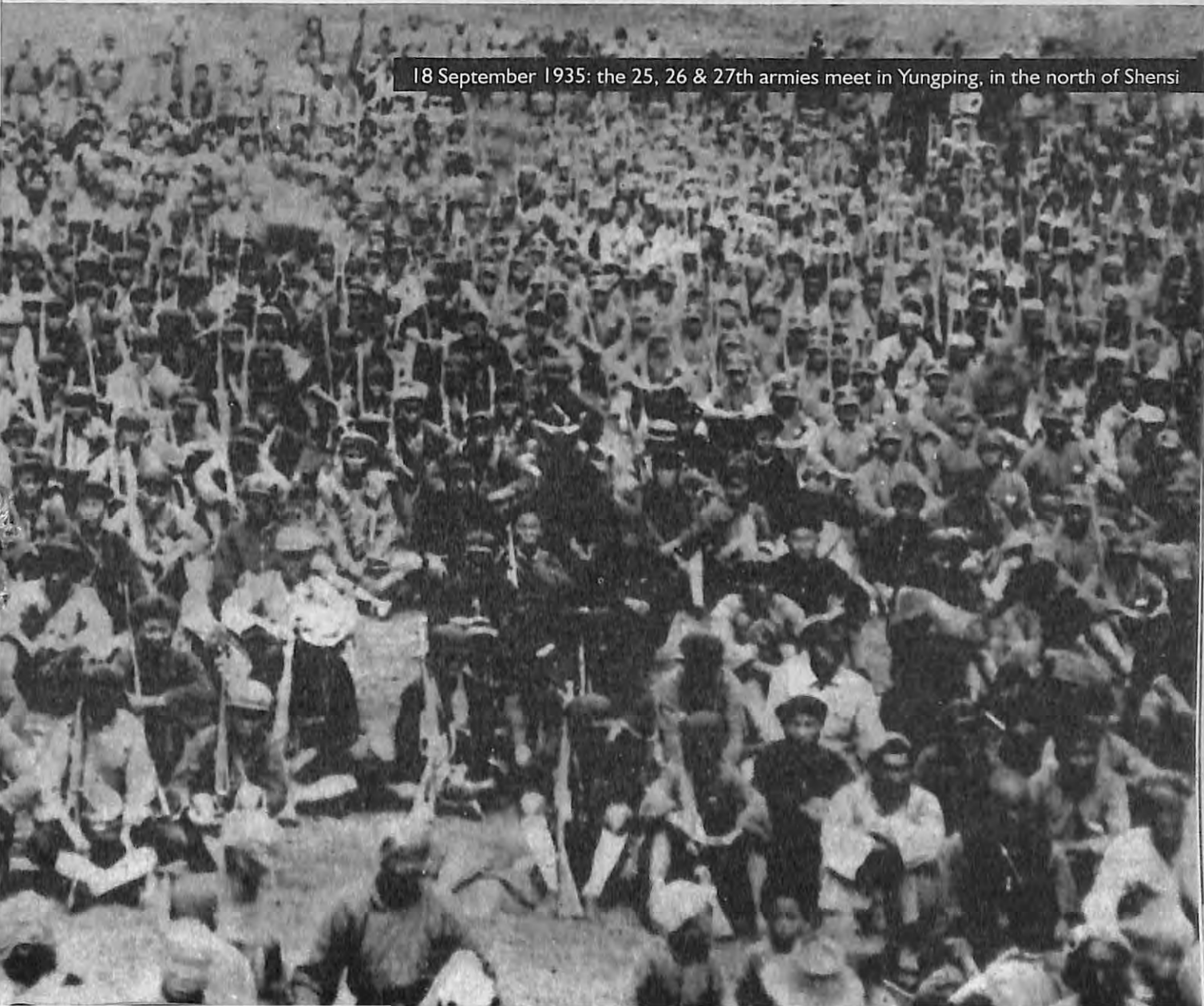
'a poor man's army'

There were big 'surpluses' - more than the Reds could carry and these were distributed among the local poor. In Yunnan the Reds seized thousands of hams from rich packers there, and peasants came from miles around to receive their free portions. From Kiangsi they had carried Nanking notes, and silver dollars and bullion from their state bank, and in poor districts in their path they used this money to pay for their needs. Land deeds were destroyed, taxes abolished, and the poor peasantry armed.

Often the 'oppressed peasantry' sent groups to urge them to detour and 'liberate' their districts. They had little conception of the Red Army's political programme, of course; they only knew that it was 'a poor man's army', said Wu Liang-p'ing. That was enough. Mao Tsetung told me laughingly of one such delegation which arrived to welcome 'Su Wei-ai Hsien-sheng' - Mr Soviet! These rustics were no more ignorant, however, than the Fukien militarist Lu Hsing-pang, who once posted a notice throughout his fiefdom offering a reward for the 'capture, dead or alive, of Su Wei-ai'. Lu announced that this fellow had been doing a lot of damage everywhere, and must be exterminated. - *Edgar Snow*

Jen Peh-si began to tell us that we had just missed two hundred miners who came over from Pingingchow, the Japanese stronghold on the Chentai railway. When the rich men, and later the Chinese troops, fled before the Japanese armies, these miners remained, took rifles from the small local arsenal, and waged guerrilla warfare on the enemy. They mined and blew up the railway repeatedly. They were the first Volunteers along the railway and from the beginning they had contact with the Eighth Route Army men in North Shansi. They continued to fight under terrible difficulties, and they had come here without shoes, or with shoes worn down to shreds. They had eaten but once a day and sometimes not that, they had no winter overcoats and only their summer clothing of overall material. We had a few extra pairs of shoes which we gave them, and we gave them food and all we could. They came to ask if they should join the Eighth Route Army or should continue to operate as Volunteers. For the time being they will continue guerrilla fighting. They left this same night for guerrilla attacks along the railway at another point. - *Agnes Smedley: China Fights Back*

18 September 1935: the 25, 26 & 27th armies meet in Yungping, in the north of Shensi





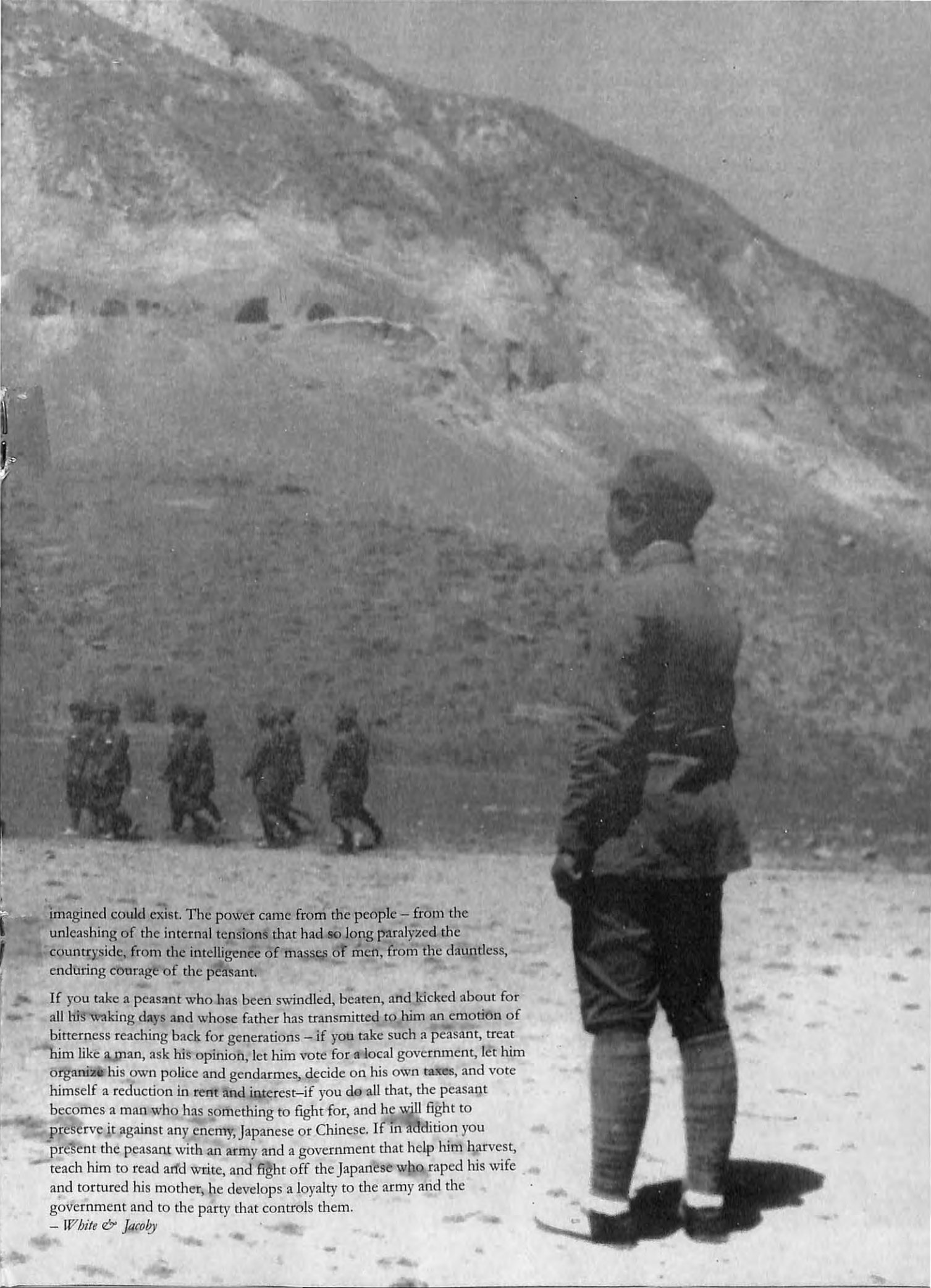
The tremendous energy behind the Communist drive was coordinated from Yen-an. A radio and courier network linked all Communist centers from Hainan in the south to the outskirts of Manchuria.

The radios were an amateur patchwork of broken Japanese sets, second-hand tubes, and makeshift materials. But the codes, which were excellent, baffled both the Kuomintang and the Japanese, and these communications bound together with iron cords of discipline the eighteen local governments in a coalition that seemed at times a shadow government and at times the most effective fighting instrument of the Chinese people.

Ninety per cent of the vast Communist-controlled area was marked on the map as Japanese-held. It is true that Japanese garrisons and lines of communication laced the entire fabric; it is true that in no single liberated region did the Communists hold more than a few hundred miles of land completely clear of the enemy; it is true that almost every government center

they established was a mobile command post ready to move or fight with the troops on a few hours' notice. But each of these governments was able to collect taxes, pass laws, fight the enemy, arm the peasants, and create a loyalty to its leadership that endured whatever savagery the Japanese marshaled against it.

Though their enemies denounced the Communists' beliefs and attributed to them every shameful excess they could imagine, no one could deny they had wrought a miracle in arms. In six years the Communists had thrown out from the barren hills a chain of bases that swept in an arc from Manchuria to the Yangtze Valley. Rarely in the history of modern war or politics has there been any political adventure to match this in imagination or epic grandeur. The job was done by men who worked with history as if it were a tool and with peasants as if they were raw material; they reached down into the darkness of each village and summoned from it with their will and their slogans such resources of power as neither the Kuomintang nor Japan



imagined could exist. The power came from the people – from the unleashing of the internal tensions that had so long paralyzed the countryside, from the intelligence of masses of men, from the dauntless, enduring courage of the peasant.

If you take a peasant who has been swindled, beaten, and kicked about for all his waking days and whose father has transmitted to him an emotion of bitterness reaching back for generations – if you take such a peasant, treat him like a man, ask his opinion, let him vote for a local government, let him organize his own police and gendarmes, decide on his own taxes, and vote himself a reduction in rent and interest—if you do all that, the peasant becomes a man who has something to fight for, and he will fight to preserve it against any enemy, Japanese or Chinese. If in addition you present the peasant with an army and a government that help him harvest, teach him to read and write, and fight off the Japanese who raped his wife and tortured his mother, he develops a loyalty to the army and the government and to the party that controls them.

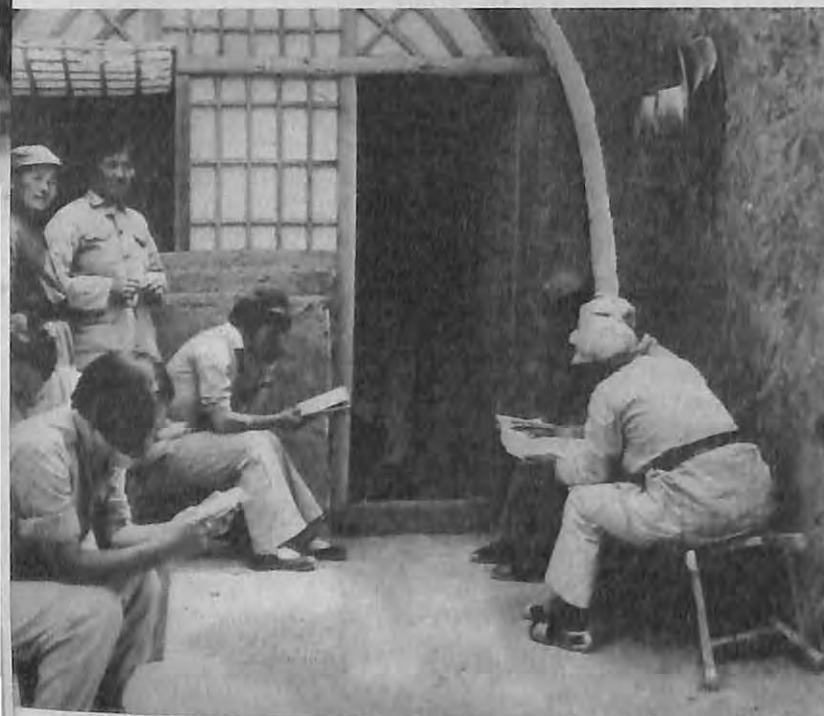
– *White & Jacoby*

Mao Tsetung emphasised that the central task of revolution is the seizure of political power by revolutionary violence. Mao Tsetung's theory of People's War is universally applicable in all countries, although this must be applied to the concrete conditions in each country and, in particular, take into account the revolutionary paths in the two general types of countries – imperialist countries and oppressed countries – that exist in the world today.

Mao solved the problem of how to make revolution in a country dominated by imperialism. The basic path he charted for the revolution in China represents an inestimable contribution to the theory and practice of revolution and is the guide for achieving liberation in the countries oppressed by imperialism. This means protracted People's War, surrounding the cities from the countryside, with armed struggle as the main form of struggle and the army led by the Party as the main form of organisation of the masses,



Yenan



mobilising the peasantry, principally the poor peasants, carrying out the agrarian revolution, building a united front under the leadership of the Communist Party to carry out the new democratic revolution against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism and establishing the joint dictatorship of the revolutionary classes led by the proletariat as the necessary prelude to the socialist revolution which must immediately follow the victory of the first stage of the revolution.

– RIM, Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!

Without a people's
army the people
have nothing.

- Mao Tsetung



Women veterans of the Long March



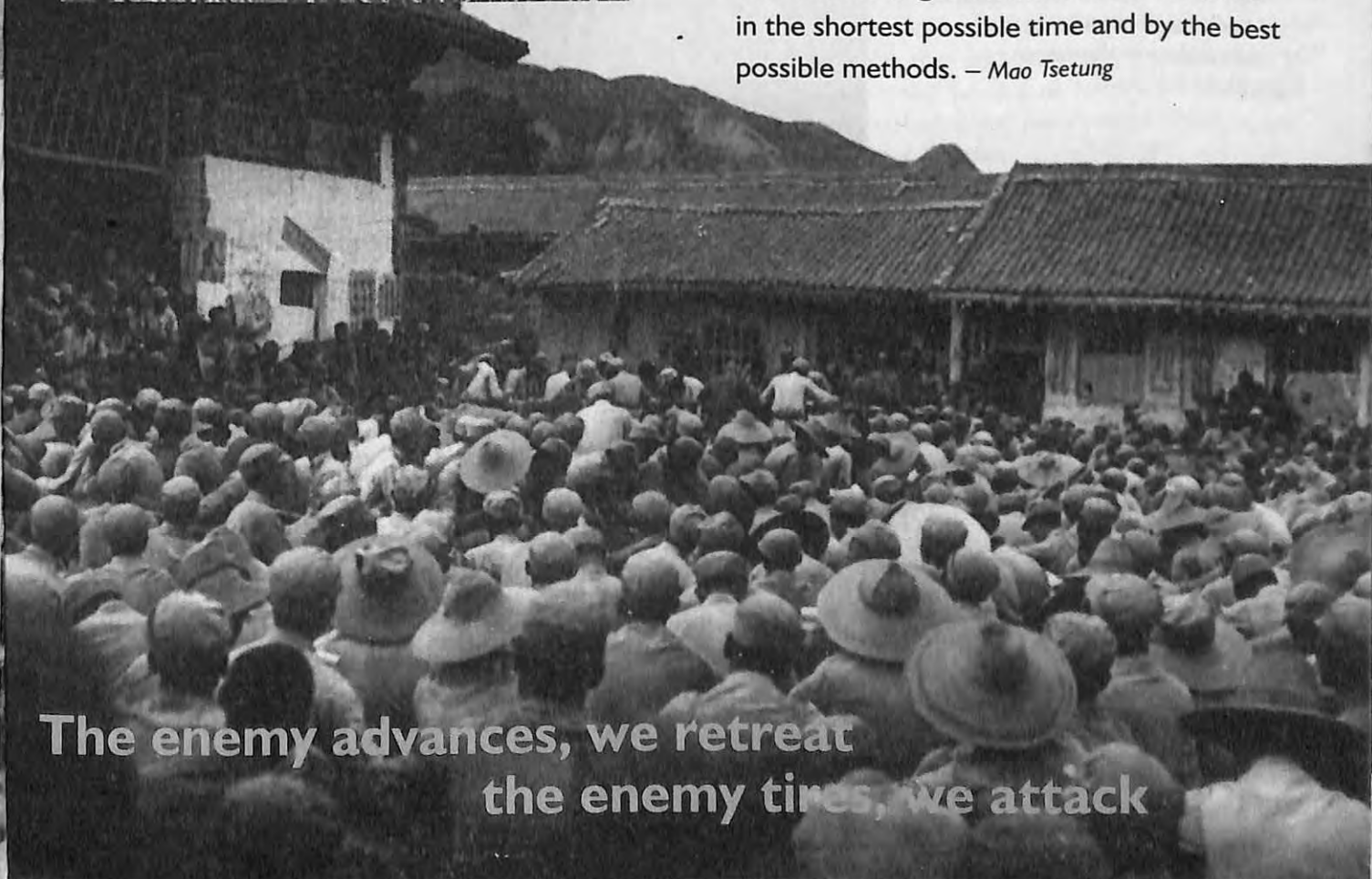
Agrarian revolution at the heart of people's war

*Divide our forces to arouse the masses,
concentrate our forces to deal with the enemy.*

The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy
camps, we harrass; the enemy tires, we
attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue.

To extend stable base areas, employ the
policy of advancing in waves; when pursued
by a powerful enemy, employ the policy of
circling around.

Arouse the largest numbers of the masses
in the shortest possible time and by the best
possible methods. — Mao Tsetung



**The enemy advances, we retreat
the enemy tires, we attack**

You might hear these people catechizing themselves aloud:

'What is this?'

'This is the Red Flag.'

'What is this?'

'This is a poor man.'

'What is the Red Flag?'

'The Red Flag is the flag of the Red Army.'

'What is the Red Army?'

'The Red Army is the army of the poor men!'

And so on, right up to the point where, if he knew the whole five or six hundred characters before anyone else, the youth could collect the red tassel or pencil or whatever was promised. When farmers and farmers' sons and daughters finished the book they could not only read for the first time in their lives, but they knew who had taught them, and why. They had grasped the basic fighting ideas of Chinese communism.

And anyway, I should think it was a lot more amusing than teaching people to read via the this-is-a-cat, this-is-a-mouse and the what-is-the-cat-doing, the-cat-is-eating-the-mouse method. Why teach realists in allegories?

— Edgar Snow



The Red Army's Eight Points for Attention:

- ★ Put back the doors which are taken down for bed boards.
- ★ Put back the straw used for bedding.
- ★ Speak politely.
- ★ Pay fairly for what is consumed.
- ★ Return everything borrowed.
- ★ Pay for everything damaged.
- ★ Don't bathe within sight of women.
- ★ Don't search the pockets of captives.

In the women of China the Communists possessed, almost ready made, one of the greatest masses of disinherited human beings the world has ever seen. And because they found the key to the heart of these women, they also found one of the keys to victory over Chiang Kai-shek.

— Jack Belden: *China Shakes the World*



In this Ningkang district were thousands of women agricultural labourers with unbound feet. For their labor the landlords had paid them rice and four or five silver dollars a year. But some were slaves, bought for work on the land or in the rich homes.

When the Agricultural Laborers' Union was formed, these women agricultural laborers entered, dominating it, and when the Red Guards were organized, some of these women stepped forward, saying: 'Our feet are big — look! They have never been bound! We can walk and work like men! We are strong as the men! Give us guns!' — Agnes Smedley: *Portraits of Chinese Women in Revolution*

The base areas of the People's War seethed with revolutionary ferment, as new social relations arose on the basis of the guns of the Red army. Women's fury was unleashed, shattering the shackles that marked their subordination to men, such as footbinding, female infanticide, prostitution. Here is a story of how wife-beating was handled. — AWTW

Among those who were beaten was Poor peasant Man-ts'ang's wife. When she came home from a Women's Association meeting her husband beat her. She went the very next day to the secretary of the Women's Association; the secretary called a meeting of the women of the whole village. Man-ts'ang said that he beat his wife because she went to meetings and 'the only reason women go to meetings is to gain a free hand for flirtation and seduction.' 'Beat her, and slander us all, will you? Maybe this will teach you.' 'Stop, I'll never beat her again,' gasped the panic-stricken husband who was on the verge of fainting under their blows.

They stopped, let him up, and sent him home with a warning. Let him so much as lay a finger on his wife again and he would receive more of the same 'cure'.

From that day onwards Man-ts'ang never dared beat his wife and from that day onwards his wife became known to the whole village by her maiden name Ch'eng Ai-lien.

— William Hinton: *Fanshen*



Women discussing the new Marriage Law in Chekiang village



"The Chinese people have stood up!"



To win country-wide victory is only the first step in a long march of ten thousand li. The Chinese revolution is great, but the road after the revolution will be longer, the work greater and more arduous." Greeting victory with these words, Mao prepared the proletariat and people of China to undertake the unprecedented task of transforming an oppressed country into a beacon of socialism and a base for the world revolution. What the Party and the revolutionary army had done and learned during the long years of the People's War now served them well: a skeletal structure of the new power had been formed that could be filled out and given flesh on a country-wide scale. They completed the New Democratic revolution, including the most massive redistribution of land in human history. Women made giant strides towards equality, as age-old sexist practices like footbinding and prostitution were eradicated. The Chinese people began to build a self-reliant socialist economy, free from the strangling, distorting embrace of the world imperialist market.

