



Discussion Bulletin

Published by
SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY
873 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003

Vol. 27, No. 8
August 1969

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THOUGHTS ON THE HISTORY OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION AND THE PRESENT
DISCUSSION OF MAOISM

By Jan Garrett

1. Introduction

Following are observations which I feel are strongly pertinent to the discussion on China and Maoism. They are numbered primarily for purposes of separation and not because of an inherent, logical order. I do not claim to give a complete or rounded position on the Chinese Revolution or the present debate. All I attempt to do here is bring out certain aspects of the struggle for a rounded position which, I believe, must be taken into account to make that struggle as successful as possible.

Readers may be forewarned that I support the general approach of the United Secretariat majority on the China question and perhaps they will speculate on the degree to which the observations made here "flow logically" from that general approach. This article, however, contains my own formulations and nobody else can be blamed for them, though where they are correct, that is due primarily to the usefulness of the Marxist method.

Realizing the extent to which these thoughts have been composed on my own, I have intentionally tried to reduce to a minimum any recourse to polemical hyperbole. That one or two such instances may remain, I am regretful. But these should be ironed out in the discussion.

The first part of this article deals with "ancient" history, which would be ignored by pragmatists but Marxists might find it food for thought.

2. Historical Note

The Chinese Revolution poses big theoretical problems for all but the most solidly grounded students of history because China was the first country to take the post-capitalist road which had not undergone anything like the normal bourgeois development of the West. Eastern Europe and Russia had experienced a belated and distorted development of capitalism, under the influence of Western Europe, but China had progressed under her own tightly knit productive apparatus; she had resisted the "gradual" encroachment of capitalism to much later. Consequently, when a Chinese middle class began to think of imitating the capitalist West, the latter was so far ahead that the Chinese could never catch up. (Japan's development was unlike that of China and more similar to pre-revolutionary Russia.)

Marx called the tightly knit mode of production in China and elsewhere in

the East the "Asiatic mode of production," because that is where it predominated, although we find it in ancient Egypt and it was extended by the Arabs across North Africa as far as Sicily and Spain.

Its characteristics were (1) the sedentary village community, where a clan system is based on the land and a patriarchal extended family structure relates each person to every other village member; (2) an intimate relationship between agriculture and village artisan industry, facilitating the rise of very intensive agriculture and a dense rural population; (3) the general absence of private property in land -- that is, most land is not salable, remaining with the village or in the name of the Emperor; (4) an omnipresent State, with a vast civil service or mandarin caste which governs the entire area and supervises the building and repair of vast irrigation works, canals, dikes, aqueducts, etc. on which the high productivity of the society ultimately rests.

The clan system of primitive communism attains its most favorable variant in Asiatic society, where a large element of rank-and-file equality is still preserved. This, however, is combined with rigid bureaucratic formalities at the top.

The mandarin caste starts out as servants of the people, keeping the local patriarchs, who might incline to turn themselves into feudal-type lords, and merchants, who might incline to become parasitic usurers, in check. But the very social harmony and peace made possible by the mandarin dictatorship at the State level leads to a luxuriant growth of the social product, whose expanding surplus the illiterate villagers cannot expect to control. The result is the temptation of the mandarins, which in turn leads to their degeneration, the relaxation of the restrictions on usury and landlordism. Social tensions grow, as these elements try to grind the masses into serfdom.

Time and again, the masses resist this process and in their resistance they find sympathetic elements in the mandarin or merchant classes to lead them. Revolts break out, leading to a peasant war. The old, corrupted dynasty is overthrown and a new, reform dynasty is established. The waterworks which fell into disrepair during the degeneration of the previous regime and the civil war are once again set in order, creating the preconditions for the reoccurrence of the cycle. And that is exactly what happens.

Stalinism and those who follow it in matters of sociology are incapable of understanding the Chinese Revolution because they abolished the "Asiatic mode of production" in 1929. But we too can go wrong if we do not grasp the different historic underpinning of the Chinese Revolution and how it, along with the Indo-chinese Revolution, differs from anything that could happen in Europe. We would, for one thing, give too much credit to the Maoist Red Army if we supposed that it differed fundamentally in the pre-1949 period from those peasant armies that had gone before.

The Preconditions of the Agrarian Revolution in China

Some historians of technology and social evolution have argued, convincingly I think, that the mode of production in precapitalist China brought that country the farthest along the road of technical progress before the rise of industrial capitalism in the West. Its irrigation and intensive agriculture supported the most densely populated rural areas in the world.