Yet with every new advance came new challenges, as, like in the Soviet Union before it, a new bourgeoisie arose in China that sought to turn the society back onto the capitalist road. Under Mao's leadership, revolutionary students and workers were mobilised to

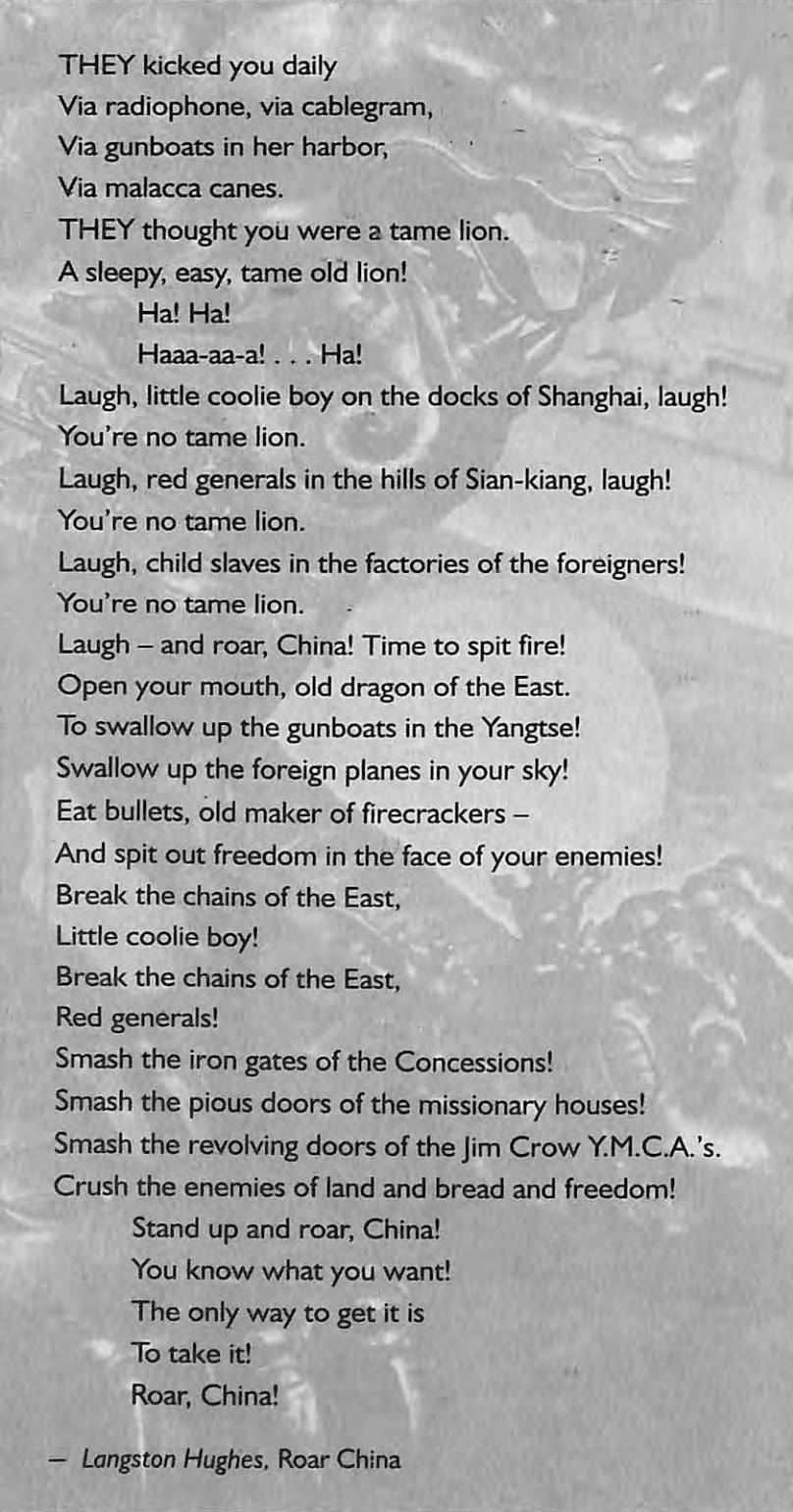




launch the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, to rally the broad masses to overthrow these capitalist roaders and dig away at the soil that nourished them. Social inequalities and privileges were struck at in a way never before seen in any society, as millions strengthened their capacity to transform every sphere of life. A decade later, following Mao's death in 1976, the capitalist roaders, now led by Deng Xiao-ping, finally succeeded in defeating the revolutionaries, seizing power and restoring capitalism in China. This did not negate Maoism, however, but only proved Mao's thesis of the need for continuing the revolution, and the world-historic achievements of the Cultural Revolution spread Maoism, including the understanding of people's war and new democratic revolution, around the world.

—AWTW





THEY kicked you daily
Via radiophone, via cablegram,
Via gunboats in her harbor,
Via malacca canes.
THEY thought you were a tame lion.
A sleepy, easy, tame old lion!
Ha! Ha!
Haaa-aa-a! . . . Ha!
Laugh, little coolie boy on the docks of Shanghai, laugh!
You're no tame lion.
Laugh, red generals in the hills of Sian-kiang, laugh!
You're no tame lion.
Laugh, child slaves in the factories of the foreigners!
You're no tame lion.
Laugh – and roar, China! Time to spit fire!
Open your mouth, old dragon of the East.
To swallow up the gunboats in the Yangtse!
Swallow up the foreign planes in your sky!
Eat bullets, old maker of firecrackers –
And spit out freedom in the face of your enemies!
Break the chains of the East,
Little coolie boy!
Break the chains of the East,
Red generals!
Smash the iron gates of the Concessions!
Smash the pious doors of the missionary houses!
Smash the revolving doors of the Jim Crow Y.M.C.A.'s.
Crush the enemies of land and bread and freedom!
Stand up and roar, China!
You know what you want!
The only way to get it is
To take it!
Roar, China!

– Langston Hughes, Roar China

Roar China!

THEY thought
you
were a tame lion

Ha! Ha!

Haaa-aa-a! . . .
Ha!

Eat bullets

And spit out
freedom

The only way
to get it is

To take it!
Roar, China!

Books used

Many of the books we used provide an excellent, often eyewitness account of the stirring developments of revolutionary China.

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p. 35 *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*

pp. 36-37 *Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan*

p. 39 *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*

P. 47 *On Coalition Government* and *A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire*

An Appeal to Oppose State Repression

Defend the Revolutionary Movement in India!

from All-India Peoples Resistance Forum (AIPRF)

7 January 1999

Dear friends and Comrades,

This is an appeal before the country and the international community to condemn the brutal repression unleashed by the Indian state against the struggling masses of Indian people, particularly in Andhra Pradesh, North Telangana, Bihar and the forest areas of central India popularly known as Dandakaranya. ...

The revolutionary, nationality, other democratic movements and even all spontaneous people's struggles in India at present are facing severe repression. The right to life and all other civil and democratic rights are being violated with impunity. The intensification of the imperialist onslaught with the initiation of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAP) since 1991 and the increasing fascisation of the state and society have, correspondingly, added to the exploitation and repression of the existing social order.

The revolutionary movement of Andhra Pradesh, North Telangana, Bihar and Dandakaranya constitute the core of the revolutionary people's movement in India today. More than a hundred million people are part and parcel of this ongoing revolutionary movement in these regions. Directly or indirectly all these people are subjected to severe repression by the various state (provincial) Governments and the Central Government. Today, the agrarian revolution in India has sunk its roots with the masses and is gradually spreading to other regions. The people in the revolutionary movement are waging relentless struggle against the feudal and pro-imperialist ruling classes.

The revolutionary movements in Bihar on the one hand, and Andhra Pradesh, North Telangana and Dandakaranya on the other, fought fierce battles in the last 20 years with the feudal landlords and compradors, and have broken the feudal shackles, instilled a sense of confidence among the rural masses and brought relief to the general masses. Hundreds of thousands of acres of land were occupied in all these regions and distributed among the landless (though, often, the government does not allow the landless peasants who occupied the land to till it). The land struggles are continuing. The Indian state reacts by killing the revolutionary leaders and the people who are actively participating in the struggles. The Indian state has been actively supporting the landlord classes by using all its armed forces. It is because the land reform laws of the government became a hoax over the last fifty years that the rural masses have been fighting to seize land from the feudal landlords. The feudal relations, bonded labour and medieval practices of subjugation are continuing through the caste system and the highly unequal land relations. It is against these oppressive social relations that the rural people are fighting, under the leadership of the revolutionary organisations. With people's developmental projects and new visions and goals set with the formation of embryonic forms of people's power in revolutionary struggle areas, the revolutionary and democratic movements are growing from strength to strength....

In the latest phase of repressive onslaught, a large number of people are being killed in the name of encounters. Sometimes whole squads have been

wiped out. The police and the paramilitary forces in Andhra Pradesh, North Telangana, Dandakaranya and Bihar have been given unlimited powers. Every year in North Telangana and in the rest of Andhra Pradesh, around 200 people are killed in the name of armed encounters. In 1998, 290 people were killed in the supposed encounters, while 159 people were killed in 1997, 161 in 1996 and 256 in 1992. Generally, the leaders, activists and common people (supporters or sympathisers) are picked up by the police from their houses or shelters and shot dead after interrogation and torture. Normally the dead bodies are not handed over to the kith and kin. In the last few years, people have come out in thousands to claim the dead bodies of the revolutionaries. The state is, once again, repressing these movements as well....

The state police are now using grenades, crude bombs, poisonous gases, and even land mines to kill the revolutionary activists and people. Chandrababu Naidu, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, the blue-eyed boy of the World Bank and Bill Gates (of Microsoft Corporation), now has navy helicopters to rush the killer "greyhounds" (a sophisticated and deadly special task force) in the flash of a second. By using greyhounds and helicopters, 13 members of the People's War Party were hunted down and killed in the Orissa-A.P. border area. ...

As part of these operations, the police stormed into the houses of mass organisation activists and destroyed their houses. The police come on motor vehicles and also in convoys of 10-15 jeeps and beat up the villagers, including children and women. The small

shopkeepers, employees, local political representatives and even the schoolteachers are not spared. To carry on this kind of white terror and to root out the revolutionary movement, each of the state governments has been constructing roads into the interior places. When such attempts are resisted by the people, even the army is brought in to construct the roads.

Since the early 1980s, around 3000 revolutionary leaders and activists were murdered and several thousands of revolutionary masses were killed by the private armies of landlords and the government armed forces in the struggle areas of CPI (ML) People's War, the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) and CPI (ML) Party Unity, i.e. in Andhra Pradesh, North Telangana, Dandakaranya and Bihar. Special reference needs to be made about the countless number of custodial deaths which, more often than not, are passed off as missing cases, with evidences destroyed. Further, mention needs to

be made about the hundreds of political prisoners languishing in Indian jails. In many cases, they are kept in solitary confinement with neither chargesheets filed nor trials taken. ...

The rise, particularly since the mid 1980s, of Hindu communal fascist forces represented by the political parties Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Shiv Sena and the numerous militant Hindu outfits supporting them (VHP, Bajrang Dal, etc.), portends the prospects of even more severe repression on the people's movements. The Hindu fascist forces, today, are the meeting-ground of all reaction. They have been polarising society on the basis of religion, thus pitting people against each other, by engineering communal riots. They have grown up with the massive support of the Indian state machinery and dominant class forces who count on them as the ultimate guarantors of the status quo, who could save them from the wrath of the people's movements....

AIPRF earnestly appeals for the support of the toiling people of the international community and all democratically minded people, on behalf of the struggling peoples of India, who today are waging a war against all odds of repression and exploitation. The prospects of the liberation of the peoples of India, a most important country in the imperialist world system, would definitely have a telling impact upon the collective destinies of all the struggling peoples of the world.

Contact:
G.N. Saibaba,
General Secretary, AIPRF
PD-50A,
Vishakha Enclave, Pitampura,
Delhi-110 034, India.
Phone: 91-11- 7466155
(also Fax).
E-mail: aiprf@hotmail.com
Fax: 91 - 11- 7458953.

Stop the Execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Mumia Abu-Jamal is a journalist, revolutionary activist and political prisoner who has been on death row in the United States since 1982. He was falsely convicted of killing a policeman in the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in an unfair trial, at which he was denied the right to act as his own attorney while police witnesses put him at the scene of the crime. In actual fact Mumia was framed and sentenced to death for his revolutionary convictions.

When still a youth Mumia became a key figure in the Philadelphia branch of the Black Panther Party, a revolutionary organisation of Black people in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Mumia later became known as the "voice of the voiceless" for his revolutionary reporting on the radio. In particular Mumia played a key role in exposing the police persecution and

murder of activists in MOVE, a Philadelphia-based group. His exposure of racism and police brutality and his revolutionary politics have earned him the hatred of the US authorities, particularly the police. They first tried to kill him at the time of his arrest and since then have actively organised a campaign of lies to influence public opinion in favour of his execution. What they hate about Mumia is what the people have come to love and defend: a revolutionary brother who has stood firm in the face of the enemy.

Mumia's lawyers have documented a whole series of irregularities and lies at his original trial, including new evidence that at least one police informant who testified against him has now exposed the frame-up. Based on this, he appealed for a new trial - but in October 1998 the Pennsylvania Su-

preme Court denied his appeal, paving the way for his execution. The increasing use of state executions is an important spearhead of U.S. imperialism's reactionary program, and it will take determined, massive opposition to force them to back off from their murderous plans.

Around the world, broad movements to support Mumia and fight his execution have sprung up over the past years, and the participating parties and organisations of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement have helped take the campaign to countries it might not have reached otherwise. This international campaign was undoubtedly one of the factors that forced the state to temporarily back down from executing him in August 1995. From cities across the US to France, Germany, Holland, Italy, the UK and other places



Above: Mumia Abu-Jamal



Left: On April 24, Mumia's birthday, over 30,000 people demonstrated in Philadelphia and San Francisco to stop the execution and demand justice for Mumia. The International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) shut down docks and warehouses on the US West Coast in support of Mumia. Actions took place in many other countries as well.

in Europe, to South Africa, to India and Bangladesh in Asia, people have been spreading information and holding actions to prevent the US ruling class from carrying out their first state execution of a political prisoner since the 1950s, when they killed Ethel and Julius Rosenberg as part of their anti-communist campaign at that time. Many artists, authors and other prominent people have stepped forward to defend Mumia.

In April 1999, Mumia's lawyers filed a petition with the US Supreme Court demanding that it examine important legal issues, including his right to a fair trial. It is expected that the battle to stop the execution will intensify in early autumn, with several events already planned for September 1999. As one slogan raised in the US points out, "Only the People Can Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!"

For more information, contact:

Refuse & Resist!
305 Madison Ave. Suite 1166,
New York,
NY 10165, US.
Email: resist@walrus.com

Also: International Concerned
Family & Friends of
Mumia Abu-Jamal,
PO Box 19709,
Philadelphia,
PA 19143, US.
Email: Mumia@aol.org

Background articles and news
about support actions devoted
to Mumia can be found on the
Revolutionary Worker
web page: www.mcs.net/rw

On the 150th Anniversary of the *Communist Manifesto*

By the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

This is the slightly edited text of the speech prepared by the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement and presented by *A World To Win* on the occasion of the two seminars sponsored by AWTW celebrating the 150th anniversary of the *Communist Manifesto*.

I. THE STRENGTH OF THE MANIFESTO SPRINGS FROM THE PROLETARIAT

Few writings in the history of mankind have the power and eloquence of the *Communist Manifesto*. Even fewer have changed the course of history itself.

Even its opponents cannot deny that the *Communist Manifesto* is one of the great works of literature of mankind, and beyond all doubt the most influential political document ever penned. The most profound ideas that had ever been formulated – the explanation of the roots of the misery of the present society, the processes that brought this society into being and, most importantly, the possibility of bringing into existence a world without exploitation – are presented with a clarity and precision that can be grasped and mastered, with a little effort, by revolutionary workers themselves.

But the inspiring phrases of the *Communist Manifesto* alone cannot explain its lasting impact and its continuing ability to bring forward new communists. Throughout previous history great works have been written, including some which seek to take the side of the masses against the oppression of despots and the cruelty of poverty. But none had or could have had

the same attraction and strength of the *Communist Manifesto*.

The *Communist Manifesto* is the reflection of the emergence of a new class in human history, the proletariat, and the expression of its political programme and historic mission, which was coming onto the scene in the mid-nineteenth century when it was first published. Ever since classes began, the labourers have never ceased to struggle against exploitation (as the *Manifesto* put it, “the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles”). And political programmes and revolutionary leaders emerged again and again to represent the interests of the exploited and their struggle. But only with the emergence of the modern proletariat, the class which stands directly opposite the capitalist ruling class and upon whose exploitation the wealth of the capitalist class is based, has it become possible to formulate and carry out a political programme that is aimed at abolishing the very existence of classes themselves.

Marx and Engels were just two people, only in their late twenties at the time of the writing of the *Manifesto*, yet, as Mao Tsetung pointed out, they were able to confidently predict the end of the capitalist system and its replacement by communism. What makes the revolutionary optimism which shines through the pages of the *Communist Manifesto* so different from the phoney promises of religious charlatans and reformist schemers? The main difference is that Marx and Engels did not just have “good ideas” – their ideas were based on the emerging revolutionary class in society, and these ideas were correct. They reflected an under-

standing that corresponds to the way the world actually is organised and how it advances from one stage to another. While Marx and Engels summarised the vast knowledge that had been accumulated up until then by the great thinkers of other classes, their ability to understand the world was inextricably linked with their full participation in the process of changing it. Indeed, the *Manifesto* itself was written for what at the time was a small, initial organisation of revolutionary workers in a few countries of Europe. Marx and Engels were intellectuals of the highest quality, but they were intellectuals of a new type, wholly at the service of the proletarian struggle in every practical and theoretical sphere.

Even though in retrospect it can be said that the capitalist system was still relatively young during the lifetimes of Marx and Engels, they were already able to show how this system was revolutionising the world, creating the basis for its replacement by a higher social system. They exposed the cruelty and hypocrisy of the ruling class and the glaring contradiction between the immense concentration of capital at one pole, and, at the opposite pole, the concentration of poverty amongst the very people who produce this wealth. Today, on a world scale, this contradiction is even more pronounced than when Marx and Engels first called attention to it.

The world today is still governed by the basic laws that Marx and Engels discovered and outlined in the *Manifesto*. The capitalists have concentrated wealth and productive power into their hands to a degree that would have surprised even Marx and Engels and, at the same time, they

constantly create whole new legions of proletarians in every corner of the globe. The *Communist Manifesto's* indictment of capitalism has never been truer than today. Never in the history of mankind has the division of wealth, for example, been so extreme, so glaring, so outrageous. While world-wide 50,000 children die of preventable diseases and malnutrition every day, vast quantities of milk are hoarded in Europe for lack of a market and hundreds of highly trained US doctors concentrate their activity on the surgical removal of fat and cosmetic surgery. The *Communist Manifesto* first described the absurd character of crisis when, as Marx put it, "it appears as if a famine or a universal war of destruction had cut off the supply of means of subsistence, industry and commerce seem to be destroyed". But why? Not for lack of wealth but because, as Marx put it, "there is too much civilisation, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce". Today hundreds of millions of people are again reliving this absurd nightmare. Can we reach any conclusion other than that of Marx and Engels, that "the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society"?

II. A BASIC LINE FOR THE PROLETARIAN MOVEMENT

Although the *Communist Manifesto* was written 150 years ago in a world that looks much different than that of today, a class-conscious worker reading the *Manifesto* today cannot help but be struck by the clear, decisive direction Marx and Engels gave to the development of the working-class movement. The *Communist Manifesto*, like the workers movement that Marx and Engels led, was, in a word, revolutionary.

The *Manifesto* presents a picture of a working-class movement that has nothing to do with reformist and revisionist understanding and practice. Marx and Engels thoroughly rejected the idea that the workers movement should be aimed at simply improving the conditions of the working class, improving the price they are paid for their labour power while leaving intact the system based on the purchase and exploitation of labour power.

The *Manifesto* points out that the class struggle must take the form of a

political struggle and that this political struggle must be aimed at establishing the proletariat as the ruling class. In turn, the purpose of the revolutionary political power of the proletariat must be to step by step transform the world from top to bottom, until there is no further trace of the old exploiting order and no further possibility of such a system ever being re-established. This political power in the interests of the great majority of society is the *dictatorship of the proletariat*.

The *Communist Manifesto* is crystal clear: the communist movement seeks to abolish private property, to abolish the bourgeoisie as a class and to abolish the conditions in which one section of society, the majority, is enslaved by a minority, the owners of the means of production. The whole of official society must be "sprung into the air". Engels emphasised, in his preface to the *Communist Manifesto* that history has reached the point at which the "proletariat cannot rid itself of its class exploitation without ridding all of society of exploitation, oppression and the very existence of classes themselves". And the *Manifesto* stresses that the communist revolution also represents the most "radical rupture" with the systems of ideas, or ideologies, that have been built on the basis of thousands of years of class society and serve to justify and reinforce exploitation.

The history of our proletarian movement since the *Communist Manifesto* has shown how difficult and protracted this struggle will be. Twice the proletariat has been able to seize political power and seriously begin the process of transforming society, first in the Soviet Union under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin and later in China under the leadership of Mao, the three most important successors of Marx and Engels. There was tremendous progress in unleashing the masses of the people, led by the proletariat and its organised vanguard party, to begin the process of transforming society and ridding it of all the vestiges of thousands of years of exploitation.

In the countries that were socialist, where the working class was ruling, there were those who abandoned the *Manifesto's* programme of marching forward toward a classless society. Whether it was the bowl of piping hot goulash that Khrushchev promised the workers in the Soviet Union, or the

"modernisation" that Deng Xiaoping promised the masses in China, the basic theme was the same: revolution has gone far enough, the task of the workers and peasants is to produce. We know this meant the restoration of capitalism, the seizure of power by a new capitalist ruling class, and the subjugation of the masses and the whole society to the merciless laws of capitalism. In the end, goulash was not for everyone and modernisation meant modern misery for most. The horror of capitalist restoration in China, incredible exploitation and oppression in what used to be the shining advanced outpost of working class rule, is a bitter but vital lesson for all of us to learn from.

After the loss of working-class rule in the USSR in 1956, Mao Tsetung, the leader of the Chinese revolution, studied the problem of how to keep on the road of the *Communist Manifesto*, how to beat back and defeat those who would reinstitute the system of wage slavery in one form or another. Mao fought hard to arm the workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals of China with the communist perspective first developed by Marx and Engels — that the task was nothing less than the fight for the abolition of classes themselves.

Mao understood that it was not possible to immediately institute the communist society Marx and Engels fought for. But he was determined to take successive steps in that direction, to dig up bit by bit the soil of the old society, the economic, political, social and ideological features of the old system of exploitation that had not yet been transformed. And he knew that in carrying this revolution forward there would necessarily be vicious opposition from a new bourgeoisie arising from within the Communist Party itself, that it would be necessary for the masses to strike down this bourgeoisie again and again and continue the revolution.

The form Mao discovered for solving the problem of continuing the march toward communism, or in other words continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, was the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Under the leadership of Mao and the proletarian revolutionary headquarters inside the Communist Party, workers and peasants and a new generation of revolutionary intellectuals

rose up and seized back those parts of political power that had been usurped by the capitalist-robbers, as those who wanted to go back to capitalism were known.

The Cultural Revolution was a new *Communist Manifesto*, a manifesto of deeds. It called out to the working class and the oppressed the world over with the same clear and astounding vision of a society no longer divided between exploiter and exploited, a society in which the masses are consciously and collectively masters of the very productive capacity they have created over successive generations, instead of its prisoner, so that they can use this capacity to transform and liberate society and advance the world to a stage we can only dream of today. But our dream is based on a solid understanding of what shapes and transforms society. Through the giant revolutionary upheaval of the Cultural Revolution, Marx and Engels' highly scientific dream began to come more sharply into focus as the black and white of theory took on the living colour of revolutionary struggle. And it was in this great crucible of struggle that our revolutionary science reached a new, third and higher stage – Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

From the beginning, the fight between Marxism and opportunism has been centred on this question, on whether the working-class movement dares to and must become a movement for the revolutionary overthrow of all existing social conditions, whether it will dare “spring into the air” all of official society, whether it will dare institute its own dictatorship, its own rule, whether it will use and maintain this rule to transform itself and the world. Hot goulash and modernisation or a whole different world, the world that Marx and Engels fought for or the exploitation of Khrushchev and Deng and their look-alikes? Yesterday's social-democrats, today's Greens, the ex-“Marxist-Leninists” who have taken the parliamentary road – all these opportunists and revisionists, produced batch after batch in this society, share the inability to see beyond a society based on exploitation and oppression. In fact, whether by conscious design or simply in the course of events, they end up seeking only to preside over and benefit from the capitalist feast of human labour.

It is natural that the division be-

tween Marxism and opportunism would also express itself very sharply in the field of programme. It is not surprising that those who have given up the fight to overthrow the system of wage slavery and instead try to focus the attention of the labourer on petty reforms have no use for the *Manifesto's* call for the “forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions”.

Lenin had fought a ferocious battle against the pretend Marxists of his day who opposed the revolutionary overthrow of the ruling class and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. These revisionists argued that rather than shatter the old state machinery, somehow the working class and masses could take over this same reactionary state by peaceful means and use it to gradually introduce reforms. (Engels himself, in an introduction to a later edition of the *Communist Manifesto* written in the wake of the Paris Commune of 1871, the first attempt at proletarian revolution, stressed that the lesson of the defeated Commune was the need to shatter the existing state apparatus.)

Mao was later to sum up this point in his brilliant remark that “political power grows out of the barrel of a gun”. Wherever communists are, they work for the proletarian revolution. Wherever the opportunists and revisionists are, they oppose this revolution (indeed, this is their specific role, for which they are well rewarded by the ruling classes).

However, merely taking up arms does not settle the question of for which class and for which purpose. Communists take up arms on behalf of the proletariat and with the perspective of doing away with all class society. Other class forces also can combat the ruling classes with arms in hand but they do so without the perspective of ending exploitation and class society.

III. IMPERIALISM, THE HIGHEST AND FINAL STAGE OF CAPITALISM

The world that we see around us today is the natural outgrowth of the capitalist world first dissected by Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto*. Marx and Engels spoke of industries that no longer rely on local materials but “raw material drawn from the remotest zones” whose products are consumed “in every quarter of the globe”. They

spoke of how the “intellectual creations of individual nations become common property”. Today, this tendency of capitalism to tie the world together into a single whole has become one of its most striking features and impossible for any observer to ignore. The brilliance of Marx and Engels and the validity of the Marxist analysis are underscored by the ability of Marx and Engels to sketch the outlines of this development when this process was still in its early stages.

How true – how more clearly true than ever – is the *Manifesto's* statement that the search for profit drives the bourgeoisie to “nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere”. It has made its system of exploitation the undisputed master of the globe.

But Marx and Engels were not fortune-tellers. It was only after their deaths that the process of capitalist development and expansion they described was to reach a qualitatively new level, the system that we know today. V.I. Lenin, the leader of the October Revolution of 1917 which established the first sustainable proletarian rule, in the Soviet Union, discovered and explained the features and laws of capitalism in its highest and final stage, and named it imperialism or monopoly capitalism. This was one of a number of Lenin's great contributions as he developed the revolutionary ideology of the proletariat to its second stage, Marxism-Leninism.

Lenin analysed imperialism on the basis of Marx and Engels' teachings, not in opposition to them. He fought hard against those in his day who said that imperialism had put an end to capitalism's anarchic character. He showed in theory and proved in practice that imperialism had not done away with the possibility of working-class revolution but, on the contrary, had ripened the conditions for the overthrow of capitalism. And he showed how the growth of capitalism into imperialism had spread the proletarian revolution from its beginnings in the advanced capitalist countries into a truly worldwide phenomenon. The *Manifesto's* point that capitalism's most important product is its own gravediggers was all the more confirmed as new legions of gravediggers were created in countries all over the globe.

Lenin showed how the breakneck competition of capitalism described by

Marx and Engels had reached a form in which a handful of imperialist powers were dividing up the world. And he showed how this leads the imperialist powers to go to war, not only against the oppressed peoples they need to exploit and dominate but against their imperialist rivals as well. The horrors of capitalism described by Marx and Engels had been joined by a new monstrous crime, world war. Indeed, the imperialist era has been marked by two such horrendous conflicts that slaughtered many tens of millions of people. Unless their system is destroyed, sooner or later the imperialist system will once again menace mankind with world war. Is this alone not proof enough that, as the *Manifesto* puts it, "Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society"?

Marx and Engels showed how the tentacles of capitalism were spreading to every corner of the globe and how "nations of peasants" have become dependent upon "nations of bourgeois, [t]he East upon the West". The subordination of the less developed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America to the handful of imperialist countries is one of the most important features of imperialism that Lenin analysed. And he understood the profound implications these developments had for the development of the workers' movement as well.

The superprofits gained from the exploitation of the oppressed peoples meant that capitalism could bribe one section of the workers in the advanced countries and lull some others to sleep. While one section of the workers is driven down and exploited ever more ferociously, while homelessness becomes an epidemic in the richest of countries, other sections of the working class purchase stocks and are allowed to rise to a comfortable middle-class position in return for loyal subservience to "their own" ruling class. The opportunists and revisionists are the representatives and spokesmen for this privileged section. The revolutionary communists are the representatives and spokesmen for the proletariat which the *Manifesto* describes "as having nothing to lose but its chains".

Under imperialism the capitalists export not only their products, but capital itself into the countries they domi-

nate. They seek not only raw materials but most of all to suck the very surplus created by the ever-growing sections of the proletariat in the dominated countries.

Everywhere the imperialists go they integrate the existing societies into their world-wide system of exploitation. They introduce capitalist development into these countries, but development of a special type, subordinated to imperialist capital and incorporating and reinforcing many of the backward features of earlier forms of exploitation. Thus US-designed blue-jeans can coexist quite comfortably with wife-burning in India; local tyrants can continue to hold power in the countryside of Mexico or Peru and use the latest computers and Microsoft software to count and organise their bloody booty.

Mao Tsetung analysed Chinese society on the basis of Marx and Engels' description of capitalism and of Lenin's teachings on imperialism. He showed how the penetration of imperialism into China had led to what he described as "semi-feudalism". The old feudal society had become substantially but not thoroughly transformed by the introduction of capitalist relations, and remained a target of the revolution, along with the country's bureaucrat capitalist class and imperialist domination.

Mao grasped the essential point in the *Manifesto* that "the communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things". He showed how in the concrete conditions of China this meant that the working class could and must organise the whole people, and especially the vast peasantry of China, to carry out a democratic revolution to sweep aside these targets. While such a revolution would still be bourgeois in that it did not immediately seek to abolish capitalism, it would none the less be a bourgeois-democratic revolution of a new type. This meant it would be led by the proletariat as a part of the overall world proletarian revolution. It would open the door to socialist revolution. This is exactly what Mao did. The protracted war Mao led the Chinese masses in waging spread the message of the *Manifesto* throughout the oppressed nations.

Today a big deal is being made about "globalisation". Indeed over the

last ten years or so the imperialists have unleashed yet another round in the further expansion and intensification of their world-wide system of exploitation. They demand that all nations bow before their God of freedom of investment. The IMF dictates social policy to the rulers of the oppressed countries just as surely as the former colonial powers did to their governors and viceroys. When the imperialist system demands it, the very diets of the people all over the world must change, Coca Cola must replace coconut milk. But as we see today in Indonesia, peasants are forced to revert to eating tree bark as their grandparents had done in the famines of a previous time. In a world where so many diseases go untreated, the imperialists are brandishing the banner of "intellectual property" to ensure that no vaccines will be produced without the giant monopolies getting their profits. And not only do they legislate the world according to their own interests, they do not hesitate to resort to naked terror, sending in their troops and bombers as they have in Panama, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq and so many places in the last decade alone.

Although new features are constantly emerging, this new world of globalisation is really only the same old world of capitalism and imperialism that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism has already dissected and condemned. Nor has globalisation fundamentally changed the basic analysis Mao made of the interpenetration of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Certainly the seal of world capitalism has been seared more deeply into the flesh of the oppressed nations. But imperialism has by no means eradicated the remaining features of earlier, non-capitalist forms of exploitation – while some of these forms are transformed or eliminated, others are reinforced. Globalisation has not done away with the division of the oppressed and oppressor countries; it has made it all the more stark. Nor has globalisation done away with the need for the New Democratic Revolution that Mao explained; it has made such a revolution all the more necessary to liberate the oppressed nations. Globalisation has not eliminated the basis for People's War – it has made the launching of such wars an urgent task.

IV. WHAT HAS DIED AND WHAT HAS NOT?

At the beginning of this decade the Soviet Union and its Eastern bloc fully collapsed. But what collapsed? Not genuine socialist society, which had been buried decades earlier by Khrushchev. The military behemoth of the Brezhnev era had nothing to do with socialism. It was, as Mao called it, a social-imperialist power, an imperialist power driven by the same laws as any other while hiding under the thinnest coat of red paint. How can the proletariat of the world regret the collapse of one of its greatest enemies? The disastrous end of the phoney communists of the USSR bloc helps to clarify what communism is and what it isn't. With the rout of those who had long ago made a mockery out of Marx and Engels' goal of classless society, the basis is there for the message of the *Manifesto* to ring out more loudly and inspire a new generation of proletarian revolutionaries.

But there can be no doubt that the class enemies will continue to use the collapse of the USSR to ridicule and declare dead our genuine communist ideology. The ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism will triumph, but only by waging a fierce and protracted battle against its enemies in the sphere of ideas as well as in practice.

It has become fashionable in the 1990s to heap abuse upon our revolutionary ideology and slander the great leaders our class has brought forward. As Marx and Engels put it in the *Manifesto*, the "ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class". Everywhere their television waves reach, the masses are bombarded with the idea that grabbing and greed are the highest human virtues. Any notion of the masses collectively and voluntarily changing themselves and the world is cynically dismissed. So is it any wonder so many different kinds of people parrot capitalist clap-trap against communists? These people, including ex-revolutionaries, consider themselves quite brilliant, when actually they are often just regurgitating the vilification of a ruling class that has everything to lose from a communist revolution. The bourgeoisie screams that our ideology is "outmoded" when, in fact, they are ideological midgets compared to proletarian giants such as

Marx and Engels. Today the level of the bourgeoisie's descent into ideological narrowness, obscurantism and selfishness knows no limits. Whereas in the past the bourgeoisie had to fight the Church, today they have discovered the "soul" in the foetus – and they call us outmoded!

The masses will continue to struggle; they cannot do otherwise. The very conditions of imperialism, the workings of capitalism itself, force the proletariat to combat the bourgeoisie, require the oppressed nations to resist imperialism, and lead the capitalist powers themselves to intensify their in-fighting, with all of the immediate misery and long-term danger that this conflict has for human society.

The class struggle cannot be abolished without abolishing the class exploitation that gives rise to it. The question is not whether the proletariat and the masses will fight, but with what programme, what ideology and what leadership?

History has shown again and again that without the leadership of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the struggles of the proletariat and the people will either fail or end up perverted into a mere vehicle to enable one set of exploiters to replace the old ones. Let us put it bluntly: either the genuine communists will succeed in leading the people to wage people's war as part of the world-wide battle to eliminate imperialism and reaction, or the workers, peasants and other revolutionary masses will follow false flags and their sacrifices and suffering will not lead to their emancipation.

Just look at Vietnam where the people put up one of the most heroic struggles in history. Because the leadership of the struggle in Vietnam lost, or never really had, the all-the-way revolutionary perspective of the *Manifesto*, the revolution ended in a whimper. Not only has that country not advanced in the direction of classless society, but even the great accomplishment of the war, the defeat of US imperialism, has been undermined as the leadership is forced to humble itself before the US. They have even had to pay war reparations to the imperialist war criminals for the "privilege" of a place in the imperialists' "new world order"!

In the final analysis, then, either the bourgeoisie or the proletariat will rule over the planet. Either the world

imperialist system making use of every type of reaction and backwardness will prevail, or the socialist system will be instituted in every country and the world's peoples together will advance forward to the classless future communist society. The victory of the proletarian revolution in specific countries must be seen in this context.

The socialist countries we build must be stepping stones along the advance to communism, base areas for the advance of the people's struggles everywhere. The imperialist enemy understands this only too well, and there is no doubt that in the future, as in the past, they will invade, harass and try to starve any genuine socialist regime. The working class and the oppressed must seize power whenever and wherever possible, and this will most likely be in one country or group of countries at a time. But our vision and our programme will never stop at the border of a single country. We can and must "win the world" or sooner or later we will lose everything.

From the very publication of the *Communist Manifesto* Marx and Engels saw the working-class struggle as an international one, and they strove to build international organisation of the proletariat. For Marx and Engels the necessary struggle of each proletariat against its "own" bourgeoisie was only the form while the substance was an international struggle against the whole capitalist mode of production. Marx and Engels considered the recognition of the international character of the struggle and the final aim of world communism to be the central dividing line with other political movements acting in the name of the working class.

In this spirit, Marx and Engels played a leading role in the First International, which grouped the infant working-class organisations of Europe. Later, after Marx's death, Engels was to be a key figure in the Second International. After the victory of the October Revolution in Russia, Lenin, who never lost sight of his internationalist vision or the communist goal, led in organising the Third or Communist International, which played a glorious role in spreading communism to the four corners of the earth. It was the practical centre of the proletarian struggle world-wide, mustering and leading, for example, the International Bri-

gades, workers from all over the world who travelled to Spain to fight with their class brothers and sisters against the fascist Franco regime.

Today the need for a new Communist International is increasingly felt. There must be a political centre rallying all of the world's genuine communists, based on the revolutionary ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, capable of uniting and concentrating the strength of our class internationally, enabling the experiences and struggle of the workers and oppressed in one country to become the common property of revolutionaries the world over. Against an international and organised enemy, we need nothing less than the international organisation of the communist movement. The clear and unambiguous internationalist vision of the *Manifesto* must once again be the guiding principle for all of the world's communist forces.

The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, RIM, was formed in 1984 and set itself the task of helping to form such an International. At the beginning it was only a relative handful opposed not only to the imperialist enemy but also to the main currents that claimed to be "communist" – the revisionists of the former USSR and East Bloc; the new usurpers who seized power in China after Mao's death in 1976 and overthrew his legacy; and other trends such as those who followed Albania's Enver Hoxha, who took advantage of the defeat in China to launch an all-out attack on Maoism.

Today, almost fifteen years later, we can see that the genuine Maoist forces have advanced. The People's War in Peru, only in its infancy when RIM was formed, grew to the point where the possibility of nation-wide political power was a great fear not only of the ruling circles of that country but of their US masters as well. Although the subsequent capture of the leader of the Peruvian revolution, Chairman Gonzalo, led to a "bend in the road" of the struggle, the comrades of the Communist Party of Peru have continued to battle forward, not only against the reactionary ruling class but also against those previously in the revolutionary ranks who demanded that the war be stopped and agreement reached with the enemy.

In Nepal in 1996, a glorious page was opened when the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) launched a People's

War, which has been spreading quickly throughout the country and now involves vast sections of the Nepalese people in the struggle against the old society. In Turkey and Bangladesh, comrades are striving to raise the revolutionary armed struggle begun by Ibrahim Kaypakkaya (founder of the TKP ML) and Sihar Sikdar (founder of PBSP) to a new level. In other countries as well participating parties and organisations of RIM are preparing to initiate people's war in accordance with the conditions and the path appropriate for specific countries.

Outside the ranks of RIM there are other Maoist forces who have also been advancing on the revolutionary path. In the Philippines, the People's War begun a generation earlier has taken on new life and dynamism following the rectification campaign launched by the Party leadership aimed at restoring and revitalising the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist vision and programme under which the Party was founded. In India, a number of Maoist organisations continue to uphold the revolutionary banner of Naxalbari through waging armed revolutionary struggle.

So while it can be said that the Maoist forces are still weak in comparison to the imperialist enemy, it can also be said that the Maoist forces are growing not only in strength but also in their understanding and their unity. And where are our opponents now? Where are the pro-Soviet revisionists, the followers of China's line of surrender and restoration of capitalism? Where are the pro-Albanian detractors of Mao? It is no small measure of success that the genuine followers of the *Manifesto*, with nothing to rely upon

except the masses and the correctness of their ideological and political line, have been able to weather and even grow in the face of the anti-communist storm while revisionists with states and even empires at their disposal have collapsed.

But this does not mean that the ideological struggle against phoney Marxism, or revisionism, is over. Opportunism will exist as long as the class basis for it exists in the world, and the fight for the line of proletarian revolution, of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, is a constant life-and-death struggle for the whole international communist movement. The Communist International of a new type that we are striving for will be built not by avoiding disputes between Marxism and revisionism but on the basis of a clear and decisive victory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism over all of its enemies, open and disguised.

Although the struggle for this new International will no doubt be protracted, complex and difficult, this process has already begun.

In this year of the 150th anniversary of the *Communist Manifesto* we should reaffirm our commitment to aim at nothing less than a completely new world without exploitation. Let us finish with the stirring conclusion of the *Manifesto*:

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

Workers of All Countries, Unite! ■

Worldwide Fundraising Campaign From One Corner of the Earth to the Other

As one facet of the campaign, RIM is calling on people from all walks of life in all countries to give one-half a day's wages to this fundraising effort. While this does not equalise the great imbalances among countries, it goes in that direction and represents a sacrifice for everyone, no matter on which side of imperialism's tentacles they were born.

Raise Funds for RIM!

What Went Wrong with the Pol Pot Regime

By F.G.

I. AN OVERVIEW OF THIS ARTICLE

OUR STAND

In April 1975, two weeks before the fall of Saigon in Vietnam, an army of ragged, thin and very young peasant men and women defeated the US-backed government in neighbouring Cambodia. In January 1979, some 44 months later, this new regime was swept from power and scattered by invading Vietnamese soldiers.

The briefness of this period is part of what makes it hard to understand. Further, there are no sweeping eye-witness accounts, and even some of the basic facts are in dispute among those who study Cambodia (or Kampuchea, as it is called in the country's Khmer language). A major difficulty is that the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK) led by Pol Pot made a secret of its policies and goals and even its existence for most of its time in power, and since then none of its leaders have come forward to defend its line. Yet the main source of confusion about this period is that a reactionary consensus has been imposed, both because it has been drummed into people's heads by the media, and because there have been so few dissenting voices.

Whenever Pol Pot is mentioned (often, considering that it has been two decades since the demise of his Democratic Kampuchea regime), the conclusion is always the same: revolution is worse than the social ills it claims to cure. Many studies focus on unsubstantiated figures on the number of people who died during

the Democratic Kampuchea period in an effort to prove that the forces who drove the US out of Southeast Asia turned out to be worse than the imperialists themselves.¹

The truth – who and what do you believe – is a big issue here. Any reader who doesn't ask "Why should I believe that?" isn't fully awake to the way this issue is being used.

We are out to overthrow "common knowledge" on this question. Unlike others who falsely claim they have no particular viewpoint from which they judge, our basic stand is explicit: as Mao said, "It's right to rebel against reaction." In other words, here our starting point is that the war waged by the three Indochinese peoples (Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos) against imperialism was just. No matter how critical our conclusions on the Pol Pot regime, the fact is that they had to deal with the horror that the US created. If anyone should be on trial for genocide in Southeast Asia, it should be the US ruling class. The charges of genocide the rulers of the US want to press against former CPK leaders are an attempt to reverse right and wrong.

AIMS

A major problem in other analyses of this experience is the foregone conclusion that it was "irrational" and therefore basically inexplicable. We've looked at it through the lens of dialectical materialist reason, examining who was trying to do what – their politics and policies – and further, what was possible in that objective situation, and the results of those policies. This is why we have focused on basic questions the CPK had to solve.

There are four intertwined, key issues:

- The relationship between Cambodia and Vietnam. This question conditioned the entire development of the Cambodian revolution. The CPK was born and developed in conflict with the Communist Party of Vietnam (formerly known as the Workers Party of Vietnam), which sought to strategically subordinate the Cambodian revolution to the Vietnamese struggle against imperialism. After the victory in Cambodia, Vietnam, in the eyes of the CPK leadership, became the main danger to their revolution. This was a defining question, both objectively and in the thinking of the CPK leadership. The course of the revolution in Cambodia depended on it.
- The kind of society the CPK sought to build and the role of the masses in that. This means the path of revolution in Cambodia, especially the fundamental question of two-stage revolution, in the specific context of the Indochina war centred in Vietnam, with all the particular opportunities and constraints that imposed; the united front during and after the war, including a very complicated relationship with Cambodia's Prince Sihanouk; and socialist construction in the shadow of a Vietnam whose failure to carry out social revolution was linked to an increasing dependence on the USSR. Many people have heard how the Democratic Kampuchean government completely emptied the cities, for instance. Here we intend to examine these policies and why they were carried out.
- The question of the party: the state of affairs in the CPK and its leaders'

conception of what a party is for. Until September 1977, the Cambodian people didn't know that what they called "the Organisation" [Angkar] and what its opponents called the Khmer Rouge was a communist party. Yet, to a large extent because of the Vietnamese victory over the US, this Party was suddenly thrust into power. It also had to deal with a situation in which its own line and ranks were far from consolidated.

■ The question of the CPK's attitude toward foreign experience in general and especially Maoism. It has often been claimed that the CPK was guided by Maoism and the Chinese revolution. This is based on little but ignorance of the facts, or, in some cases, a deliberate effort to slander Maoism.² The Cambodian Party never made such a claim. Although Pol Pot lived in China on the eve of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and even though this earth-shaking event, the farthest advance yet achieved by the world proletarian revolution, had a spontaneous impact on Cambodian political life, still any support for the GPCR is completely absent from CPK documents and other statements during Mao's lifetime.³ The CPK was pro-China because Vietnam was pro-Soviet (and for the same reason also had relations with North Korea, Albania and Yugoslavia), but when CPK documents refer to the Chinese revolution it is usually to belittle it by comparison to Cambodia. The CPK claimed that it was so advanced that it "exceeds Lenin and is outstripping Mao",⁴ leading a revolution so "unique" that, "[i]n this case, it is better to learn nothing from foreign experience".⁵ But the "foreignness" of this experience is not the only reason why the CPK leadership did not want to learn from Mao's development of Marxism. They didn't like its content. As we shall see, the policies they carried out were the opposite of those developed by Mao. For the most part, the CPK leadership maintained their reserve on China until September 1977, when they established enthusiastic relations with Deng Xiaoping, the man who overthrew Mao's successors. It didn't matter much to Pol Pot what class ruled in China when he was looking for an ally against Vietnam.⁶



At the same time, our focus means that other important questions have to be neglected, especially the international context of all this: the full role of the US (including its support for the CPK after they were driven from power, and its intentions in Cambodia today), and of the Soviet Union; and the nature and development of Vietnam, particularly after the war. Although China was the main foreign source of support for the Democratic Kampuchea government, an overall summation of its role is impossible here. That would necessitate an examination of China's broader policies on a global

level. It would also require an examination of how China's policy toward Democratic Kampuchea involved different goals by the right and left in the struggle within the Communist Party of China that came to a head in this period, a subject about which there has been speculation but very little documentation or even reliable information.

METHOD

The point has been made that almost all the available material on Democratic Kampuchea (especially for non-Khmer speakers) is from hostile

sources. Most research is based on partial and conflicting reports (often from interviews of refugees in Thailand or elsewhere), and the interviewers themselves are sometimes flagrantly reactionary. But the CPK did have a line, which can be discerned in these studies, and even more importantly, in the internal Party documents translated and published by academics in the last decade. We've taken some of the main scholarly studies in this field and looked at them through the prism of the CPK's stated line and our own understanding.⁷

Our central theme is this: in that storm-tossed sea of contradictions, a society which, in the end, was no more complicated than any other but only caught in the throes of a more acute situation, there was only one course that could have saved Cambodia: revolutionary politics had to become embodied in material reality, the conscious activism of a growing section of the masses who could be relied upon in turn to unite the vast majority of the people to vanquish and root up the old society step by step, in unity with the revolutionary interests of the people of Indochina and the world. This is the standard according to which we've judged the CPK, and our understanding of the complexity, the necessity and the possibility of accomplishing this task has been strengthened by examining this experience.

To this end, part II of this article is a chronologically-based examination of the context in which the CPK won victory, and part III an analysis of their policies once in power. Part IV takes a closer look at key theoretical questions as they posed themselves in Cambodia. The last section is a brief description of what happened after the 1979 overthrow of Democratic Kampuchea, especially the fate of Cambodia in the last decade during which it has been in the clutches of the UN, the IMF and other Western imperialist institutions.

II. BACKGROUND TO VICTORY

THE ANGKOR KINGDOM

Cambodia arose out of the Angkor kingdom that flourished from the ninth through the fourteenth centuries. Half a millennium later, with the rise of the modern nation, the temple complex those kings had built (now called Angkor Wat) was to become the icon

of the Khmer national identity for all those who sought to raise the national banner.

When the Hindu civilisation spreading out of India was first taken up by Khmer monarchs, it brought about a transformation. The rise of a strong central state enabled the construction of an extensive irrigation system to control monsoon floods and retain water for irrigation. Nothing could be more vital in a land flooded half the year and dry the other half. Some historians say the Angkor kingdom was able to master dry season rice cultivation, making it possible to grow two or three crops a year. The wealth of the Khmer court was legendary, and its dominion spread east across the Mekong Delta (now southern Vietnam) to the sea, north through much of Laos to China and west through Thailand and part of Burma. But the temples fell into ruins, because like the dams and canals, they were built by *corvée* labour, the forced work of the peasants, and this order of exploitation could not endure. The people deserted the Hindu religion at the core of the Angkor social system and embraced Buddhism.

A strong Siam (Thailand) pressed hard from the West. Vietnam took over the lower Mekong and swaggered through Cambodia. Later Cambodians would say that Vietnamese conquerors buried Khmers alive up to their necks and filled up their mouths with hot coals to warm teapots set on top of their heads. Whether true or not, this image was to become a central reference point for all Cambodian political parties.

By the time the French arrived in the mid-19th century, the old Angkor kingdom had been carved to a sliver. France set out to colonise all the countries of the Mekong, partly to challenge the British hold on China. In 1863, it forced Cambodia's King Norodom to accept a treaty making the country a French "protectorate" in exchange for saving his throne.

A FRENCH COLONY

The French started out (like the British) drawing their profit from the opium trade and alcohol, but soon this was not enough. In 1884, French gunboats sailed up the Mekong from Vietnam. Their troops marched into the palace and made the king sign over virtually all power. The point was to establish ownership of the land in Cambo-

dia so that French plantations could be set up, along with the imposition of harsh taxes. When peasants rose up against the French, the colonialists brought in troops from Vietnam. According to some historians, they killed two hundred thousand people, 20% of the population. Norodom, who at first had called for the revolt, two years later betrayed it, once again in return for keeping his kingdom.

The French brought Vietnamese to administer Cambodia, and aside from the royal court, they developed no local elite. Taxes collected in Cambodia went to pay for the administration of France's colony in Vietnam. The French justified their policies by labelling the Khmers lazy, "a decadent race". Unlike Vietnam, where the French found it convenient to bring about some limited degree of modernisation in the interests of profit and their overall Southeast Asian empire, practically no development was carried out in Cambodia, except for rubber plantations and other export-oriented crops. Nothing was done to maintain the irrigation system. French imports killed the national crafts (silk and cotton weaving) and nascent local industry. The imposition of taxes brought the proliferation of usurious money lenders, as peasants with no previous connection to the market had to borrow cash to pay this tribute. The land was divided into smaller and smaller parcels and many peasants became bonded labourers, forced to work for others to whom they all but belonged, rather than farming their own land. Rice production per capita dropped to the lowest level in Southeast Asia.

The king's grandson, Norodom Sihanouk, was crowned king by the Vichy French regime and then ruled under the subsequent Japanese occupation. After World War 2, he "invited" France to return. Both capitalism and feudalism became increasingly onerous in the coming decades. The royal court grew fabulously bloated. In some areas of the countryside, particularly Battambang and Svay Rieng, landlordism became rampant. In general, the number of peasants who no longer owned land but lived as *ténants* or sharecroppers grew at a quickening pace, especially in the 1950s and '60s, and reached about one in five by the end of Sihanouk's reign in 1970. While the bulk of the peasants still owned some land, a great many families had

less than a hectare (considered the minimum to feed a family of four) and had to rent both land and tools. The overwhelming majority were in debt to moneylenders and shopkeepers. Many peasants owed more than they could make in a year. Moneylenders commonly charged 12% a month in interest, and worked in tandem with traders, who would buy rice cheaply at the beginning of the season when it was plentiful and sell it back at higher prices and on credit to the peasants at the end of the season when food ran out. Overwhelmingly, these lenders and merchants were Chinese or Sino-Khmer.

As Mao said, when the productive forces are held back by social relations, the tools speak through people. Resistance arose against these social relations that condemned the people to poverty in what had once been a rich land.

Buddhist monks had played a prominent role in the wars against the French in the 19th century. By the 1930s and '40s, Buddhist wats (temples) became centres of national resistance, first against the French and then against the Japanese. While Buddhism as an ideology was a main prop of the social system, the Buddhist church was also the only source of education (the French established no schools), the centre of intellectual life and the only real national institution aside from the monarchy. Most young men spent a few years as monks. This meant that various political trends were nurtured in the monasteries.

THE EARLY COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

In 1930, as winds of revolution began to rise in the world, and in the context of revolutionary war in China, the Comintern (Communist International) directed the Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh to found the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP). This Party's core was in Vietnam, where the communist movement was by far the most advanced in the region. Laos was and remained the Indochinese country where it was least developed. In Cambodia, at first the only Party members were Vietnamese rubber plantation workers in the east and middle-class ethnic Chinese urban dwellers. Later, in the wake of the Buddhist-led anti-colonial movement of the 1940s, the

Party began to recruit among the young monks, and for the next two decades many Party cadre and leaders were ex-monks.

World War 2 transformed this struggle for independence. Shortly afterward, the Vietnamese launched an armed uprising against the French. At that time, the international communist movement advised both the Vietnamese and the Chinese not to seek national liberation through revolutionary war. Neither Party agreed. After the victory of the Chinese revolution in 1949, the Chinese became the major external source of support for the Vietnamese revolutionaries, just as they also did for the Korean people in their war against the US invasion in the same period. By the time the Vietnamese drove out the French in 1954, the US was paying for 80% of France's expenses in this conflict, which they considered an essential part of encircling China.

Following the dissolution of the ICP in 1951, the Vietnamese had formed their own communist party (the Workers Party of Vietnam [VWP], renamed the Communist Party of Vietnam in 1976). They also had their own army. The situation of the Cambodian communists was very different. It was not just that the Cambodian revolutionaries were less developed politically, organisationally and militarily than their Vietnamese counterparts. Their external dependence on Vietnam was matched by the fact that they had little distinct communist organisation. Instead of a communist party, the Cambodians followed Vietnamese advice and formed a united front organisation, the Khmer People's Revolutionary Party. Instead of forming their own army, an army that while united around the immediate tasks of the revolution would also be a key training ground in the long-term goals and ideology of communism, they simply worked with the Buddhist and nationalist Issarak guerrillas who had emerged in the struggle against Japan. In other words, both the Vietnamese and Cambodian communists treated Cambodia as though the task there was not to organise a revolution that would be part of the world-wide proletarian revolution, but simply an adjunct to the Vietnamese struggle.

The VWP leadership had a theoretical justification for this and won many Cambodians to it. They saw conditions in Cambodia as unsuitable for

revolution, because, they said, so many Cambodian peasants were small landholders and social antagonism was insufficiently developed there. The communist movement in Cambodia was equally doomed to weakness, they thought, so that they would always have to play the father party. A 1951 VWP document says, "The Vietnamese party reserves the right to supervise the activities of its brother parties in Cambodia and Laos."⁸

The following contradiction was to mark the decades to come: on the one hand the Vietnamese movement was strong and pulled the Cambodian movement forward; on the other, the weakness of the Cambodians suited the Vietnamese, who attempted to institutionalise this weakness. The Vietnamese were to carry the main burden of fighting, first against the French and then the Americans, with all the heroic sacrifice that entailed, and at the same time they were to subordinate the struggle in the neighbouring countries to their own. Whether or not to do so tactically is one question (for instance, whether or not to concentrate forces in one or another country, etc., for the good of the Indochinese struggle overall), but the VWP turned this into a strategy in which revolution in Cambodia or Laos could never take place except through Vietnamese intervention.

The Vietnamese trapped and completely smashed the French colonial army in the battle of Dien Bien Phu. France was forced to accept a negotiated-withdrawal from Vietnam in 1954. A Geneva Conference spelled out the conditions for the end of the Indochina war: Vietnam was divided, with a revolutionary government in the North and elections scheduled in the South to create a reunited, independent country. The situation in Cambodia was more ambiguous. The Issarak movement was well-rooted and its fighting forces numbered in the thousands. But Sihanouk, as he so often did, played a double game. He had persuaded the French to grant Cambodia's independence in 1953, telling them they could either deal with him or lose Cambodia to the communists. France was fighting in Vietnam. At the Geneva Conference, he succeeded in getting an agreement to guarantee the continuation of his regime in return for Cambodia's neutrality.

BITTER LESSONS

The Cambodian communists were left with empty hands. They were obligated to dissolve their armed forces. About a thousand people, about half of the revolutionary activists at that time, left Cambodia on ships bound for northern Vietnam along with the Vietnamese troops who had been fighting in Cambodia. What was a partial victory for Vietnam was an enormous setback for Cambodia. This experience had a far-reaching impact on the future leadership core of the CPK, both those who spent these war years at university in Paris and those like Pol Pot who returned just in time to see their hopes completely frustrated.

This was the beginning of what is called the Sihanouk period, in which the king abdicated in favour of his father, becoming a mere prince, and ran the country through a combination of parliamentary manoeuvres, fixed elections and violence until his overthrow in 1970. It is an extremely complex period that only became more complicated when the Vietnamese returned to the armed struggle in 1959, after the US refused to allow the promised elections in southern Vietnam. Sihanouk declared what he called at first "Khmer socialism" and later "Buddhist socialism". The essence of his doctrine was to preserve "the barrier which preserves the originality of our race, of our traditions, of our religious faith, and which safeguards our independence vis-à-vis certain of our neighbours". The purpose of this "socialism", he explained, was "to prevent the triumph of Communism in Cambodia".⁹ He meant what he said: the purpose of his policies, foreign and domestic, was to perpetuate his rule and the whole system it represented.

Things went from bad to worse for the Cambodian communists. They established the legal Pracheachon Party and took part in the 1955 elections. "The Pracheachon's greatest accomplishment was to fill the police dossiers with the names of all the leftists who exposed themselves in the election," writes an observer.¹⁰ The Party was allowed a legal existence, and some members worked secretly within the regime, but Sihanouk carried out a ruthless policy of hunting down and murdering communists, especially in the countryside. The communists had some success in organ-

ising industrial workers until Sihanouk turned around and crushed the strike movement. His police brazenly murdered the publisher of the Pracheachon newspaper on the sidewalk in front of its office. The Party's leader secretly betrayed information to Sihanouk's police for several years before openly going over to the government. It is said that 90% of the Party's members in the rural areas were lost in the late 1950s. Many were killed or scattered by the enemy; others just drifted away. A draft history of the CPK attributed most of these losses to a passive attitude prevailing within the Party.¹¹

The Communist Party of Kampuchea was founded in 1960. It was then called the Workers Party of Kampuchea, like the Vietnamese party. It was clandestine and its existence was secret; publicly, it worked through the legal Pracheachon Party. The strange dance with Sihanouk continued; the prince brought two leading communists into his cabinet and one into the legislature, but had the Party chairman kidnapped and murdered. Student riots against police repression broke out in 1963. In response, Sihanouk published a list of the members of the Party's central committee and promised to wipe out what he labelled the "Khmer Rouge" (Red Khmers).

Events abroad had a far-reaching impact on both sides in that period. Sihanouk was upset by the 1963 murder of Diem, the US flunky in South Vietnam killed by the CIA when deemed no longer useful. The prince broke relations with the US and made an agreement with the North Vietnamese government and the National Liberation Front in the South that would allow them to use Cambodian territory in return for a promise to respect Cambodia's borders.¹² The Cambodian communists, for their part, were said to have taken sharp note of the 1965 debacle in Indonesia. The legal, open Communist Party of Indonesia had hoped to achieve liberation without armed struggle through its association with the nationalist Sukarno regime; instead both the regime and the Party were crushed by a US-organised right-wing coup and uncouneted people slaughtered.

POL POT BECOMES CHAIRMAN

The Cambodian Party's second Party congress in 1966 marked a turn-

ing point. Its name was changed and Pol Pot became the CPK's chairman. Most of the Party leadership and a large part of its rank and file (which included many students and teachers) withdrew into the countryside. The centre of gravity began to shift, first to the eastern border, where contact and co-operation was re-established with the Vietnamese communists, and then to Ratanakari province, in the isolated northeast hills. The Party began to build clandestine organisation in the countryside in preparation for armed struggle. It won the support of the tribal hill people who had long suffered under the central government. With these moves, the CPK was moving away from the Vietnamese Party, which still held that there was no revolutionary situation in Cambodia and that therefore it was wrong to endanger co-operation with Sihanouk.¹³ Yet ironically, the situation in Cambodia was becoming increasingly conditioned by the war in Vietnam, and this heating up was to intensify Cambodia's internal contradictions to the breaking point.

China was supplying arms to the Vietnamese through Cambodia's ports. Sihanouk skimmed a certain percentage off the top. Similarly, a large amount of Cambodian rice was being sold to the National Liberation Front forces in southern Vietnam. This was a problem for Sihanouk, because it represented a loss of government income from rice export taxes. He introduced a system called *ramassage*, under which government soldiers went to the villages and forced the peasants to sell the rice to them at less than market prices. In Samlueat, in the west near Battambang, peasants rose up and attacked military posts. The CPK, although centred in the opposite end of the country, supported this rebellion.

Pol Pot later explained, "It was in this ripening revolutionary situation that an armed uprising broke out in 1967 in Samlueat.... This was set off by the people through their own movement. The Party Central Committee had not yet decided on general armed insurrection throughout the country."¹⁴ In fact, the Party had not yet formally changed the more eclectic line that had predominated since the beginning of the decade, that of "combined political struggle and armed struggle", and it is not clear to what degree the Party was united around making a complete

rupture with its past practice. (The CPK's Eastern Zone, in particular, was said to have been reluctant.) But circumstances intervened. "It is quite true that our Party had not yet raised the principle of armed struggle, but in the face of this massive civil war by the enemy, our Party had to fight back with arms."¹⁵

Sihanouk used planes the Chinese had given him to resist the US and instead bombed western Cambodian villages. He turned the guns he had taken as his price for co-operation with the Vietnamese against the Cambodian peasants. He took public responsibility for an order that all captured rebels be executed on the spot. The prince bragged that they would be roasted and fed to the vultures. He gave instructions to film prisoners being hacked to death and had these newsreels shown in theatres in the cities. In the countryside, his troops left severed heads on poles to make the same point.

The rebellion lasted from April through May.

Now the CPK began to organise for a nation-wide uprising in earnest. In January 1968, it launched its first offensive. The revolutionaries had very few modern weapons at this point and the Party leadership had to flee Sihanouk's forces yet again, but a civil war had been unleashed.

The Vietnamese didn't welcome this development, but co-operation with the CPK continued. The NLF was preoccupied with preparing for the February 1968 Tet offensive, a make-it-or-break-it gamble on urban insurrection whose defeat was to signal the end of a large measure of reliance on the strategy and tactics of protracted people's war and the beginning of a more conventional war with the aim of a negotiated settlement.

But again ironically, and certainly against their will, Sihanouk, the CPK and the Vietnamese were moving toward a three-way alliance.

THE US "SECRET WAR" IN CAMBODIA

In March 1969 the US launched its "secret" bombing campaign of Cambodia. Panicked, Sihanouk invited Jackie Kennedy (widow of the American president) for a visit and re-established relations with the US. But it was too late. In March 1970, Sihanouk's prime minister, General Lon Nol, on

whom Sihanouk had relied to repress the communists since the beginning, overthrew him in a US-orchestrated coup. At the end of April, the US invaded Cambodia. Some 30,000 US troops and 40,000 troops from South Vietnam rampaged through eastern Cambodia for two months with the declared aim of rooting out the Vietnamese NLF fighters, who shifted westward to avoid a decisive battle. Sihanouk fled to Paris and then Peking. China offered to support him on the condition that he take up the war against US imperialism. A few days later, Sihanouk issued a call to arms to the Cambodian people, as head of a National United Front of Kampuchea (usually known by its French initials, FUNK) whose core was the Khmer Rouge. He also called for a summit conference to unite the Indochinese peoples against US imperialism. Sihanouk was made head of state of the FUNK's government in exile, the Royal Government of National Union, but the FUNK's programme was silent on what role Sihanouk would play in a post-liberation government.

At that point, the CPK had about 50,000 local militia fighters and an army some 5,000-strong. That would double within a year. Close military co-operation was established between the liberation forces of the two countries. "They were poorly equipped; they relied as much on captured US weapons as on arms and ammunition supplied by the Chinese or Vietnamese," comments an American writer who was a journalist in Phnom Penh at that time.¹⁶ But she adds, "Time was the major aid given them by the Vietnamese, and they used it efficiently."

Clearly there were two sides to this process. The CPK had to build up its armed forces step by step and had little to rely on but the support of the Cambodian people. That support, according to all serious observers, was broad, deep and strong. Nothing else could explain the steady expansion of the revolutionary army, which reached 40,000 by 1973. Even their purchase of much material and weaponry from corrupt Lon Nol officials and officers is testament to the support they won from rubber plantation workers (who enabled them to sell rubber). But the Vietnamese did the bulk of the fighting against the Lon Nol army through the end of 1972, and by then they had broken the reactionaries' teeth. Even

more importantly, they beat US imperialism in Vietnam. Otherwise, the liberation of Cambodia could not have taken place at that time.

By 1973, the Vietnamese had forced the US to the negotiating table in Paris and they wanted the CPK to join them. The Vietnamese sought and won a cessation of bombing and the withdrawal of American troops. The US was not willing to concede defeat and the war was to continue for more than two years, yet they had put a limit on what they were willing to risk to achieve victory. In the context of the US's Indochina war overall, this was a decisive juncture. But in terms of their own immediate war aims, the Cambodians saw no reason to agree to a cease-fire that would only relieve their stranglehold on an all but isolated Phnom Penh, which seemed about to fall into their hands. This was why Lon Nol was eager for a cease-fire even if the CPK did not take part in the Paris accords, and why the CPK refused both offers.

Just as the immediate aims of the two main Indochinese liberation forces at the time of these Paris negotiations were different, the immediate results were dramatically different. The US withdrawal from Vietnam meant no let-up for Cambodia. Quite the opposite. Under the Paris accords, the US could no longer bomb Vietnam, where they hoped that massive US support could enable the reactionary regime to hold out for a "decent interval", but they feared that a Khmer Rouge victory was imminent. CIA director William Colby called bombing Cambodia "the only game in town".¹⁷

Much of Cambodia was declared a "free-fire zone".¹⁸ The Paris peace talks took place in January; in February the US sent its war planes back over Cambodia. A quarter of a million tonnes of bombs fell in raids that went on every single day for 140 days. This was more than three times the amount dropped on Japan in the last, all-out bombing campaign of World War 2 that culminated with the atomic destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The objective was to build a fire wall around Phnom Penh. It did gain the Lon Nol regime two years respite.

There had been friction between the two Indochinese parties in the best of times, and now relations deteriorated rapidly. According to the CPK, the Vietnamese proposed setting up joint military command and units, but the

Cambodians preferred to keep their independence.¹⁹ Starting in the early 1970s, after the US invasion of Cambodia and the formation of the FUNK, the Vietnamese had begun to send back hundreds of the Cambodians who had been in exile in northern Vietnam for 15 years. The Vietnamese wanted to build up the revolutionary forces in Cambodia, but they wanted to do so by building up their own influence within the CPK. Many of these returning Cambodian cadre had undergone training in the Vietnamese approach to politics as well as other fields. At first they were welcomed home and integrated into CPK-led units. Within several years, almost all of them were removed from the Party and a great many executed. "The group of former combatants trained in Hanoi", a 1976 document would later say, "...became 100% Vietnamese and nothing left as Khmers. They were subservient lackeys of the Vietnamese."²⁰ This bitter contradiction was reflected within the CPK itself, as firefights broke out between troops of the CPK's Southwest Zone and the CPK's Eastern Zone command, considered pro-Vietnamese, "Khmer bodies with Vietnamese minds". In the Southwestern Zone, leadership was said to have told people that there were two kinds of enemies, acute and non-acute. "The Vietnamese were not yet our acute enemy, which was the US-Lon Nol, but at the time it was said that Vietnam was our number two enemy." Vietnam was frequently referred to as "the hereditary enemy".²¹



Above:
US B-52
bombers over
Indochina. The
US high-tech
war machine
killed at least
two million
Vietnamese
and one
million
Cambodians.

Right: A US
aircraft carrier
off the
Cambodian
coast.



THE RICE WAR

If the CPK had little holding it up but the support of the people, the US had little to hold up the Lon Nol regime up but B-52s. Even his American advisors considered his regime a disaster. It was so corrupt and incompetent that as many as half the soldiers on its roster didn't really exist but were merely a device for the generals to pocket their pay. Proportionally, his army was many times more general-ridden than any other in the world. In the face of constant US carpet-bombing, the CPK, like the Vietnamese, used an effective tactic: its fighters moved in as close as possible to the government forces. Most of the casualties were civilians; further, the ravages of explosives and napalm destruction

were turning vast areas of the countryside into wastelands, while able-bodied young men were obliged to fight for one side or the other. The question of feeding the people and the troops became increasingly acute on both sides. Rice riots shook refugee-swollen Phnom Penh. By now the US had to supply rice in massive quantities. So much did Lon Nol's survival depend on this that the US Embassy was cabling home weekly reports on rice stocks.

In some liberated areas, rice production had improved, despite the bombing, but the demands of the war were outstripping supply. Until then, land taken from landlords and other traitors who backed the US-Lon Nol

regime was distributed to landless peasant families individually. Peasants enthusiastically joined mutual aid teams in which each helped farm the land of all. Half the country's population lived in liberated areas, administered by mass organisations such as the Peasants Association and the Patriotic Monks Association. (The existence of the Alliance of Communist Youth, through which the Party did much of its recruiting, was still secret, as was that of the Party itself.) Moneylending and borrowing on rice crops was abolished, although merchants continued to ply their trade. No longer were peasants plagued by corruption, rape, theft, drunkenness and gambling. In some places peasants had voluntarily formed



Left: The US bombing of Cambodia emptied the countryside and drove hundreds of thousands of Cambodians into Phnom Penh.

co-operatives of 10-30 families that raised living standards.

In May 1973 Angkar launched what it called the "Democratic Revolution". Now these co-operatives were to be moved to a "higher level" and made universal. The term co-operative is misleading, since private property was basically abolished. So were cities in the liberated areas.

The internal CPK publication *Tung Padevat* (Revolutionary Flags) was later to explain the situation like this: "There was progress on the one hand and the same old society on the other... [T]hose in possession of the land kept their private ownership. Furthermore, previously landless peasants and previously landless workers now received land from the [revolutionary] state. Therefore land remained in private ownership in general." In the northeastern city of Kratie, part of a CPK-led liberated area, "our state was their [the comprador capitalists] satellite." "Kratie township showed the same signs as the old society. Honda motorcycles were speeding up and down the streets like before, while our ragged guerrillas walked in the dust. This showed that they were still the masters... if we followed that road, we would have gone nowhere."²²

Kratie was completely evacuated and turned into a ghost town. In the countryside, money, credit and trading were abolished; rice and other basic products were directly collected by the new state. Private ownership of land, farm tools, motor ve-

hicles and so on disappeared.

It was unheard of, as the CPK document quoted above admits, for private property to be completely confiscated during a national liberation war, when the task is to unite all who can be united against the imperialists and their puppet regime, including the national bourgeoisie and even some patriotic big capitalists and landlords whose existence is completely bound up with reactionary society but who can sometimes be won to action against the main enemy (such as Sihanouk himself). Furthermore, this treated all property as the same, whether it belonged to feudal landlords and plantation owners (ultimately targets of the revolution) or peasants, who could only win their own liberation against these forces by seizing the land. So what was the purpose of these measures?

Pol Pot later described the aim like this: "[T]he landowners and merchants gathered all the rice to sell to the Lon Nol clique and to the Vietnamese. The poor strata of our people ran out of rice... the Revolutionary Army of Kampuchea, who were fighting at the front, they were running out of rice and fed with rice soup at every meal... that was why in 1973, the Central Committee of our Party decided to create co-operatives on inferior and superior levels in the whole liberated area."²³ Another CPK leader explained the 1973 decision more bluntly: "The Vietnamese were the biggest problem. They would buy the rice. So we abolished money. If the people did not need

money, if they lived in a co-operative where everything was provided for them by the state, they would not sell rice to the Vietnamese."²⁴

These measures were taken in the desperate days of war and in the heat of a revolutionary upsurge. Apparently they were not carried out everywhere in the liberated areas or all at once. In some areas, they were applied only to advanced villages; in others, they were compulsory for all. But they were not meant as temporary or tactical steps; rather they prefigured the CPK regime to come. The CPK's main characteristics and the main political and ideological issues raised by its rule had come to the fore, as did the particular way in which they were to be inter-tangled.

NATIONALISM AND REVISIONISM

To return to the four issues posed at the beginning of this article:

First, the CPK's handling of the Vietnam question: Vietnamese disdain for the revolution in Cambodia and attempts to subordinate it to their own national interests was becoming the main factor conditioning the development of the Cambodian revolution. That this was a condition, an external factor, cannot be emphasised too much, because this external factor did not determine the response of the Cambodian revolutionaries.

It should be kept in mind that the military connection and interpenetration of the two national liberation strug-

gles made it possible for the Vietnamese to influence the course of the Cambodian struggle, but the opposite was also not impossible, and if an increasingly wrong line on the part of the VWP was a big problem for Cambodia, it was to prove even more disastrous for the masses of people in Vietnam.²⁵ Vietnam was a problem for the Cambodian revolution, but it was also a big advantage. The US had been defeated there and it was full of people who had sacrificed everything for the anti-imperialist struggle. The fact that so many Cambodians lived in Vietnam and vice-versa was a potentially wide-open door through which a revolutionary line in Cambodia could have impact in the whole region. But the CPK couldn't see that. All they could see was the negative aspect of the situation. They couldn't see beyond their own conception of Cambodian national interests, any more than the Vietnamese revisionists could understand why they should be concerned about revolution in Cambodia. In response to the Vietnamese line that tended to reduce the Indochinese struggle to revolution in Vietnam and support for that in the other two countries, the CPK was equally incapable of seeing the need and possibility of spreading thoroughgoing, proletarian internationalist revolution throughout Indochina, in unity with the world's people (including Maoist China, a very important element in this situation).

Second, this, of course, raises the question of what kind of revolution they wanted to carry out. That was to become increasingly clear in the few years in which the CPK held countrywide political power, as we'll see in the next section. But already, these measures taken in 1973 herald the line that called for leaping over the stage of national democratic revolution and even socialism, which was to take an astonishing form after nation-wide liberation. The target was skewed: instead of focusing revolutionary fire on the US and the Lon Nol regime, private property in general was declared the enemy, in a country where most people had some property, and the greatest humiliation portrayed as the fact that some middle-class young men had motorcycles while Khmer Rouge fighters walked in the dust. (Note that for *Tung Padevat*, the fact that previously landless peasants had got land is not considered a factor that could fan

their enthusiasm for revolution to go further; rather the conclusion is that their land should be confiscated.) The CPK's inability to even imagine the possibility of uniting the Indochinese people on a revolutionary basis was matched by its inability to grasp the importance of uniting the vast majority of people to make revolution in Cambodia.

Third, another grave portent was the handling of contradictions within the Party (particularly the unjust handling of returning cadre from Vietnam). As we have seen, the struggle against the "Vietnamese" influence in the CPK was in fact a two-line struggle within the Cambodian Party, an endeavour to chalk out a revolutionary line in conflict with the non-revolutionary line that had predominated. But because this struggle itself was seen from a nationalist perspective, it was summed up incorrectly as mainly a struggle against an external enemy (Vietnam and "Vietnamese minds"). This summation itself became an enormous obstacle to the Party's development, undermining the more revolutionary orientation that had won out. Because these questions were not treated politically in a straight-on fashion, which could have strengthened the understanding and unity of the CPK, this situation weakened the Party. Rather than learning from this error, it was to systematise this approach.

Lastly, the CPK needed to develop a critique of the political, ideological and military line of the Vietnamese Party, whose bearings were never firm and which had been increasingly drawn into the political and ideological orbit of the USSR. Such a criticism would have been essential for clarifying the road to liberation and socialism in Cambodia and uniting the Party, but it was no less desperately needed in Vietnam and Laos as well. This was one aspect of "foreign experience" that the CPK could ignore only at the risk of losing their own bearings and their ability to lead any revolution at all. The other was Mao's polemic against Soviet-led modern revisionism and his developing summation of the historical experience of the international communist movement, and the line and experience of the Cultural Revolution. But instead of making the ideology and interests of the international proletariat their starting point, they reacted to Vietnamese chauvinism on a nationalist

basis themselves, making this contradiction insoluble. Despite the CPK's very real and acknowledged leadership over broad masses of the Cambodian people and its valuable and heroic role in the struggle against US imperialism, which made an important contribution to the international proletarian revolution, as the CPK developed a consolidated line in the course of the war, it was heading further and further up a blind alley.

III. VICTORY WASTED

LIBERATION

The liberation of Phnom Penh came on 17 April 1975. The final assault had begun on the first day of the year. Revolutionary troops cut off Highway One linking Phnom Penh to Saigon. They strung Chinese-supplied water mines on cables across the Mekong and pulled them up as ships approached, cutting off that route as well. Heavy howitzers (supplied from the Vietnamese, who had captured them from the Americans) pounded the capital's airport, its sole remaining link with the US. Fearing what its ambassador called an "uncontrolled solution",²⁶ the United States sent Lon Nol into exile and tried to cut a separate deal with Sihanouk if he would break his alliance with the CPK. He rejected that offer, perhaps because it was too late. The hated reactionary army – the army that had raped and robbed in the city just as it had in the countryside – collapsed, while the armed forces led by the CPK encircled the cities and closed in. At some 60,000 strong, including several battalions of women, along with many more peasants in local militias, the revolutionary army was several times smaller than Lon Nol's, but under the leadership of the CPK the justness of its cause had become an irresistible material force.

The US and their puppet regime had tried to paint the war as one to save Cambodia from a Vietnamese invasion, but now, for the first time in modern history, Cambodia was entirely in the hands of Cambodians. Even a US State Department officer in Phnom Penh had to admit, "The population in the [Lon Nol] Republican zone welcomed surrender when April 17, 1975 came."²⁷

Yet it could be said that two different Cambodias, or two different parts of it that had undergone a diverging de-

velopment, confronted each other that day. First under the French (and even before), and then under the Sihanouk years of economic boom, Phnom Penh, like so many Third World urban concentrations, had always been a city apart from the rest of the country. Its economy was articulated to foreign capital, to the export of rice and rubber and a few manufactured items, and its main role was to serve as a warehouse and distribution point for foreign goods. Throughout most of the twentieth century the majority of its population had been Cambodian-born but non-Khmer, especially Chinese and Vietnamese. Following independence from France, Sihanouk, in one of his "modernising" moods, issued an edict that forbade the wearing of traditional



Above: Young Khmer Rouge soldiers at the Thai border, 1975.

peasant clothing in town or going barefoot. The million refugees who had poured in during the years of American carpet bombing changed that – doubling the city's population to about two million – but at the same time it became even more cut off from the countryside. While millions of peasants had been part of the revolution for several years at the time of the taking of Phnom Penh, the people in the capital had been living almost exclusively off the reactionary war or the charity the American ambassador's wife dispensed while her husband helped direct the destruction of the country.

The city captured by the liberation forces was no prize in any immediate sense. There were few stocks of arms and ammunition and no fighter jets or tanks or heavy artillery. No raw materials, no spare parts, and for want of fuel, almost no electricity. Much of the city was without water. There were no medicines or other hospital supplies. And above all, no food. The rice supplies on hand were only enough to feed the city for less than a week.

The country overall was not in much better shape. The Lon Nol regime had indicated half a million dead on its side; another 600,000 were reported killed in the liberated areas (out of a total population of between seven and eight million). Hundreds of thou-

sands of the survivors were badly maimed or crippled. The last dispatch sent out by the USAID reported that Cambodia had "slipped in less than five years from a significant exporter of rice to large-scale imports, and when these ended in April 1975, to the brink of starvation".²⁸ At least half the rice fields had been dug up by bombs or lay unplanted. The American air raids and fighting had killed off the bulk of the water buffalo used to pull ploughs, along with cattle and other farm animals. Almost half the country's population had been driven from their homes. The country's motorways and railroads were shattered, the rivers clogged with the carcasses of sunken ships.

These were the circumstances under which the liberation forces evacuated Phnom Penh and other major cities almost as soon as they entered. Further, they had no way to know whether or not the US would renew its bombing raids. War was still raging in Vietnam. Only a few weeks later, on May 12th, the US was to stage the Mayaguez incident, in which the capture of an American freighter carrying military supplies in Cambodian waters was the pretext for another US attack, destroying most Cambodian naval facilities and knocking out the country's only oil refinery at Kampong Song.

The US and other imperialist press wailed that this evacuation was a death march, but even the most unfavourable reports give no evidence of that. As a *New York Times* reporter described it, "in fact, it was a journey away from certain death by starvation... [which] was already a reality in the urban centres."²⁹ Liberation fighters went door to door and asked people to leave as soon as they could gather up their possessions. There was no violence. People walked out of the city in families and were given food and drink on the way. Some medicine was also dispensed. True, as the Western press complained, the wounded and sick were evacuated from the hospitals, but for the moment, at least, they were little worse off anywhere else. Captured high officials and officers of the Lon Nol regime were executed, but the only reports of mass executions of former soldiers came from Battambang and elsewhere in the Northwestern Zone, and the Party centre soon ordered that they be halted. Since the US press led the pack in howling about "Khmer Rouge atrocities" on the heels of the American defeat, it seems only fitting to quote a once-classified report from the US Embassy in Thailand, in charge of "monitoring" events in Kampuchea, which said that after the first month, "reports of the wilful killing of former

government officials and soldiers more or less ended".³⁰

Yet the emptying of the cities was not meant as a wartime step, nor even as a necessary adjustment of an untenable situation. The fighters who organised the exodus told people that this was only a temporary measure, but it was not, nor was it ever meant to be. In a May 1975 Party conference, it had been decided to put an end to cities once and for all. The evacuation was complete and permanent. Later, a few skilled workers were to be called back and peasants sent to replace factory workers, a few government offices and foreign embassies were to reopen, but for almost four years the living part of the capital was reduced to the size of a few square blocks. The rest was cleaned up and then abandoned to the weeds.

The evacuation of the cities was only the first step in a broader programme adopted in the months before liberation. Markets, private property, money and religion were abolished. The emptying of the cities was seen as a decisive step in this. "If we had kept Phnom Penh," the CPK wrote in its internal organ, "it [private property] would have had much strength. It is true that we were stronger and had more influence than the private sector when we were in the countryside. But in Phnom Penh we would have become their satellite."³¹

A "UNIQUE" REVOLUTION?

The CPK understood very well that this ran contrary to the policies and experience of every socialist revolution. "The expulsion of the population of Phnom Penh is a measure one will not find in any other country's revolution," noted an internal CPK document. Foreign Minister Ieng Sary later explained to a foreign correspondent, "The Khmer revolution has no precedent. What we are trying to do has never been done before in history."³²

In fact, the CPK leadership considered their revolution totally unique. In July, Pol Pot told a meeting of 3,000 army representatives: "We have won total, definitive, and *clean* victory, meaning that we have won it without any foreign connection or involvement. We dared to wage a struggle on a stand completely different from that of the world revolution.... In the whole world, since the advent of revolutionary war

and since the birth of US imperialism, no country, no people and no army has been able to drive the imperialists out to the last man and score total victory over them. Nobody could."³³

Pol Pot was making two separate claims that need to be deconstructed. First, the idea that no one else had ever before defeated the US was simply false – what about China, Korea and Vietnam? It seems that the real point here is to contrast Cambodia with Vietnam, which had received aid from the USSR and China and therefore won an *unclean* victory. It is true that the Vietnamese leadership had turned away from revolutionary Marxism on every front (including military doctrine) and in the struggle to free Vietnam from the clutches of the US compromised their country and sold their soul to the equally imperialist USSR. (After the fall of the Soviet bloc, this approach led them to fall into the hands of the West again.) But Cambodia did not win its liberation independently of the world context.³⁴

This first claim, with its blatant nationalism, was inextricably linked to the second, which was true: the CPK was not adapting Marxism's lessons (based on historical and world-wide experience) to Cambodia's specific and unique conditions but instead proceeding from "a stand completely different from that of the world revolution". Cambodians returning from Europe were lectured on "the superiority of the Khmer revolution, in particular because of the abolition of money and the evacuation of the cities".³⁵ This was explicitly a criticism of China's revolution: "The Chinese now pay wages to state workers, etc. Wages lead to private ownership, because when you have money you save to buy this or that."³⁶

The point of difference – Cambodia's uniqueness – was that the struggle was not aimed against the old ruling classes, which were considered irremediably smashed, but against all private property in general and all who had become tainted by it, including all classes in the cities. "We have already put down the capitalists and the feudal classes and we continue to strike them further. And we are also hitting the private property of the petty bourgeoisie, the peasants and the workers.... We evacuated the people from the cities which is our class struggle."³⁷

The other side of this "class strug-

gle" is what was done with the people evacuated from the cities. The country's population was divided into two categories, "old people" (those living in revolutionary base areas before April 1975) and "new people" (city dwellers and peasants living in areas under Lon Nol's control, about 30% of the population according to a CPK document³⁸ and closer to 40% according to other calculations.³⁹)

A PROFITABLE DIVISION

These two categories did not correspond to social class. There were very different classes in the first category, from poor and landless peasants to rich peasants (by liberation, most non-peasants had fled the countryside). The second included an even broader range of classes, from capitalists and feudals, to shopkeepers and intellectuals, to industrial workers and rickshaw drivers.⁴⁰ Nor did this classification correspond to any political category, since it threw together people who sympathised with the revolution and those who opposed it. For instance, almost all of Cambodia's Chinese minority (about 430,000), by now located in the cities, were labelled "new people", mixing together moneylenders big and small, shopkeepers and students. Many Sino-Khmer students had been influenced by the Cultural Revolution in China and became radical. (Sihanouk had banned the Cambodia-China Friendship Association, even as he was receiving aid from China.) Speaking Chinese was forbidden.

Students, in fact, had provided important support and many members for the CPK. Secondary education had been very limited until 1954. (Khieu Ponnary, married to Pol Pot, was the first Cambodian woman to graduate from a secular secondary school and later ran a secondary school herself to provide work and income for CPK leaders.) In a futile effort to modernise his country without revolution, Sihanouk spent up to a quarter of the national budget on education and produced a million educated youth. Many of them, without work or future prospects, were open to revolutionary ideas, although by liberation the Party had not carried out mass work in the cities for years. All of them were sent to be "new people".

At first, many of those who had come from villages originally were free

to return there, and the rest were concentrated in a number of areas, especially the Southwest and Eastern zones. All were installed in co-operatives and, like everyone else, went to work in the fields. But the two categories were not treated equally. The co-operatives were political as well as economic units – they were the basic local government, the only mass organisation and the form in which almost all daily life was organised. The “old people” were “full rights members”. The “new people” were not. They could not be candidates for the committees that led the co-operatives or any other post. When the following year, in a manifestation of national unity and institution-building, the country adopted a constitution and a national assembly, they were not allowed to vote. Party documents describe a further division of the “new people” into “probationary members” and “depositees”. It is unclear how widely this was carried out or how much consequence it had. But Party documents themselves make little distinction. “New people” were expected to be neutral at best, and if not all enemies, not potentially advanced either.⁴¹ Often they were told: “To keep you is no gain, to get rid of you no loss.”

There is much evidence that “base people” (as the “old people” were often called) considered the “new people” a burden, unable to farm very well. In some areas, they were well received and well treated. In other areas, they were given less food, the worst shelter and harsh treatment. Initially they were concentrated in the zones where the Party was strongest. In September 1975, a second mass exodus took place. “New people” were sent by foot and rail from the Southwest and East to the less densely populated Northern and Northwestern zones. About 800,000 were sent to the Northwest alone, almost doubling its population in the space of a few months. Here conditions were to become especially harsh.

A NEW STATE RELIGION

At the same time, the CPK was also carrying out another massive population transfer. Previously, the Lon Nol regime, aptly described as “Buddhist fascism”, had launched pogroms against ethnic Vietnamese living in Cambodia as part of its holy war

against the Vietnamese “Thimils” (the Sanskrit word for “infidels” – a term that was meant to simultaneously lash out at the Vietnamese for being communist atheists and also incorporate the popular Cambodian scorn for the Vietnamese for having, in Cambodian eyes, surrendered to Christianity). 300,000 peasant settlers, plantation workers and other Vietnamese were driven out amid a squall of racist hysteria whipped up by the US puppet regime, drawing on animosities accumulated in earlier centuries of Vietnamese occupation. Within five months *after* the liberation in Cambodia, most of the remaining 150,000 ethnic Vietnamese were also removed to Vietnam. The Democratic Kampuchea government labelled them “Vietnamese residents whom Vietnam had secretly infiltrated into Kampuchea and who lived hidden, mixed with the population”.⁴² Few of the 10,000 who remained (mostly with Khmer spouses and families) survived the next few years.

Another non-Khmer minority targeted by the DK regime were the Chams, a Moslem people numbering several hundred thousand, with their own distinctive customs, who live throughout Cambodia, especially along the rivers. In addition to fishing, many worked as butchers (a job Buddhists preferred to leave to them) or small traders. They were considered fierce fighters, and during the war both sides recruited many Cham soldiers. It has been said that they initially supported the Khmer Rouge because of the discrimination they had suffered at the hands of the Buddhist governments, but that they turned against the revolutionaries after 1973 when their language, distinctive dress, religion and religious trappings (such as beards) were banned in the new co-operatives – and then the Lon Nol regime turned around and courted them.⁴³ While it may be true that as a particularly traditional and religious group, they tended to oppose the revolution, it is certain that when the new government persecuted them, they resisted violently, sometimes killing CPK cadre, Khmer and Cham alike. Their villages were broken up and they were scattered among the “new people” in co-operatives. There was no attempt to wipe them out as long as they ate pork (a test repeatedly put to them) and abandoned their customs. But they were

forced to accept Khmerisation.

However, Khmer minorities (the “upper Khmer” or tribal peoples of the hills) were favoured as “real” Cambodians whose dark skin was favourably contrasted to that of “white” Chinese, Vietnamese and others.

All this adds up to a systematic approach: religion was abolished by decree, but the CPK did not hesitate to rely on the most backward religious and ethnic prejudices, synthesised in the (not very) new state religion: Khmer superiority.

It also went very well with another aspect of the Democratic Kampuchea regime that, whether consciously or not, also represented a reluctance to thoroughly break with traditional ideas. The Democratic Kampuchea government did not repeat Sihanouk’s “Buddhist socialism” slogans, but he was, in name, at least, the head of the new state (until he was quietly sent into retirement in September 1977), and that whole concept of communism (which Sihanouk often condemned as treason to Buddhism) was never publicly referred to. In this situation, it was easy for many people to have the impression that the “Organisation” was simply a more nationalist and radical component of the united front of which the Buddhist monarch was the ostensible leader.

THE PLAN FOR SOCIALISM

Shortly after liberation, the new government declared the old Lon Nol banknotes no longer legal currency. New bills with an image of the Angkor Wat temples had been printed up, but at the last minute the government decided not to put them into circulation. Money, they announced, was history in Cambodia.

This was a radical measure, but not a particularly revolutionary decision.

For one thing, it was not simply an over-hasty step based on a hatred for what Marx called “the nexus of callous cash payment” that turns all human relations into ones of naked self-interest.⁴⁴ Like the 1973 leap to co-operatives, it was justified as a measure against national enemies who might use it: “If we use money, it will fall into the hands of individuals.... If the money falls into the hands of bad people or enemies, they will use it to destroy our cadres by bribing them with this or that.... They have the

money to bribe the people's sentiment. Then in one year, ten years, twenty years, our clean Cambodian society will become Vietnam."⁴⁵

For another thing, currency was abolished but, as we shall see, money as a category persisted – and, when it came to determining the plans of the state and the lives of the people, it ruled.

In 1976, the CPK adopted a four-year plan for the country's development, which in almost comical nationalist one-upmanship over China was called the "Super Great Leap Forward". The main target was to double rice production in the years 1977-1980 so that Cambodia could export \$1.4 billion worth of agricultural goods. Ninety percent of that was to be rice sold to its traditional buyers (Hong Kong, Singapore and African countries), with Thailand a vital market for other products. The profit would be used to buy the machinery and raw materials needed to achieve modern (mechanised) agriculture within 10-15 years and modern industry within 15-20 years.

The key to doubling rice production would be to "solve the water question" by building an extensive system of water-retention dams and irrigation canals throughout the country, so as to progress from a pre-Liberation average of one metric tonne a year per hectare to an average of three tonnes in areas where one crop a year was harvested and six tonnes or more in a growing number of areas where irrigation was to make two yearly harvests possible. To that end, within a year, the co-operatives moved to a "higher level" – far bigger farms, with up to a thousand people, and roving work teams able to carry out large-scale projects. All private property was abolished except for clothes, eating and hygiene utensils, notebooks and a few other personal items. Collective eating arrangements were made universal and compulsory; people were forbidden to carry out sideline activities such as fishing, gathering fruit and nuts, raising chickens, etc., which had made an important difference in their living standards.

Some critics of Democratic Kampuchea have ridiculed its ambitious economic goals as unobtainable or unnecessary, but that is not our purpose here. What was wrong with the CPK's plan for "building socialism

quickly" was not that it was too quick, but that it couldn't lead to socialism.

First of all, it is impossible to build socialism in a country that hasn't settled accounts with feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism (capitalism interlocked with feudalism and imperialism). The CPK did not intend to build an "autarchic [self-contained], peasant society", as some critics have claimed; instead of liberating the peasants, they planned to modernise exclusively on the backs of the peasants. (This will be discussed further in part IV.)

Secondly, the plan confused socialism with modern machinery. That's why its slogans are so similar to the call for "Four Modernisations" issued at that same moment by the Right in the Chinese Party, which argued that increasing production was the most important aspect of building socialism. In opposition to this, the Maoist slogan "Grasp revolution, promote production" put forward revolutionising the relations of production (which means, ultimately, the relations between people) as key to developing the productive forces (understood to include both tools and people). This, too, will be taken up again in part IV, but for now, at least, it has to be said that in building a society where the basic relationships between people are based on coercion, the CPK was simply perpetuating the old social relationships in a new form.

In fact, the CPK's approach to economics was capitalist in essence. Both socialism and capitalism need surplus product (over and above what people need to live) to build up the productive forces, but in the CPK plan rice was taken as capital in the strictly capitalist sense, as a commodity to be traded for other commodities on the international market. For all of the CPK's nationalism, the calculations in this plan to build socialism had to be – and were – expressed in American dollars.⁴⁶ Although a socialist country will have to buy some necessary items abroad, an economy that revolves around buying and selling on the world market will never achieve the all-around, balanced internal development necessary to become independent from imperialism, build socialism and support the world revolution. Even aside from the problem of how to stand up to external imperialist pressure (which Cambodia apparently hoped to solve by selling to colonies and other coun-

tries under the thumb of the big powers, rather than directly to imperialist countries), such a country will never be able to break free of market considerations internally. This plan would have enslaved Cambodia ever more thoroughly to the capitalist world market. Apparently the CPK was not consciously following the model of Cuba, with its fatal decision to mortgage the country to the export of sugar, but there was nothing "unique" about the Cambodian version of this revisionism.⁴⁷

The application of this plan varied in the CPK's seven zones, which seems to reflect different lines within the Party more than local conditions. However, the CPK centre itself, in a document published in *Tung Padevat*, emphasised the strategic importance of choosing where to concentrate offensives, in economic construction as much as in war, and declared, "The good number one battlefield for us is the NW zone".⁴⁸ The Party had taken the decision that the Northwestern and Northern zones were to provide a large part of the rice surplus.

The larger Northwestern Zone contained some of Cambodia's most productive rice fields and before liberation had been the main source of its rice exports. But of the zone's 1.8 million inhabitants (a quarter of the country's population), the majority were former city people from Phnom Penh and Battambang, making this by far the greatest concentration of "new people". Further, the demands placed on them were to be higher than anywhere else. Forty percent of the country's fields chosen to be harvested twice yearly were in the Northwest, and the state was to keep half the value of the rice harvested there, as opposed to 20% in other zones.

This was truly a perverse decision from the point of view of socialism, and stood in sharp contrast to Mao's China. China took up the slogan of "In agriculture, learn from Tachai" – an agriculturally difficult area where the advanced consciousness of former poor peasants propelled rapid economic development by creating new relations of production. The CPK chose to make its economic breakthroughs in the agriculturally richest areas by concentrating the greatest number of people they had excluded from the revolution, in a region where the Party was relatively weak (it was held by the Lon Nol regime until the

end and the reactionary army staged its last stand there) and unable to lead. And more, many of these urban people were not used to this kind of labour and didn't know much about farming. At the same time, the South-western Zone, a poor area that had long been a CPK stronghold, was given a much smaller place in this economic offensive and relieved of most of its "new people", as was the Eastern Zone, where the CPK was also strong and deeply-rooted.

Instead of relying on the conscious activism of the labourers and giving special emphasis to the efforts of the most advanced, the CPK was operating according to a very different logic. A revisionist modernisation scheme was the major factor in this apparently irrational decision. Capital was working in mysterious ways, but it was definitely in command.

HARVEST OF DISASTER

The harvest at the end of 1975 – truly a battle against the devastation wreaked by the US imperialists – was surprisingly successful. But by the next year, the results were disastrous. Especially in the Northwest, large numbers of people died from malnutrition and disease, both adults toiling in the fields and youth in the mobile work teams building irrigation projects. The expanded "co-operatives" were administered by committees of 30, "old people" and Party or army cadre. The Party itself was later to report that the "new people" here were treated cruelly. Ieng Thirith, Democratic Kampuchea's Minister for Social Affairs, made an inspection tour of the zone in mid-1977 on behalf of the CPK centre, of which she was a leading member. "Conditions there were very queer. In Battambang [province, not the city], I saw they [the cadre] made all the people go to the rice fields. The fields were very far from the villages. The people had no homes and they were all very ill.... I know the directives of the Prime Minister [Pol Pot] were that no old people, pregnant women, women nursing babies or small children were to work in the fields. But I saw everybody in the open rice fields, in the open air and very hot sun, and many were ill with diarrhoea and malaria."⁴⁹

The CPK leadership understood that something was going very wrong. Overwork had become a major na-

tional problem. "So far this year, the strength of the labour force is rather feeble. Only in the East is the labour force not feeble", reads a late 1976 report attributed to Pol Pot.⁵⁰ Most people were not being adequately fed. Concerning food reserves, the report continues, "A number of places have solved it nicely, but three-quarters of the country has failed to do so."⁵¹ "Some of our comrades behave as if all new people were enemies. They don't trust them to make political progress, to acquire political consciousness, or to solve the problems of livelihood. This is a big misinterpretation. If it were true, we would be unable to round up the people to take the side of the revolution in terms of politics, consciousness, and in terms of tasks assigned by the line laid down by the Party."⁵²

This report is striking for what is right in it as well as what is wrong. The Party recognised that things were going badly, it expressed concern for the people and correctly understood that it had to solve problems of livelihood and unite the people if it were going to retain power. Yet at the same time the report also fails to recognise the source of these problems.

Because the CPK held that the main target was "individualism, whether of feudalists, capitalists, or other classes not particularly poor, such as independent farmers, independent workers, and independent manual labourers",⁵³ they could not distinguish between contradictions among the people and those with the enemy. It was impossible to unite the people with that line. Further, since the co-operatives were not based on "the principle of voluntary co-operation and mutual benefit", as Mao wrote of China's co-operative movement,⁵⁴ and since the CPK could not lead the co-operatives in a way that would meet the people's basic necessities, at least over time, then how could people be expected to have any enthusiasm for them?

The inability of Party cadre to win the support of the people and a tendency to impose policy by force is often criticised in this and other documents. Part of the solution, the report says, is for cadre to go "down to live among the people" and "be trained to solve this problem well so as to unite themselves with the people".⁵⁵ Again, this fails to see that no matter how Party members and committees carried it out,

the underlying obstacle was the Party's line itself. But the CPK leadership was determined to find the source of the problem in the *application* of the line. The report's main focus is not on Party members' shortcomings or mistakes, but on conspiratorial wrecking activities: "[H]idden enemies seek to deprive the people of food, while following our orders to some extent. These people exist in the army. They look like people conforming with the law. They take our circular instructions and use them to mistreat the people and to deprive them, forcing them to work whether they are sick or healthy."⁵⁶

This was actually the operative section: "[T]here is a sickness inside the Party, born in the time when we waged a people's and democratic revolution. [In other words, in the 1960s and '70s.] We cannot locate it precisely.... We search for the microbes within the Party without success. They are buried. As our socialist revolution advances, however, seeping more strongly into every corner of the Party, the army and among the people, we can locate the ugly microbes. We are encouraged to expel treacherous elements that pose problems to the Party and to the revolution. If we wait any longer, the microbes can do real damage.... To give an example, the string of traitors that we smashed recently had been organised secretly during the people's revolution and the democratic revolution. In those days, that sort of people could get alongside us. In a socialist era, they must be cast aside. Now 1976 was a year of furious, diligent class struggle. Many microbes emerged. Many networks came into view."⁵⁷

Ieng Thirith was more blunt in her interview with a Western correspondent. "Agents had gotten into our ranks," she said, "and they had gotten into our highest ranks. We were not yet in full control in 1976. The power was in the hands of the zone secretaries.... they controlled millions of people, and we, the government, we controlled nothing but factories [in Phnom Penh]. That's all."⁵⁸ Her husband, Ieng Sary, foreign minister and top Party leader, blamed Nhim Ros, secretary of the Northwestern Zone, and So Phim, secretary of the Eastern Zone, for exacerbating divisions among the people in order to carry out sabotage.⁵⁹ Both men were eventually called Vietnamese agents. Nhim Ros was executed, So Phim killed while resisting arrest.⁶⁰

SECRET WAR WITHIN THE PARTY

Who were these hidden enemies? It is more than likely that some existed. There are many examples of the Right within the Chinese Party sabotaging socialist construction by applying policies that did not correspond to the requirements of the situation and the sentiments of the masses. In fact, one of the greatest lessons Mao drew from the experience of the Cultural Revolution and of socialist construction in the USSR was that with the development of the socialist revolution, the key battles between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are those fought within the party itself over what policies and line to apply. But the CPK was saying something different. The problem was not one of line, a line that could be identified, criticised, struggled against and defeated as the party reached a higher unity. Nor does the reference to people who had joined the party during the democratic revolution point to what Mao meant when he warned about "bourgeois democrats becoming capitalist roaders", people who joined the party during the period of New Democratic revolution but who opposed the further transformation of society through continuing socialist revolution. Instead, the CPK claimed that these hidden enemies were able to sneak in during that period because of the weaknesses imposed by Vietnamese influence. They owed their continued power to Vietnam because, in the CPK leadership's view, now that money had been abolished and the old property-owning classes had been scattered in co-operatives, there was no longer any internal social basis for the emergence of antagonistic classes and thus antagonistic class struggle within Kampuchean society or the Party.⁶¹

Before this late 1976 report quoted above, the CPK leadership had sent cadre from the Eastern Zone to "sweep" the Northwestern Zone, rooting out leading cadre suspected of being at fault for the problems that were arising. Ieng Sary later complained that the Eastern Zone cadre had punished and killed the wrong people.⁶² After the report, cadre from the Southwestern Zone were sent in to repeat this combing. They found little rice on hand, although the quotas had been reported fulfilled and the required amount had been turned over to the

state. Apparently a number of the Northwestern "old people" were killed as punishment. At first the "new people" welcomed the Southwestern Zone cadre, who were more politically sophisticated and treated them better. Some "new people" were brought in to leadership of the co-operatives to replace the removed "old people", and in general this distinction seems to have lessened in this zone. But by the next harvest, the problem just repeated itself. The harvest was even worse. Some reports say that half the rice fields lay unplanted because the people were too weak from hunger and disease to work.⁶³ However, the centre's rice requisition was not lessened. Instead, there was a new "sweep".

The CPK set up a prison for those suspected of grave political crimes in a former school building at Tuol Sleng, not far from the capital. All of those who entered there were tortured and almost all of them executed. The killings in the countryside are more difficult to examine. What makes Tuol Sleng different is that the Party kept detailed records of every prisoner, their class background and their confessions, for detailed confessions were the main point of its existence. The Vietnamese, after they invaded and occupied Cambodia in 1979, made a museum of Tuol Sleng and used it to discredit the CPK. But there has never been any claim that the documents there are forged. The authenticity of some of them was confirmed by Ieng Sary.⁶⁴ Kang Kek Iey (better known as "Duch"), who was in charge at Tuol Sleng, recently corroborated the basic outline and verified his signature on some of these documents.⁶⁵

A REACTIONARY METHOD

No socialist regime has ever made systematic use of torture. It was illegal in China, and it should be noted that Mao points this out forcefully just before discussing "counter-revolutionaries who have sneaked into the Party".⁶⁶ One of many reasons for this is that while the enemy may be able to use torture to break some revolutionaries so that they commit the reactionary act of informing on their comrades, no torture can ever make a reactionary into a revolutionary – and therefore, the question of the truth of what people say under torture, always a big question, is even greater for proletarian revolu-

tionaries. Further, it degrades the revolution and creates a climate that impedes the correct and necessary struggle against wrong lines in the party. The Cambodian experience is proof of this.

In China, when Mao analysed that there was a bourgeois headquarters within the Party, he and other Party leaders took the basic issues at stake to the masses and launched the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution to subject the bourgeois line and policies to mass criticism, make the lessons of the material basis for the emergence of a new bourgeoisie under socialism a mass question and formulate new policies to continue digging up that "soil" step by step while raising the consciousness of the Party and the masses through studying basic Marxist works and thoroughly dissecting and criticising the bourgeois line. When, as the document quoted above says, the CPK leadership analysed that a "life-and-death struggle" threatened their Party, they resorted to secrecy, torture and executions.

At first, in 1976, of the more than 750 executions at Tuol Sleng, most were considered members of the old society: Lon Nol soldiers, professionals, students, factory workers, etc. They confessed to CIA links. Koy Thuon, secretary of the Northern Zone, also admitted to CIA connections under torture and was executed in 1977. But the confession of Northwest Zone leader Nhim Rhos was a bombshell: the Vietnamese, he said, had set up a parallel party within the CPK. In the next two years, as some 20,000 people in all were tortured and killed in Tuol Sleng, this theme became a drumbeat, and every confession led to further arrests, torture and confessions of Party leaders, members and their spouses and children, in ever-widening mad spasms of murder.

As could be expected, the meticulous records left behind in this place of horror make it unmistakably clear that people were tortured until they gave the confession sought after. The regulations stated that torture was to be applied "by hand" and slowly, to facilitate this result; the torturer was considered to have failed at his duty if a prisoner died before writing what was considered an acceptable confession (often involving many drafts and a final "clean" version).

Since this was not seen as a political and ideological line struggle and

certainly not as one that had to be taken to the masses, Democratic Kampuchea's failures were reduced to a police question and dealt with accordingly. The executions carried out by the regime should be examined in light of this fundamental line problem and not explained in terms of "Cambodian psychology", or by some inexplicable rage gripping the Party and its mass base (or even as the result of a just rage unleashed by the US-inflicted slaughter).

REAL ISSUES

The question of the differences and contention between the various zones of Democratic Kampuchea (which had developed pretty much autonomously until liberation) is one of the most controversial among Cambodia researchers. There are no documents and not much evidence that would point to clearly contending lines. But it is clear that there were major issues at stake. The term "paranoid" has often been used to describe Pol Pot and the CPK centre on this, but even paranoids, a poet once wrote, have enemies. There were plots; this was a life-and-death struggle around basic questions of the line of the Kampuchean revolution. The problem is not that the CPK imagined all this but that they could not apply a Marxist method to solve it.

One cluster of issues is obvious: the long-festering controversy over how to sum up the CPK's history and Vietnam's role in it.

The Vietnamese hardly needed to set up a separate political party because their influence and line had been within the CPK since the beginning. Just about the only political question involved in this mortal combat within the Party about which there are contending documents revolves around when to date the Party's founding. A pre-liberation Eastern Zone document puts it in 1951, when the Pracheachon Party was founded under Vietnamese influence.⁶⁷ The 1976 "Decision of the Central Committee on a Variety of Questions" attacks this directly: "The question of the Party History: Set the birth of the Party in 1960 instead; do not use 1951, so that we are close to others – make a clean break."⁶⁸

An important bone of contention with the Workers Party of Vietnam and within the ranks and leadership of the CPK itself had always been how to re-

late to Sihanouk, in other words, whether or not to subordinate the revolutionary struggle in Cambodia to hopes for an anti-US alliance with the prince. The Vietnamese Party clearly had more confidence in Sihanouk than they did in the Cambodian communists, in terms of the way the VWP tended to see things, which was in relation to their own immediate war aims. But no foreign influence was required to create a reluctance, among some Cambodian Party members, especially those who had found a place in Sihanouk's two-faced political system, to thoroughly rupture with the old society and face the uncertainties of war against it. This is part of the experience of every party that prepares to launch people's war.

In the most basic strategic sense, the line associated with the CPK centre was correct: if the CPK had not built up its own revolutionary army – and it could not have done so without waging war and carrying out agrarian revolution – then Cambodia would not have been liberated from the US.⁶⁹ In fact, it is highly unlikely that Sihanouk would have joined the united front led by the CPK otherwise. As the Party correctly wrote about the Sihanouk forces, "Although they did not want to join us, when the storm came they had to come and take shelter in our refuge. This is because we had already prepared our refuge."⁷⁰

In this, the Cambodian revolution was not so different from the Chinese revolution, where the question of what attitude to take towards Chiang Kai-shek was one of the thorniest problems and a core issue, for it embraced all the basic questions of the class analysis of Chinese society, the primacy of agrarian revolution and people's war, the strategic nature of the revolutionary united front and the question of tactical alliances, the question of independent armed forces under party leadership and so on. These repeated life-and-death struggles within the Communist Party of China were the motive force of the Party's advance, both in terms of the development of its line and the development of the consciousness and unity of its members. It is true that some of the standard-bearers of the wrong line, who at times dominated the Party, eventually committed treason and went over to the enemy in one form or another; but if Mao had simply tried to solve the question by terror he would

have failed utterly – in fact, the line developed under his leadership would not have emerged.

Once again, the question of "foreign experience" is fundamental. The problem of class struggle under socialism and two-line struggle in the party, as its concentrated expression is one that the proletariat has been grappling with since socialism was first established in the Soviet Union, and the lessons Mao drew from this experience were paid for at a very high price. The CPK had grasped some immediate issues – if they had not, they would not have won victory – but by rejecting those lessons, the CPK was doomed not to "exceed Lenin and outstrip Mao", but to cut off any possibility of correcting their increasingly monstrous errors.

DOWNWARD SPIRAL

Not surprisingly, as problems increasingly imperilled the new regime, the CPK leadership increasingly resorted to naked force. This was not necessarily because they wanted to. It was not the path they had set out on, or they never would have gathered and organised the mass support to win victory. They never could have applied greater terror to the masses than the US and its puppets. This theme of the unintendedness of the consequences of their regime has been repeatedly emphasised by surviving Party leaders, even Pol Pot himself. A foreign correspondent described a brief conversation with Pol Pot shortly before his death like this: "I told him many people in the city hate him and think he's responsible for the killings. He said he knew how many people died. When he said that, he broke down and cried. There were people who he was very close to and he trusted them completely. Then, in the end, they made a mess of everything."⁷¹ Yet they could find no other method.

The "Super Great Leap Forward" was spiralling into counter-revolutionary depths. The Western imperialist media reports about "genocide" in Cambodia had begun at the moment of liberation – and they were lies and/or gross exaggerations motivated by wounded reactionary pride at having "lost" Indochina. But later, particularly after the first year, amid this turbulent political situation, mass killings did break out and spread. For instance,

until late 1976, the centre prevented the killing of former rank-and-file soldiers in the Lon Nol armed forces. This correct policy – while the top officers had blood debts against the masses under their own rule as well as the revolutionaries, the soldiers were usually unenthusiastic conscripts – was later reversed. Former soldiers were sifted out from among the “new people” and killed, often with their families (this execution of wives and children was supposedly to prevent them from seeking revenge against the revolution, but in fact it seems tinged with a feudalistic view of the family). Once again the contrast with real revolutions is stunning. This policy not only made enemies out of hundreds of thousands of people who had not actively opposed the regime or were even supportive, it created a climate in which the “new people” and others were increasingly fearful and opposed to the regime.

In fact, the whole political atmosphere degenerated further and further. The centre may or may not have given directives regarding the killing of people in the co-operatives, but at any rate, the killings of groups of people in far-off fields at night that have come to be emblematic of the Pol Pot regime in the Western press were the inevitable result of the centre's line. Tools and farm animals were scarce and precious; the 1976 report cites their protection (along with the fulfilment of work quotas in general) as a main form of class struggle. In China, too, the question of the economic use of and preservation of the people's resources was considered a question of class consciousness. But the CPK's treatment of this was consistent with their overall line. It is not surprising that city people working many hours a day might ruin a hoe or allow a water buffalo to break a leg, whether out of ignorance or bad luck, or even out of backward resentment – which didn't make them unredeemable enemies of the revolution. Yet that is how such incidents were often treated, especially if the person had a “bad” class background or other “problems”. The co-operative leadership was becoming increasingly anxious and desperate (and perhaps cynical) and lashing out wildly.

There was a certain change of course in Democratic Kampuchea's last 15 months or so. Since the regime was about to end abruptly, it is hard to

know where all this was headed. Perhaps the desire was to make it a more “normal” revisionist country.

In September 1977, the Cambodian people were finally let in on the secret that “the Organisation” was a communist party. While clandestinity is a basic organisational principle for every party preparing for or waging war against the old order, nonetheless, since the *Communist Manifesto*, as Marx and Engels declared then, “communists have always disdained to conceal their views”. The 1977 move did not signal a changed relationship with the masses and may have been meant mainly for foreign consumption. It took place in the context of a campaign to “normalise” Democratic Kampuchea's status and end its diplomatic isolation, and especially an attempt to enter into a military alliance with China immediately following Deng's coup.

In that same context, in mid-1978 the government announced major policy changes. The CPK leadership, with plans for modern industry, surely knew that they could not do without engineers and technicians for long. Intellectuals (especially foreign-educated Cambodian experts who'd been declared “new people” when they returned after liberation) were suddenly showered with good food and other inducements and invited back to Phnom Penh. They were gathered together for meetings with representatives of the CPK leadership, who told them that their mistreatment had been a mistake, a provocation against the revolution organised by the CIA and Vietnam.

This seems to have been a part of a broader effort to recoup popular support. A March 1978 article in the CPK organ underlines the need to “gather forces” and says, “And the full rights and probationary members of the co-operatives and even the depositors must study and watch and draw experiences as well. However the full-rights members must study apart first, in order to unite together; and the probationary and depositor members study together, drawing experiences, making corrections over and over – they will all progress. We must educate and build full rights members into progressives...”⁷² In many areas, at least, the distinction between “old” and “new people” was ended by mid-year.

Negotiations between Cambodia and Vietnam to achieve a final delineation of their borders had gone on since the two countries were liberated. Vietnam refused to accept the land border drawn by the French colonialists (despite the fact that when the French drew up these borders a century before, they had meant to settle old disputes in Vietnam's favour). This was a violation of the agreement reached with Sihanouk in 1967 and amounted to a state of permanent pressure against Cambodia. For its part, Cambodia refused to recognise the French-drawn boundaries in the sea, rivers and water known as the Brevié line (less was at stake in this, although the hope that this territory might harbour oil deposits may have loomed large in a country with apparently no other hydrocarbon resources). Until 1977, however, the situation between the two countries was tense but generally stable, as both sides seemed to be avoiding any decisive diplomatic moves or military action.

Exactly how that situation unravelled is not altogether clear, nor, in the end, crucial to our analysis. But the timing is significant. Hostilities began as both countries were entering internal crisis. They blossomed into full war a year later, as Vietnam moved entirely into the Soviet camp and the US began trying to line up an alliance with China, where power had been seized by revisionists.

The CPK was convinced that Vietnam was trying to organise a coup from within. This is the gist of the confessions of former Party leaders Koy Thuon and Hu Nim. There seem to have been bomb explosions in the capital and Siem Reap in 1976. The movement of 20,000 DK troops to the capital – equal to its entire civilian population – indicates extreme concern. The clearest manifestation of what may have been Vietnamese or pro-Vietnamese infiltration occurred in late 1978, on the eve of the Vietnamese invasion. The Democratic Kampuchea government had invited three Western journalists in an effort to win international support. On their last night in the country, there was a mysterious attack on the guest house where they were staying, in the Southwest, not far from the capital. Malcolm Caldwell, one of the most prominent Western writers sym-

pathetic to the new regime, who had just come back delighted from a private interview with Pol Pot, was singled out and shot dead.

Many bourgeois military analysts say the Cambodians mounted small-scale border raids against historically disputed areas in early 1977; fighting was generalised by mid-year. A Cambodian offensive meant to smack the Vietnamese met with defeat, and Vietnam counter-attacked in force. The CPK's Eastern Zone front collapsed without a major fight. By the end of 1977, Kampuchea broke off relations with Vietnam.

There was a lull for a while in 1978. The centre sent in two brigades to arrest the Eastern Zone leadership. Many Eastern Zone troops fled to link up with the advancing Vietnamese. Vietnam's army recruited these troops and ethnic Khmers in Vietnam into specially-formed units meant for fighting on Cambodian soil. Cambodia responded by deporting massive numbers of Eastern Zone civilians to the Northwest.

Vietnam's war aims were made clear by its actions: eventually it was not only to invade and knock out the DK army, but also station 150,000 troops in Cambodia in a decade-long occupation that ended only when the collapse of the USSR made Vietnam's leaders decide to seek Western investment. In this light, the argument that Vietnam was merely trying to protect itself against the CPK is not tenable.

Nonetheless, Democratic Kampuchea set out to face this threat in a reactionary manner. Phnom Penh radio broadcast an appeal to "purify our armed forces, our Party and the masses of people... in defence of Cambodian territory and the Cambodian race.... One of us must kill 30 Vietnamese... two million troops would be more than enough to fight the Vietnamese, because Vietnam has only 50 million inhabitants.... We need only two million troops to crush the 50 million Vietnamese, and we would still have six million people left. We must formulate our combat line in this manner, in order to win victory."⁷³

This was an astonishing call from a self-proclaimed communist party. It may have seemed to the Democratic Kampuchea leadership that this kind of appeal was the only way to unite Cambodians behind them at that point. But by calling for a race war, they ensured their own defeat. If the Vietnam-

ese government was threatening Cambodia's sovereignty, it had trampled no less on the revolutionary aspirations of the people of Vietnam. All of Indochina needed real New Democratic and socialist revolution. Why couldn't a revolutionary party in Cambodia do everything possible to unite with the workers and peasants in Vietnam, including supporting revolutionary politics there? In fact, why didn't the Cambodian Party do everything possible to avoid or at least postpone a war that went against the interests of the masses of both countries?

The CPK appears to have welcomed the prospect of a showdown. It seems that the Party was convinced that such a final conflict would finally put an end to their own internal problems, both by setting off a wave of national unity and ending Vietnamese interference. Besides, the CPK seemed certain of winning it, which turned out to be a highly subjective view.

Pol Pot told the two other invited Western journalists that Vietnam could not defeat Cambodia on its own because "there is nothing in Vietnam". Vietnam's plan, he said, was for the Soviet Union to send Warsaw Pact troops from Europe to invade and occupy Cambodia. The US and its Southeast Asian allies would not accept that; and more, that would leave the Soviet empire weakened on the European front and NATO would move against it.⁷⁴

The Soviet Union, threatened by the prospect of a US/China entente, continued to back Vietnam. US President Carter's National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski was later to brag that, "I encouraged the Chinese to support Pol Pot. I encouraged the Thai to support the DK."⁷⁵ In February 1979 China would invade Vietnam with a quarter of a million troops to "teach them a lesson" – only to be taught a better lesson by the Vietnamese. But the CPK's hope that reactionary alliances would mean Cambodia's salvation and that they would emerge victorious turned out to be another wild miscalculation.

On 25 December 1978, Vietnam unleashed the same "blossoming lotus" strategy they had used to take Saigon. The troops under Vietnamese command included 100,000 Vietnamese and 30,000 Cambodians. The bulk of Kampuchea's 80,000 troops were massed at the eastern border, in expect-

tations of positional warfare. Vietnam's troops outflanked them, punching through north and south of their positions to the centre of Cambodia and then unfolded, with part of their forces moving back east to crush the Cambodian army from behind and the rest speeding westward and outward in all directions. By January 7, two weeks later, they seized Phnom Penh.

The CPK leadership had to be ferried out by helicopter as ignominiously as Lon Nol before them.

IV. SOME THEORETICAL QUESTIONS

ON PRIVATE PROPERTY AND EQUALITY

To be provocative, let's recall what Marx and Engels wrote in the *Communist Manifesto*: "In a sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property."⁷⁶

Isn't this what the CPK set out to do? And why shouldn't they have tried to do so at one stroke, overnight?

There are two aspects to what was wrong with their understanding, both inextricably interrelated. One is a wrong conception of private property and its contradictory nature and role in a country like Cambodia – the question of New Democratic revolution. The other is a wrong conception about what it means to negate capitalism through socialism. In both aspects, CPK line and policy was, despite its occasional Marxist terminology, profoundly anti-Marxist.

In the *Manifesto*, the founders of Marxism explain that they do not mean that socialism will abolish the property of "the petty artisan and of the small peasant". "There is no need to abolish that; the development of industry has to a great extent already destroyed it, and is destroying it daily." That kind of private property existed long before capitalism and, the experience of socialist revolution has proven, will exist for a long time after capitalism as a system has been overthrown. The main target of socialism is capital, "that kind of property which exploits wage-labour, and which cannot increase except upon conditions of begetting a new supply of wage-labour for fresh exploitation". Thus capital is a very par-

ticular kind of private property: it is the collective product of the labourers that is expropriated, snatched from them, by a class with antagonistic interests, the bourgeoisie. "To be a capitalist is, therefore, not a personal, it is a social power." This point cannot be emphasised enough. The aim is not to abolish the "personal appropriation of the products of labour... for the maintenance and reproduction of human life.... All we want to do away with is the miserable character of this appropriation, under which the labourer lives merely to increase capital, and is allowed to live only in so far as the interests of the ruling class require it."

To explain, expand and apply this analysis to Cambodia, first let's look at the aspect of private property. Contrary to what Marx and Engels foresaw in the mid-19th century, every socialist revolution so far has taken place in countries where small-scale property, not capitalist property, was the most prevalent form (even though Russia, where the majority of people were peasants, was an imperialist country). China was ruled over by "the three mountains", imperialism, feudalism and what Mao called bureaucrat capitalist capital tied up with imperialism, the landlords and the state.

Cambodia was different from China in many ways and yet it was not very different in some fundamental ones. The vast majority of the people were oppressed and exploited by all three mountains. In particular, the peasants' ability to make the land produce a living was constantly undermined and held back by the tribute taken from them by these three forces, sometimes as rent and other forms of exploitation by feudal landowners, and sometimes at the hands of the tax collectors and usurers, who also sucked up the surplus created by the peasants' toil. This surplus was not principally reinvested in production (and even more rarely in agricultural production). It went to support a feudal aristocracy (especially the court) and the colonialist administration and its successor, Sihanouk's feudal-bureaucrat capitalist government, and other forms of parasitism as well (including the usurers themselves and the Buddhist hierarchy).

NEW DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

In countries of this kind, as the *Declaration of RIM* succinctly puts

it, "The target of the revolution... is foreign imperialism and the comprador-bureaucrat bourgeoisie and feudals, which are classes closely linked to and dependent on imperialism. In these countries, the revolution will pass through two stages: a first, new democratic revolution which leads directly to the second, socialist revolution. The character, target and tasks of the first stage of the revolution enables and requires the proletariat to form a broad united front of all classes and strata that can be won to support the new democratic programme. It must do so, however, on the basis of developing and strengthening the independent forces of the proletariat, including in appropriate conditions its own armed forces and establishing the hegemony of the proletariat among other sections of the revolutionary masses, especially the poor peasants. The cornerstone of this alliance is the worker-peasant alliance and the carrying out of the agrarian revolution (i.e., the struggle against semi-feudal exploitation in the countryside and/or the fulfilment of the slogan 'land to the tiller') occupies a central part of the new democratic programme."⁷⁷

Even this first, new democratic stage of the revolution was not thoroughly carried out in Cambodia. Initially, the targets were correctly selected and the peasants mobilised in a war of national liberation and agrarian revolution, but even in the two years or so before liberation there was a tendency to confuse the aims. By 1976, contrasting Cambodia's "Super Great Leap Forward", one year after liberation, to China's mere Great Leap Forward seven years after liberation there, the CPK was to write: "Certainly our Party didn't hesitate. We didn't go through a period of land reform or social change. We leaped from a people's democratic revolution into socialism."⁷⁸ This means that the difference was not just one of pace, but of road.

Cambodia's "co-operatives" were not a sequel to a revolutionary redistribution of the land. Instead, they simply amounted to confiscation of whatever land many peasants did have by a state whose economic plans would effectively chain them more tightly to the world market. The claim that Cambodia had become "basically a collective society"⁷⁹ cannot be accepted if we

accept the *Manifesto's* distinction between capitalism and socialism: "In bourgeois society, living labour is but a means to increase accumulated labour. In Communist society [here Marx and Engels mean to include the first stage of communist society, i.e. socialism], accumulated labour is but a means to widen, to enrich, to promote the existence of the labourer." In light of all we have seen about Democratic Kampuchea, which category best describes the existence of the masses of people there is obvious. The leap was not into socialism but into capitalism.

AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION

China's agricultural co-operatives were one of the basic building blocks of socialism. But the formation of high-level agricultural co-operatives (the people's communes) was the culmination of a process that began with the New Democratic revolution. Immediately following the nation-wide seizure of power (and even before, in some liberated areas), the peasants were led to seize the land. Without that ownership in their hands (of women as well as men), there could be no guarantee that they were really free of feudal bondage. Otherwise, they would have felt that nothing had changed, and in fact there would have been a tendency for feudal relations to reappear in new forms. As Mao pointed out, the New Democratic revolution had opened the door to capitalism. But at the same time, it opened the door even wider to socialism. The peasants could see the advantages of pooling their land and labour, and they could also see that the polarisation between rich and poor that inevitably accompanies capitalist development in agriculture means that socialism is the only way out for the vast majority. With little time wasted, they were organised to form mutual aid teams and small, lower-level co-operatives in which land was farmed collectively but people received a share of the harvest in proportion to the land, animals and tools they had provided. (This was done extensively in the liberated areas of Cambodia until 1973 and in some places after that, and was very popular with the peasants.) Then, in the mid-1950s, the Chinese Party began "to call on the peasants, with the same principles of voluntary co-operation and mutual benefit, to unite further on the basis of these small, semi-

socialist co-operatives and organise large agricultural producers' co-operatives which are fully socialist in nature. [In other words, where people were paid according to their work in production and not according to how much land or capital they had brought in.] These steps make it possible for the peasants to gradually raise their socialist consciousness, through their personal experience and gradually change their mode of life, thus lessening any feeling of an abrupt change. These steps can generally avoid any drop in crop yields during, say, the first year or two; indeed, they must ensure a year-by-year increase, and this can be done."⁸⁰

While in Cambodia, almost everyone was forced to live on a "co-operative" farm, in China the co-operatives built by relying on the poor and lower-middle peasants were so clearly superior that for a short period of time at first the better-off peasants had to be prevented from flooding into them and taking them over before the other peasants could develop their own political strength.

WHAT IS A SOCIALIST ECONOMY?

The CPK was no less wrong about socialism than about New Democracy. It wrongly held that all public property is automatically socialist. Marx identified socialist public property not with state ownership but social ownership. In other words, state ownership, too, can be (and certainly was in pre-liberation Cambodia) a form of private ownership in the Marxist sense, a form in which the surplus produced by the labourers is appropriated by a handful of people for their own interests while the "labourer lives merely to increase capital, and is allowed to live only in so far as the interests of the ruling class require".

Whether or not a society is truly socialist depends on whether or not the labouring masses increasingly, and in waves, are becoming the masters of production (the process of production itself, the relations of people in production and the allocation of the surplus), of the state and of all society, leading step by step but steadily toward the abolition of what the Chinese revolutionaries called "the four ills": class distinctions generally, the relations of production on which they rest, the social relations that correspond to these

production relations and all the ideas that result from these social relations. This point deserves the most profound study (see *Maoist Economics: The Shanghai Textbook*), but even this relatively brief overview here makes it all too plain that despite the CPK's claims to be "20 or 30 years ahead of China", it had embarked on a different road.

Mao's study of the experience of socialist construction in the world, including especially the USSR, as well as China,⁸¹ led him to understand that socialism is a relatively long historical period of transition. The *Shanghai Textbook* explains, "For a certain period of time in socialist society, there still exist nonsocialist relations of production.... On the other hand, the socialist relations of production themselves undergo a process of development from a less mature to a more mature state. In socialist society, 'communism cannot as yet be fully ripe economically and entirely free from traditions or traces of capitalism.' The establishment of the system of socialist public ownership was a fundamental negation of the system of private ownership. But this does not imply that the issue of ownership is completely settled; bourgeois right has not been abolished entirely in the sphere of ownership. Furthermore, owing to the practice of the commodity system, exchange through money, distribution according to work, and the existence of basic differences between workers and peasants, town and country, and mental and manual labour, bourgeois right still exists to a serious extent in the mutual relations between people, and holds a dominant position in distribution. This kind of bourgeois right in the historical period of socialism cannot be entirely abolished, and, in certain aspects it is still allowed to exist legally and is protected by the state. It can only be restricted under the dictatorship of the proletariat, which actively creates the conditions for the elimination of bourgeois right from the stage of history."⁸¹

Bourgeois right refers to economic and social relations that uphold formal equality but actually contain elements of inequality.⁸² While the CPK thought that it had solved the problem of social inequalities and therefore of classes overnight by getting rid of money and wages, bourgeois right inevitably continued to exist. For instance, to speak only of "natural" in-

equalities, under its distribution system able-bodied young people got larger rations than the handicapped or the elderly. Since the productive level was so low, there was not enough surplus to feed everyone equally. Another example is certain indispensable privileges extended to leading cadre, such as access to transport, radios, etc., as well as extra food rations and medicines to ensure their survival. Absolute egalitarianism proved impossible. As Mao said, criticising this idea when it arose in the early days of the Red Army in China, "We should point out that, before the abolition of capitalism, absolute egalitarianism is a mere illusion of peasants and small proprietors, and that even under socialism there can be no absolute equality, for material things will then be distributed according to the principle of 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his work' as well as on that of meeting the needs of the work."⁸³

Under communism, Marx said, society will be guided by the principle "from each according to their ability, to each according to their need". But until then bourgeois right can only be eliminated gradually and step by step. In brief, the leap from "according to their work" to "according to their need" will be made possible by the increasing communist consciousness of the masses (which is the driving factor) and the development of production (so that people's needs can actually be satisfied). Not only was the apparent abolition of bourgeois right under the DK regime an illusion, it hid actual injustices, a denial of rights, such as "old people" getting privileges over "new people" (in fact, once again this smelled of feudalism, since family relations could play a determinate role in whether an individual was classified as "new" or "old"). If the regime had lasted longer and especially if it had succeeded in industrialising, these inequalities (which were already potentially fatal) would only have become more pronounced.

The CPK muddled socialism and communism by doing away with wages, money, etc., but met neither the criterion of communism (in fact, not meeting the needs of the masses at all) nor that of socialism (by not taking into account people's productive labour at all in determining what they receive, but simply giving them starvation rations and sometimes less, which actu-

ally hampered production by dampening their enthusiasm for work and often leaving them unable to do so). As Mao said in a different context, this was like wanting a cow to produce milk but not letting it eat grass.

Pol Pot looked at the problem like this: "Where can we find capital to build our industry? Our capital comes essentially from the work of our people. Our people, by their work, develop agricultural production.... We also have another important source of capital. That is the fact that we have no salary. The absence of salary constitutes in itself a great source of capital."⁸⁴ While it is true that the surplus created by production is the source of capital under socialism as well as capitalism, this completely and deliberately ignores the difference between this surplus under capitalism and socialism, where "accumulated labour is but a means to widen, to enrich, to promote the existence of the labourer". They adopted the basic capitalist principle of squeezing the labouring people as much as possible... in many cases, to death.⁸⁵ In this view, similar to the one that attracts Western capital to set up garment factories in Cambodia today, the country's main comparative advantage is not rice but the fact that its backward social relations make for very cheap labour.

Historically, by far the main error committed in relation to bourgeois right has been to resist moving step by step to eliminate it. Until the "four ills" are eliminated, it will not be "impossible for the bourgeoisie to exist or a new bourgeoisie to arise."⁸⁶ In one of his most far-reaching contributions, made amidst the struggle to prevent Deng and others like him from seizing control of the Party and the state, Mao warned the people, "Our country at present practices a commodity system, the wage system is unequal too, as in the eight-grade scale, and so forth. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat such things can only be restricted. Therefore, if people like Lin Biao come to power [here Mao was summing up the lessons of a previous two-line struggle within the party to serve a new one, against Deng Xiaoping], it will be quite easy for them to rig up the capitalist system. That is why we should do more reading of Marxist-Leninist works."⁸⁷

But the CPK was committing this same error in another, "unique" fashion. Money had been abolished, but



Above: Pol Pot with revisionist CCP leader Hua Guo-feng in 1977 following the coup that restored capitalism in China, as revisionist China becomes the Khmer Rouge's main source of foreign support.

commodity production still prevailed: co-operatives gave the state a certain amount of rice and other products (valued in dollars) and received other commodities in exchange; rice itself was considered the most important commodity not because it could feed people but because it could be exchanged on the international market. It was deemed unprofitable to divert efforts from this capital formation to the struggle against malaria and other diseases that were ravishing the people.⁸⁸ In fact, labour power itself remained a commodity, since the purpose of production was not to satisfy the people's needs but to accumulate capital. Under these conditions, the abolition of money simply served as a very threadbare cloak to hide the dominance of capitalism, and the absence of wages an attempt to hide the most bone-cutting exploitation.

Actually, the CPK's line was not entirely "unique". In China, the revisionist ringleaders Liu Shao-chi and Chen Po-ta called for the premature abolition of commodity production, the *Shanghai Textbook* recounts. Mao retorted, "This way of thinking which attempts to prematurely abolish commodity production and exchange, prematurely negate the constructive role of commodities, value, money and price is detrimental to developing socialist construction and is therefore incorrect." The textbook goes on to say, "Socialist commodity production must not only be retained, but must be de-

veloped to consolidate the economic link between China's industry and agriculture and between urban and rural areas in order to promote the development of socialist construction."⁸⁹

Chang Chun-chiao, one of Mao's closest comrades in arms (and a leader of the "Gang of Four" whose arrest signalled a reactionary coup in China after Mao's death) put it this way: "The wind of 'communisation' as stirred up by Liu Shao-chi and Chen Po-ta shall never be allowed to rise again. We have always held that, instead of having too much in the way of commodities, our country has not yet a sufficient abundance of them. So as long as the communes cannot yet offer a great deal to be 'communised' along with what the production teams and the work brigades would bring in, and enterprises under ownership by the whole people cannot offer a great abundance of products for distribution to each according to his needs among our 800 million people, we will have to continue practising commodity production, exchange through money and distribution according to work. We have taken and will continue to take proper measures to curb the harm caused by these things. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a dictatorship by the masses."⁹⁰

In other words, the point is not to enshrine money and commodity production, but to work to develop the political and material conditions for their abolition and not just "abolish" them in words while protecting the ac-

tual relations they represent.

NOTHING TO LOSE

There is another universally significant political lesson to be drawn from the Cambodian experience. Every country in the world is an enormous ball of contradictions in which the contradiction between socialised production (represented by the proletariat) and private appropriation (represented by the bourgeoisie) drives and/or intersects with a myriad of others. The class that really has nothing to lose is no less a minority in the imperialist countries than in the predominantly peasant ones. And yet by taking the interests and standpoint of the international proletarian revolution, the party has to rely on the poorest in society to unite the broadest number of people possible at any given moment to fight and ultimately overthrow the source of the ills that plague the vast majority, in that country and in the whole world. This means that the communists must unite with the class feelings of the most exploited and work to transform them into the liberating outlook of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Communists everywhere are grappling with this.

The words of the *Internationale*, "We want no condescending saviours/ To rule us from their judgement hall/ We workers ask not for their favours/ Let us consult for all" refer to the fact that no one else, with the best or worst intentions, can emancipate the world's labouring people. The concluding words, "The Internationale shall be the human race", signify that the proletariat can free itself only by doing away with all classes and everything that arises from them, or in other words, by freeing the human race.

THE PARTY

This brings us back to the question of the party. A party whose existence, line, policies and ideology is secret from the masses can only build a "socialism" whose secret is that it is capitalism.

The CPK was very small in relation to the task of leading millions of Cambodian masses in constructing a new society. Since there were only about 14,000 members and membership was frozen from Liberation until late 1977, only half the co-operatives at most had a Party branch.⁹¹ In a sense,

the Vietnamese had "robbed" the CPK by creating the conditions for its victory *too soon*, before the Party and the revolutionary movement were in a position to wield power, that is, to lead all of society. In China, the rapid achievement of socialism after liberation took place on the basis of two decades of people's war, in which the Party had been trained and tempered and vast sections of the masses transformed through the experience of agrarian revolution, revolutionary political power and armed struggle.

Yet it would have been a betrayal of the interests of the Kampuchean people and revolution internationally if the CPK had not taken power when it was all but thrust on them by force of circumstances. Without speculating on what might have been, it is clear that their approach needed to be the opposite of what it was: they had to take particular account of the always-necessary vision of revolution as a long-term process in which the communists must fight to transform conditions and neither bow to them nor ignore them. For instance, take Ieng Thirith's complaint that, "We controlled nothing but the factories [in the capital]", so often echoed after the debacle by other CPK leaders, including Pol Pot—a startling admission for a Party that had emptied the cities! Even if that was the situation, the problem for communists would be how to solve it. The Communist Party of the USSR, since it had emerged mainly in the biggest cities, faced a similar situation in the countryside. Transforming this situation would have meant developing particular policies based on investigating the actual needs and desires of various sections of the peasants and the people to be able to lead them forward step by step, while carrying out broad socialist education and training the most advanced to become Party members. Instead, because the CPK tried to use force to impose its views, like the sorcerer's apprentice it was soon overwhelmed by the workings of an objective world it could not understand nor, in the end, control.

How could there be any real communist leadership at all by a party kept *secret* from the masses? Such a party can lead in the bourgeois sense, of making decisions and co-ordinating their fulfilment, but how can it lead in the communist sense, without carrying

out the process of mass line, a back-and-forth of learning from the people and teaching the people, and without even explaining its policies, goals and ideology to the masses, winning them to that and in that way making its line a material force?

A proletarian party is a class party, not just in terms of its ideas, but in material terms. That is a major difference between it and conspiratorial revolutionary organisations of the bourgeois type (Blanquism). The ideology and the line of the party must correspond to the outlook and interests of the international proletarian revolution, but we are talking about something more than a group of men and women with socialist ideas. If it is not a conscious expression of a movement of a section of the masses who are being trained in communism, then it can hold some correct ideas and strive to move in a revolutionary direction, but it cannot even formulate the correct policies that would enable it to navigate amid the swirl of revolutionary struggle, let alone succeed in carrying out such policies. It will, at best, lose its bearings.

In the end, the CPK could be considered more a small circle than a party, not because of its size but because of its attitude. As Mao wrote, "Those who have this small circle mentality resist the idea of bringing all positive forces into play, of uniting with everyone that can be united with, and doing everything possible to turn negative factors into positive ones so as to serve the great cause of building a socialist society."⁹²

This does not mean that the CPK did not have a social base. It seems that the CPK had enthusiastic support from among the poorest peasants and especially the young men and women and adolescents among them, particularly downpressed in patriarchal Cambodian society. But instead of relying on the advanced to win over the people, this social base was appealed to in terms of their own immediate interests and given privileges over other sections of the people, who were simply subject to dictatorship, with little distinction between the former ruling classes and those they oppressed.

The same line arose several times in the course of the Chinese revolution, a "poor peasant" line that instead of mobilising the poor masses to unite the people, tried to appeal to their

most narrow feelings of rancour and self-interest, the kind of sentiments Lenin described as “they grabbed, now let me grab too” – the ideology of capitalism and a vehicle for a new class of exploiters.

The CPK wrote, “Concretely, we did not rely on the forces of the workers. The workers were the overt vanguard [i.e., in name], but in concrete fact they did not become the vanguard. In concrete fact, there were only peasants. Therefore we did not copy anyone....”⁹³ This is certainly true: in Mao’s China and in every other country where genuine people’s war has been waged ever since, the communists have paid great attention to recruiting and training proletarians for this task, and further, to relying on the propertyless to lead the broad strata of peasants by transforming their world outlook and helping them become socialist peasants with proletarian consciousness. The CPK’s absolute lack of interest in identifying key sections of the working class and training and recruiting revolutionary proletarians⁹⁴ went with an equal disinterest in training a section of the peasants in Marxism in any form, and especially not in the stand, method and line developed by the international proletariat.

But this did not make the CPK a peasant party either, although its views seem to have coincided to some extent with certain spontaneous tendencies among some peasants, especially a class hatred that should have been a door to training in all-around class consciousness. Instead, these sentiments were used against the peasants’ broad revolutionary interests.

Because the CPK could not apply the mass line to lead the people, because what it was trying to lead the people to do was, in fact, against their interests, it is not hard to see why they fell into imposing dictatorship over the people.

Mao was categorical about this: “Dictatorship does not apply within the ranks of people. The people cannot exercise dictatorship over themselves, nor must one section of the people oppress another. Law-breaking elements among the people will be punished according to law, but this is different in principle from the exercise of dictatorship to suppress enemies of the people. What applies among the people is democratic centralism. Our Constitu-

tion lays it down that citizens of the People’s Republic of China enjoy freedom of speech, of the press, assembly, association, procession, demonstration, religious belief, and so on. ... In advocating freedom with leadership and democracy under centralised guidance, we in no way mean that coercive measures should be taken to settle ideological questions or questions involving the distinction between right and wrong among the people.”⁹⁵

The CPK may have wanted to unite the people, if only because otherwise they could not stay in power. But they couldn’t. On the one hand, they turned a deaf ear to the Cultural Revolution and its theory and practice of “the all-around dictatorship of the proletariat”, through which the proletarian party leads the masses in wielding their political power to transform all of society, and on the other they had no conception whatever of the complexity, the enormous contradictoriness, of socialist society, and could not distinguish contradictions among the people (whose long-term interests are basically the same) from contradictions with the enemy (whose interests are antagonistic to those of the masses). One can find all sorts of references in their documents to “mass line”, “cadre going down to the people”, the need to “listen to the people” and especially “unite the people”. If we didn’t take this into account and judged them as identical to the reactionaries who ruled before and after them, we would be missing the point. The point is that they had an increasingly wrong line, and that line was more than just a wrong idea. It became an irresistible material force because it corresponded to the reactionary way the world is already organised.

In today’s world, no small producers or petit-bourgeois forces can establish their rule over any society, and all capitalist logic, big or small, must ultimately capitulate to the demands of imperialist capital. Perhaps, in its unique way, the CPK was on its way to establishing the kind of rule seen in many Third World countries in recent decades, where national bourgeois forces became bureaucrat capitalists, and where squeezing the peasants to extract surplus through state and other collective forms of exploitation goes hand in hand with a fundamental acquiescence to the world market.

PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM

In a document on Party history, the CPK held that while studying experiences of foreign parties had played a positive role in its development in the 1960s, “the Party has also had numerous bad experiences resulting from the learning and copying of foreign experiences. This learning often had bad results for the Party with regard to both large and small problems. On the one hand, it made us completely ignorant; on the other hand, it hindered and sometimes destroyed the revolutionary movement and progress in organising the Party. In this case, it is better to learn nothing from foreign experience.”⁹⁶ This was mainly a wrong summation of the relationship with the Vietnamese, but it is a slap at Mao’s China as well. The most important reason they didn’t want to learn anything from anyone else was that they didn’t like what was being taught. They rejected Mao’s line not because it was Chinese but because it represented an outlook and interests utterly different from their own. That’s why this problem seems to have become worse over time. While there are reports of cadre studying Mao and Stalin in the early days when the Party was casting around for a correct understanding, as it developed its own consolidated line there seems to have been much less of that.

One thing they may not have liked in Marxism is its ridicule of the concept of “national communism”. No party can represent the interests of the broad masses of the people of a country (which of course doesn’t mean that they can be won over all at once, or that there are not advanced, intermediate and backward among the masses) if they don’t represent those of the vast majority of the world’s people. As the *Manifesto* said, “In the national struggles of the proletarians of different countries, they [the communists] point out and bring to the fore the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of nationality.” Whether a party is leading a revolution in an oppressed country or an imperialist one, it is only one detachment of an international revolutionary proletarian movement whose goal is world communism.

As it was, for the people of the world and the Cambodian people alike, the country’s liberation was truly a vic-

tory wasted.

V. CAMBODIA'S FATE

Once the Pol Pot regime was overthrown, the US had no problem supporting its remaining army. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, international aid directed by the US helped sustain the thousands of fighters in the jungles of the western Cambodian border region and in refugee camps in Thailand.⁹⁷ For a decade, the US and its ever-subservient United Nations recognised the FUNK (the CPK's united front, of which Sihanouk was still the formal head) as the legal government of Cambodia.

Just as the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia might have gone on even longer if it hadn't been for the collapse of the Soviet bloc, so, too, American aid (and sponsorship in the UN) might have gone on much longer if it hadn't been for that same radically changed international context.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, not only has the US found no further use for the Khmer Rouge, it has some specific reasons to act otherwise. For one thing, because of its own efforts to brutally impose its interests through B-52s operating under various "humanitarian" banners, the US has more reason than ever to try to revise the history of Indochina, and indeed to paint itself as the main opponent of genocide instead of its main perpetrator in today's world. And for another, by demanding a trial of remaining CPK leaders, the US can better bring to heel the present government in Phnom Penh, led by former Eastern Zone commander Hun Sen for whom such a trial could be a problem and an embarrassment. (Once reviled as a "Khmer body with a Vietnamese mind", Hun is now supported by China.)

Famine continued to ravage Cambodia under Vietnamese occupation. The occupiers and their People's Republic of Kampuchea encouraged peasants to form "solidarity teams" to maintain the earthen waterworks built under the CPK and pursued some of its economic goals as well. The CPK's successor in power, the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party, called itself a continuation of the CPK founded, they declared, in 1951.

To facilitate Western support, and perhaps to bury their own past, in 1981 the CPK leadership announced the dis-

solution of their Party in favour of the united front against Vietnam.

Eventually they were to be deserted even by Sihanouk, in whose name they were supposedly fighting. In 1989, the US brokered a coalition government of old pro-US forces and new pro-Vietnam forces. Sihanouk became king and head of state again. His son, Prince Ranariddh, who does not seem to have enjoyed his father's support, jostled with Hun Sen for control for years, before Hun Sen ousted him in a coup in the late 1990s.

The fortunes of the Khmer Rouge had dwindled along with their reactionary foreign support. They maintained a few thousand soldiers and seemed to have some mass support. But they ended up little more than aimless rebels at best and bandits at worst. They lived by smuggling opium, gems and illegally-cut hardwood through Thailand. Without the support of the reactionary Thai government, they would have all but vanished. Then starting in the mid-1990s, they made a deal with Hun Sen. In return for their backing, he allowed them a certain resurgence and even some political power, this time as his silent partners in the reactionary "stabilisation" of Cambodia. Ieng Sary surrendered in 1996 and received a royal pardon. He was followed within the next two years by Khieu Samphan (Democratic Kampuchea's second head of state) and Party deputy secretary Nuon Chea, along with many of the surviving Paris-trained intellectuals who formed the initial core of Pol Pot's cadre and supporters.

The border town of Pailin (west of Battambang, in the old Northwestern Zone) and the region around it became their fiefdom, in the same way that much of provincial Cambodia is ruled by local warlords. Until his appointment by the central government, the governor of the region was a top Khmer Rouge military commander. The deputy governor is Ieng Sary's son. The region's soldiers and police are former Khmer Rouge fighters. Their old units and command structures are intact but now instead of black pyjamas these 2,000 men wear new government uniforms. Now many of the men on Honda motorcycles tearing up the dust are former guerrillas. The ex-CPK leadership rule over vast smuggling and "legitimate" business operations and their city, Pailin, boasts a Caesar International Casino (meant to

attract Thai businessmen), dozens of houses of prostitution, a bank and innumerable karaoke bars that cater to former guerrilla fighters. Ieng Sary and Khieu Samphan live in guarded villas overlooking the city.⁹⁸ Pol Pot died in April 1998 shortly after having been sentenced to life under house arrest by his former comrades. They invited a Western reporter to briefly interview him just before his death, in what was basically a "photo opportunity" to prove that they had disassociated themselves from him. In the internal struggle leading up to his arrest, Pol Pot had ordered the execution of the Party's military leader and 14 of his family members (Pol Pot was to explain later that the killing of Son Sen's infant grandchildren was unintended). The last historic CPK leader in the jungle, the Southwestern Zone chief Ta Mok, who overthrew Pol Pot, tried to negotiate his own surrender in 1999 but was arrested instead. He awaits trial, although by whom remains the object of contention between the US and Hun Sen. It is only fair to ask, then, just what the West has done with Cambodia in the decade since they got it back in their clutches.

The "industrialisation" of Cambodia is supposed to be the up side of the situation. As of January 1999, there were 110 legally recognised garment factories with 72,000 workers, and 39 more factories (110,000 new jobs) authorised to open shortly. US and EU policies give Cambodian products access to their domestic markets at reduced tariffs. But the capital, of course, is Western: the West gets the profit and Cambodians the pain. Wages for many workers in the booming garment industry were recently *reduced* from \$40 to \$30/month for a 48-hour work week. Even better-paid workers getting 80 cents an hour were cut back to 50 cents.

Cambodia still, it seems, hardly has its own currency; workers are paid in US dollars. In the context of the Asian financial crisis, this has penalised Cambodia severely, since currencies in Indonesia and Thailand have been devaluated against the dollar, leaving the country behind in the race for the cheapest labour.

The country's other major "industry" and a far bigger employer is prostitution: local and foreign exploiters prey on hundreds of thousands of prostitutes, mostly unemployed young women and men from the countryside.

Estimates run as high as 600,000, half of them HIV-positive. Cambodia has the fastest-growing rate of AIDS infection in Asia.

The situation of the 85% percent (out of a current population of 11.4 million) who still live in the countryside is more difficult to see from abroad, since they are of scant concern to imperialist-controlled media. One fact now widely known is that in a country where peasants once pulled many tonnes of fish from an acre of water, the fish are nearing extinction. Tonle Sap, the country's vast central lake, the biggest fresh water body in Southeast Asia, is silting up due to unrestrained logging operations for the Western luxury market. It has been reported that the country may become completely deforested in the next five years. Casinos on the lake front are pushing out the remaining fishing villages and fish breeding grounds. Relief agencies warn of the threat of massive famine.

Cambodia has become so literally a rubbish heap for imperialism that waste so toxic no other country will permit it is brought there. The seriousness of this was recently forced to the attention of the Western press when rioting broke out to protest the deaths of workers at one such enormous dump near the southwestern port of Sihanoukville, where Chinese weapons for the Vietnamese National Liberation Front were once unloaded.

The situation can be summed up like this: as a consequence of the US invasion and subsequent wars, Cambodia has a higher proportion of crippled people and amputees than any other country in the world. There is still no real medical system. The rail and road system destroyed by the US bombing was never rebuilt. Rice harvests never recovered. Half of the country's children are starving or chronically malnourished and the death rates for children at birth and before the age of five are among the world's highest.

The situation can also be summed up like this: politically under the tutelage of the UN, economically under the tutelage of the IMF, investment controlled directly and indirectly from the US and Europe, government a pro-imperialist coalition of every party that ruled Cambodia in the past half-century.

Nobody, of course, would ever call

this genocide or demand trials. It's just ordinary life under imperialism.

ENDNOTES

¹ This is why the US Congress and the Clinton administration appropriated millions of dollars for "Cambodian genocide" studies at a time when they were slashing research funding in general. One of the highest estimates for the number of dead was formulated by Ben Kiernan, a leading scholar in the field who once supported Vietnam and is now head of the US government-financed Yale University Cambodian Genocide Program. He subtracted certain estimates for the population of Cambodia in 1979 from those for its 1975 population and came up with the figure of 1.5 million people dead of starvation, disease and execution during the Democratic Kampuchea government. But these figures are highly problematic. Those were war years and such figures were not obtained by counting heads; further, the pro-US pre-1975 Cambodian government and the pro-Vietnamese post-1979 government had their reasons to exaggerate upward (in the first case) and downward (in the second). Even DK government figures given at various times are mutually inconsistent. Kiernan arbitrarily decided to accept the unsubstantiated (and unpublished) figures of a private researcher. Michael Vickery, who used CIA statistics, put the number of dead of all causes at 800,000. See Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime* (Yale University Press, 1996), p. 457; Vickery's claims are also cited and discussed here. In a 1997 interview, CPK leader Ta Mok told the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (23 October 1997), "It is clear that Pol Pot has committed crimes against humanity. I don't agree with the American figure that millions died. But hundreds of thousands, yes."

We do not accept the reactionary approach that would try to absolve one set of crimes by claiming that someone else's were bigger. But even in these terms – the sheer numbers of people murdered – the US is by far the biggest criminal. Their war on Indochina stands as one of the bloodiest crimes the world has ever seen. The US and its allies dropped three times as many bombs on Vietnam as fell in all of World War 2. They killed at least two million Vietnamese and created ten million refugees in that country. In Cambodia, the US installed a puppet government in 1970 and then sent in troops. B-52 carpet bombing raids went on almost without interruption for more than three years. Half a million tonnes of explosives and napalm devastated the countryside, unleashing unprecedented famine. That war killed a million Cambodians. Yet the Cambodia Genocide Program does not consider this part of its mission.

² The original assertion that the CPK was

Maoist came from the Soviets (Vladimir Simonov, *Kampuchea: Crimes of Maoists and Their Route* [Novosti, 1979]). Their motive, of course, was to tar Maoism and Mao's China by association. The USSR refused to break relations with the US-installed Lon Nol regime.

³ Kiernan, who does tend to paint the CPK as Maoist, admits, "Neither Pol Pot, nor Ieng Sary, Son Sen, Khieu Samphan, or anyone else in the CPK Center, however, is known to have expressed sympathy with the Cultural Revolution while it was occurring." (*PPR*, p. 127.) Another prominent scholar writes: "No evidence so far links the Cambodian party with China's radicals in the period 1965-1971." (Timothy Carney, "Unexpected Victory", in Karl D. Jackson, ed., *Cambodia 1975-1978: Rendezvous with Death* [Princeton University Press, 1989], p. 24.)

⁴ Interviews cited by Kiernan, *PPR*, p. 148.

⁵ "Summary of Annotated Party History", CPK Eastern Zone document, in Jackson, p. 264.

⁶ The facts are these:

"In late 1967, Pol Pot ran a CPK training school in the jungle of Cambodia's northeast. In nine days of political lectures, he rarely mentioned China and never the Cultural Revolution raging there. 'China is a big country,' he remarked at one point." (Kiernan, *PPR*, p. 127, citing an interview with a participant in this school.)

Just after taking power, in June 1975, Pol Pot made a secret trip to Hanoi and Peking and some accounts say he met with Mao. Nothing is known about this alleged meeting. After this, China gave Democratic Kampuchea extensive economic (but not military) aid.

When Mao died in September 1976, Democratic Kampuchea called for a five-day period of mourning. Pol Pot, who had just become Prime Minister, made a radio speech in which he described Mao as "the most eminent teacher since Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin". A message to the Chinese Party praised the Cultural Revolution against "the counter-revolutionary headquarters of Liu Shao-chi and Deng Xiaoping". (Kenneth Quinn, "Explaining the Terror", in Jackson, pp. 219-21; also Becker, pp. 277-8.)

Kiernan cites second-hand sources who say that during the year of intense struggle within the Communist Party of China following Mao's death, CPK leaders expressed their hatred for the "Gang of Four", Mao's closest comrades and successors whose arrest in 1977 marked Deng Xiaoping's revisionist coup. (*PPR*, pp. 155-6.) However, none of this is convincingly documented or given explicit political content, and so it can't be used as a pillar of serious analysis. Several writers have tried to link the Pol Pot regime to the

"Gang of Four" (and above all Mao) on the basis of alleged similarities between CPK policies and the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution in China; we will disprove that claim by examining and comparing those policies.

What is known without the shadow of a doubt is this: after Deng's coup, when he was still trying to pose as a revolutionary and rally support from communist parties that had looked to Maoist China, Pol Pot and the other CPK leaders came to Peking and literally embraced Deng at the airport. Pol Pot gave a speech in which the existence of the CPK was publicly revealed for the first time. Referring to the Party's history, he said, "We also learned from the experience of the world revolution and in particular Comrade Mao Tsetung's works and the experience of the Chinese revolution played an important role at the time." (Quinn, in Jackson, pp. 219-20.) But this was invoking Mao only to join hands with the betrayers of his legacy. The speech was broadcast over Chinese radio but not rebroadcast in Cambodia.

⁷ Most CPK documents, captured by the US or Vietnam, are only in Khmer, and even those translated are often not generally accessible. Many radio speeches (the major mass media in Democratic Kampuchea) were recorded and translated by the US government Foreign Broadcast Service. In referring to these two kinds of sources, we have cited primary researchers. In addition to the four complete CPK documents published in the previously-cited Jackson book, the most comprehensive and readily available set of CPK documents in English is David Chandler, Ben Kiernan and Chanthou Boua, eds. and translators, *Pol Pot Plans the Future: Confidential Leadership Documents from Democratic Kampuchea, 1976-1977* (Yale University Southeast Studies Monograph 33, 1988), which can be ordered by mail from Yale University Press, P.O. Box 208206, New Haven, CT 06520-8206, USA. A few can be downloaded from the Yale University Cambodian Genocide Program web site at www.yale.edu/cgp.

⁸ Cited in Elizabeth Becker, *When the War Was Over* (Simon and Schuster, 1986), p. 345. On this point also, see David Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History* (Yale University Press, 1991), p. 48.

⁹ Cited in Chandler, p. 87.

¹⁰ Becker, p. 97.

¹¹ "Summary of Annotated Party History", in Jackson, p. 257.

¹² Typically, Sihanouk put nationalised US businesses into the hands of his cronies. Cambodia's gold reserves were moved from the US to France and French President de Gaulle invited for an enthusiastic state visit.

¹³ Wilfred Burchett, one of the few Western journalists to report on the war from the point of view of the Vietnamese and who was privy to the thinking of the VWP, wrote that in 1967 he turned down a request that he write about an "armed struggle about to be launched against Sihanouk". "It was absurd to speak of a 'revolutionary situation' in Cambodia at that time." Wilfred Burchett, *At the Barricades* (London, 1979), p. 324.

¹⁴ 1977 Pol Pot speech, cited by Chandler, pp. 166-7.

¹⁵ *Provatt nei Pak Kommyunis Kampuchea* (History of the Communist Party of Kampuchea), mimeographed document said to be distributed by Ieng Sary in 1974, cited in Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power* (Verso/New Left Books, 1985), pp. 250-1.

¹⁶ Becker, p. 148.

¹⁷ Cited in Chandler, p. 224.

¹⁸ An area where American pilots could bomb or strafe any suspected enemy target without prior permission, which basically meant all people, animals, houses and fields outside government-held areas.

¹⁹ Government of Democratic Kampuchea, *Black Paper - Facts and Evidences of the Acts of Aggression and Annexation of Vietnam Against Kampuchea*, 1978.

²⁰ "The Last Plan", in Jackson, p. 301.

²¹ Kiernan, *HPPCP*, p. 362.

²² *Tung Padevat*, August 1975, translated by T.M. Carney and cited by Kiernan, *HPPCP*, p. 368-9.

²³ September 1978 speech by Pol Pot, cited by Becker, pp. 162-3.

²⁴ Interview with Thiounn Prasith cited by Becker, p. 163.

²⁵ For an analysis of the political and military line of the VWP through the late 1970s, see "Vietnam: Miscarriage of the Revolution", *Revolution* (Organ of the Central Committee of the RCP, USA), Vol. 4, No. 7-8, July/August 1979.

²⁶ Chandler, p. 234.

²⁷ Timothy Carney, "The Organization of Power", in Jackson, p. 35.

²⁸ Cited in Kiernan, *PPR*, p. 163.

²⁹ Cited by Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, *After the Cataclysm: Postwar Indochina and the Reconstruction of Imperial Ideology* (South End Press, 1979), p. 161.

³⁰ Embassy airgram of August 26, 1975, cited in Kiernan, *PPR*, p. 92.

³¹ Cited in Kiernan, *PPR*, p. 96.

³² Both cited in Chandler, p. 240.

³³ *Tung Padevat*, August 1975, cited in Kiernan, *PPR*, p. 94. Emphasis in original.

³⁴ While principally relying on its own forces, Cambodia received important aid from China during the war and after it as well. (The first shipload of food supplies from China arrived less than a week after liberation. By mid-September, China offered \$1 billion in interest-free economic aid, including a \$20 million outright gift - the most aid China ever gave any one country. Statistics from *China Quarterly*, quoted in Kiernan, *PPR*, p. 129.

³⁵ Interviews cited by Kiernan, *PPR*, p. 148.

³⁶ CPK document "Examine the Control", cited by Kiernan, *PPR*, p. 147.

³⁷ "Sharpen the Consciousness of the Proletarian Class to Be as Keen and Strong as Possible," *Tung Padevat*, in Jackson, pp. 271-9.

³⁸ "On the Control and Implementation of the Political Line of Gathering Forces for the Party's National Democratic Front", 22 September 1975, cited in Kiernan, *PPR*, p. 16.

³⁹ Kiernan, *PPR*, p. 458.

⁴⁰ "Sharpen the Consciousness", p. 278.

⁴¹ See "Pay Attention to Pushing the Work of Building Party and People's Collective Strength Even Stronger", in Jackson, especially p. 296.

⁴² This description of ethnic Vietnamese who had lived in Cambodia for generations, in the same way as many Cambodians lived in Vietnam, could have been taken from Lon Nol's fascist propaganda, but in fact it comes from the DK government's *Black Paper*.

⁴³ Becker, pp. 262-3.

⁴⁴ "Manifesto of the Communist Party", in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, Robert Tucker, ed. (W.W. Norton & Co, 1972), p. 337.

⁴⁵ "Examine the Control", cited in Kiernan, *PPR*, pp. 98-9.

⁴⁶ Literally. This plan and related political documents are in *Pol Pot Plans the Future*.

⁴⁷ See "Notes on the Political Economy of Cuba", *A World To Win* nos. 14 and 15 (1990/1991).

⁴⁸ "Excerpted Report on the Leading Views of the Comrade Representing the Party Organization at a Zone Assembly", in *PPPF*, p. 25. Note that this plan was discussed within the Party for a time, although the Party's existence was still secret.

⁴⁹ Interview with Ieng Thirith, Becker, p. 247.

⁵⁰ "Report of Activities of the Party Centre According to the General Political Tasks of 1976," *PPPF*, p. 197.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁵² Ibid., p. 206.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 182.

⁵⁴ Mao Tsetung, "On the Question of Agricultural Cooperatives", *Selected Readings* (Foreign Languages Press, 1971), p. 399.

⁵⁵ "Report", *PPPF*, p. 205.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 207.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 184-5.

⁵⁸ Interview with Becker, p. 247.

⁵⁹ Interview with Becker, p. 245.

⁶⁰ So Phim had purged the Cambodian returnees from Vietnam, which is a counter-argument to the charge that he was a simple Vietnamese tool, but there did seem to be a dispute between the Eastern Zone and the Party centre over how to deal with Vietnam.

⁶¹ It should be noted that this document concludes that in light of these "hidden enemies" and "networks" within the Party, its existence should remain secret. "Enemies also want us to emerge so that they can observe us clearly, and so they can proceed to accomplish their long-term objectives. The emergence of the Party poses the problem of defending the leadership. Back in September and October, we had thought to emerge also, but since that time documents have revealed that enemies have tried to defeat us by using every possible method..." The conclusion was "to defer our decision on the emergence of the Party". The argument that revealing the Party's existence would endanger its leadership is made less convincing by the fact that by this time Pol Pot and the other top Party leadership were now publicly identified as running the government. What was secret was both that they were supposed to be communists and the existence of the Party itself.

⁶² Interview with Becker, p. 275

⁶³ Charles H. Twining, "The Economy", in Jackson, p. 145.

⁶⁴ Interview with Becker, p. 275.

⁶⁵ "Duch" became a born-again Christian in 1992 and spent the next few years working under an assumed name for the UN and NGOs in western Cambodia. In May 1999 he gave extensive interviews to *Far Eastern Economic Review* writer Nat Thayer (*FEER*, 13 May 1999.)

⁶⁶ Mao, "Main Points of the Resolution of the Political Bureau", *Selected Works*, Vol. 5 (Foreign Languages Press, 1977), p. 46.

⁶⁷ "Summary of Annotated Party History", in Jackson, p. 251 ff.

⁶⁸ *PPPF*, p. 4.

⁶⁹ Within that, there are some tactical questions. It was not wrong for China to en-

courage Sihanouk to act against the US, particularly insofar as Sihanouk did provide concrete aid to the anti-imperialist war. China also provided aid to the CPK, long before and at the time of liberation, and there is no evidence that they ever pressured the CPK to follow suite on China's state-to-state policy. The CPK itself later held that it had concentrated its political fire on Sihanouk's prime minister Lon Nol and his coup preparations, and not on the prince himself during the last year of that period. (*Black Paper*)

⁷⁰ "Abbreviated Lessons," *PPPF*, p. 220.

⁷¹ Nat Thayer, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 23 October 1997.

⁷² "Pay Attention to Pushing the Work of Building Party and People's Collective Strength Even Stronger", in Jackson, p. 296.

⁷³ A BBC recording cited by Kiernan, *PPR*, pp. 393-4.

⁷⁴ Becker, pp. 431-2.

⁷⁵ Quoted in Becker, p. 440.

⁷⁶ "Manifesto of the Communist Party", in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, Robert Tucker, ed. (W.W. Norton & Co., 1972), pp. 335-62.

⁷⁷ *Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement* (Keralam, India, 1998), p. 35.

⁷⁸ "The Party's Four Year Plan to Build Socialism in All Fields", *PPPF*, p. 46.

⁷⁹ "The Party's Four Year Plan", p. 45.

⁸⁰ Mao, "On the Question of Agricultural Cooperatives", p. 409.

⁸¹ *Maoist Economics and the Revolutionary Road to Communism: The Shanghai Textbook*, Raymond Lotta, ed. (Banner Press, 1994), pp. 24-5. Translation of the 1975 Chinese textbook *Fundamentals of Political Economy*.

⁸² See Lotta's introduction to *Maoist Economics*, p. xliii.

⁸³ "On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party", *Selected Works*, vol. 1, p. 111.

⁸⁴ Speech by Pol Pot, "Let Us Continue to Firmly Hold Aloft the Banner of the Victory of the Glorious Communist Party of Kampuchea In Order to Defend Democratic Kampuchea, Carry On Socialist Revolution and Build up Socialism," cited in Becker, p. 198.

⁸⁵ The 1976 plan says, "We must provide the people with 50-100 percent of their material necessities from 1977 on." ("The Party's Four Year Plan", p. 111.) This represents such stunning indifference to whether or not people lived or died that it's not hard to understand why the plan was kept a secret. The IMF and the World

Bank make similar calculations, but their language is less frank.

⁸⁶ *Textbook*, p. 21.

⁸⁷ Cited in *Textbook*, p. 9.

⁸⁸ The 1976 plan put off the manufacture of insecticides and medicines until the end of the four-year period. Although the plan mentions mobilising traditional medicine, there seems to have been no effort to do so scientifically; rather people were often given remedies without regard to whether they cured or killed. China offered to send "barefoot doctors" to share its experiences of combining traditional and modern medicine, but as with other such offers from China, the regime was not anxious to allow outsiders into the villages.

⁸⁹ *Textbook*, p. 109.

⁹⁰ Chang Chun-chiao, "On Exercising All-Round Dictatorship Over the Bourgeoisie", in *And Mao Makes Five: Mao Tsetung's Last Battle*, Raymond Lotta, ed. (Banner Press, 1978), p. 219.

⁹¹ *PPR*, p. 313. For the CPK's views on the party, see "Sharpen the Consciousness".

⁹² "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People", *Selected Readings*, p. 461.

⁹³ "Abbreviated Lesson on the History of the Kampuchean Revolutionary Movement Led by the Communist Party of Kampuchea", in Jackson, p. 219.

⁹⁴ The report speaks of the political situation among the factory workers as "too complicated" to allow them to remain in the urban areas, and refers to "people from the lower layers who have recently emerged from the cities" as "too diverse" to be trusted. The conclusion is that they, like the "upper layers of society", should not be allowed to enter the leadership of the co-operatives or given political rights. This, incidentally, is in a section discussing the danger of "buried enemy networks"! ("Report of Activities of the Party Center According to General Political Tasks of 1976", *PPPF*, p. 208.)

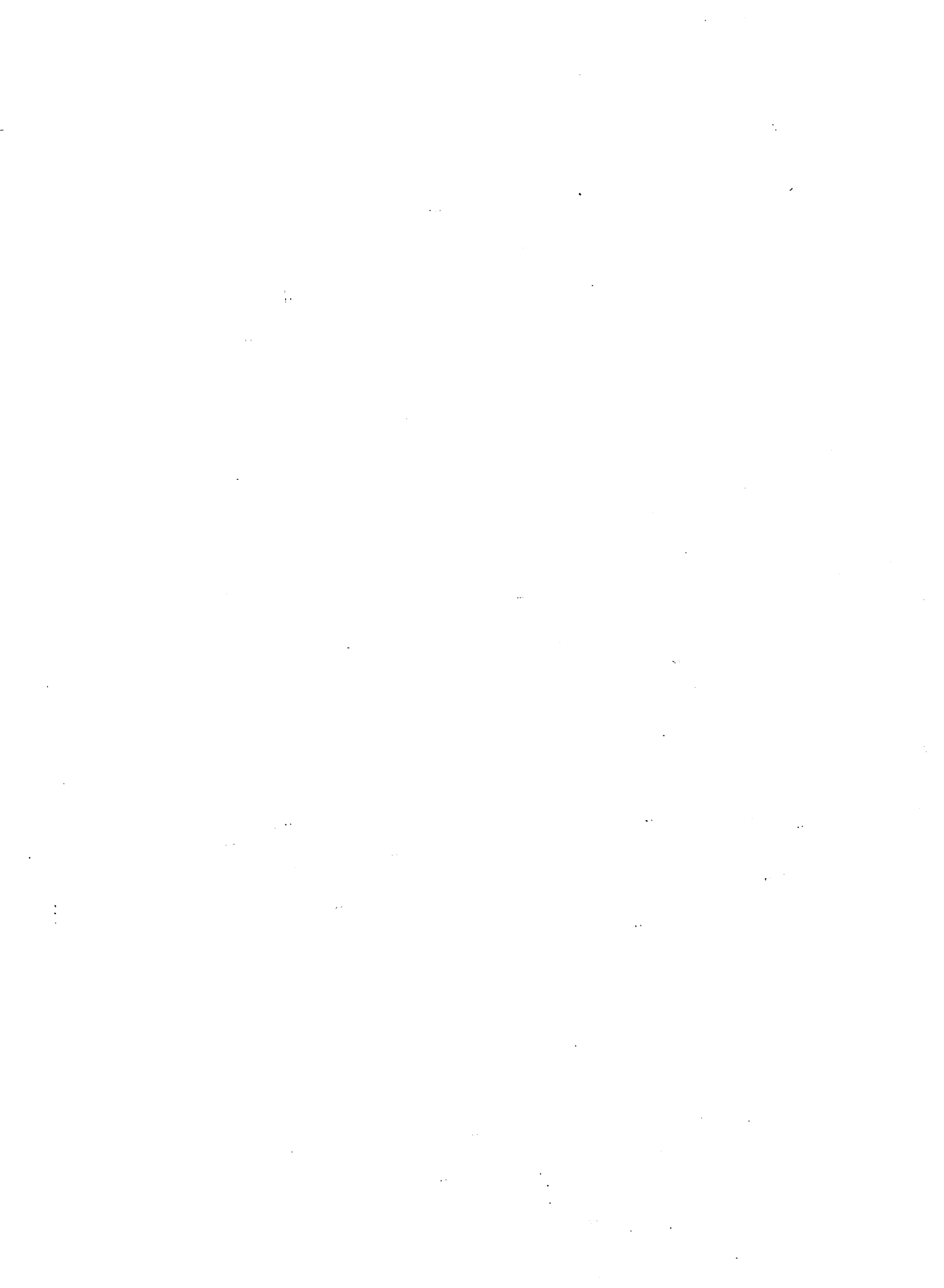
⁹⁵ "On the Correct Handling...", pp. 436 & 438.

⁹⁶ "Summary of Annotated Party History", Jackson, p. 264.

⁹⁷ As the US government's Brzezinski hinted. See Becker, p. 440.

⁹⁸ See *The New York Times*, 24 July and 28 December 1998, and *The Sunday Times* (London) 19 April 1998. ■

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