The arrival of commercial capitalism and the first assaults of imperialism, however, ended all the Asiatic harmony and dynastic monotony and threw the country into a crisis of combined development (actually development-retrogression) that was a product of its own past as well as capitalism's world Present.

Once capitalism started to invade, greatly weakening the Central Power and giving rise thereby to all the contradictions of commercial greed and rural landlordism, even the most determined mass movements of peasants along ancient lines could not overthrow the existing power and create a new, cleansed dynasty. There were valiant attempts, like the Taiping and Boxer Rebellions, but they were put down -- not by the Emperor but by the imperialists whose captive he was. It required a drastic weakening of imperialism to the degree of the post-World War II period before such a peasant-based revolt could again be successful.

The peasantry of the East is characterized by the fact that it has, by and large, no long heritage of individualism like the peasants of Western Europe. Many European peasants developed on a freehold basis in the pores of the Middle Ages, similarly to and under the pressure of the towns. Others were established on that basis following such events as the Great French Revolution.

Moreover, the growth of capitalism progressively affected the bulk of the peasants in Europe from the beginning of the 18th century at least. The unemployed on the land were drawn into the cities

there to beg for a slightly higher standard of living than they would have had in the country; eventually they found their way into the rising industrial system or else they emigrated to America. The peasants remaining on the land were freed of the burden of supporting the unemployed and, after a period of time, they had nothing to fear from feudalism, for capitalism had won the day definitively.

When 19th century commercial capitalism broke the Great Commercial Wall of the Asiatic mode of production, the intensive agriculture, intimately connected as it had been with village handicrafts, was destroyed. The country masses plummeted into misery. The living standard of the majority dropped. Lack of capital forced the incipient capitalists and landlords, now freed of the restraint of the Central Power and desirous of obtaining the commodities the world market offered, to subject the masses to a grinding serfdom and semislavery. Accumulation of capital, in this primitive stage, comes to mean in effect accumulation of human capital: Men become virtual beasts of burden. The actual overpopulation of the countryside facilitated this just as urban unemployment often gives the bosses more power to bully their workers. Even the industrial growth of the cities on the coast during the first World War did not alleviate the rural overpopulation.

The "feudalism" that arose now was not the "natural economy" kind of the early European Middle Ages, which was distinguished by a relative absence of markets and the very sporadic character of trade, and where the lord-serf relation had a protective as well as exploitative content. This feudalism was the kind that appears first wherever an untrammelled commercial situation arises in a previously "natural" or limited-trade economy, before the penetration of manufacturing or industrial capitalism.

Thus, the peasant war that shook China beginning in the '20's had -- like its predecessors -- many of the characteristics of a great slave revolt.

The opposition of the Maoist Chinese Communist Party to the rural "slavery" (i.e., the extremely brutal degeneration of the Asiatic mode of production subjugated by the commercial extension of imperialism) provided them with a mass following and the Red Army with fighters. It put them in close touch with a semi-proletarian layer that could be mobilized constantly to defend them when the Kuo-mintang tried to exterminate them and restore its rule in alliance with that slavery. These masses, once in motion, tended to grow over into a permanent struggle against landlordism and rural

capitalism.

In trying to establish the Stalinist character of the CCP by proving that it was "counterrevolutionary" through and through, we sometimes sound as though we think the CCP must have supported this "slavery." This is absurd on the face of it. They were against it. But this did not make them feel the principled necessity of carrying even the rural class struggle through to the end, even against the landlords.

3. Mobilization of the Masses -- the Decisive Factor?

It is impossible here to discuss all the different theories that have been developed or called upon to determine the social character of revolutionary China. Suffice it to say that, in characterizing China as a deformed workers state, we ended up using some of the same criteria that we had just previously criticized Pablo for using when he had come to a similar conclusion: that is (1) nationalization of the bulk of the heavy industry; (2) taking over of the banks by the state; (3) a fairly thorough attack on precapitalist privileged strata; (4) state monopoly of foreign trade; and (5) destruction of the old administrative apparatus and the army.

The Wohlforthites and the theoreticians of state capitalism, however, argue that several of the criteria I mentioned previously have been fairly well accomplished in several Asian or African countries by forces Marxists are hardly inclined to regard as working-class, that is, left-leaning militarists such as Nasser.

This is complicated by the fact that an apparent "state monopoly of foreign trade" often arises on the basis of economic isolationism. This autarchy was not an unfamiliar occurrence in the post-World War II colonial world, in countries where the peasantry have been so plundered by imperialism and/or devastated by interimperialist war that there is virtually no surplus product to trade any more. If a military group seized power here and proclaimed their own monopoly of import-export, they would have little trouble maintaining it for a period, until things quieted down and once again a growth of surplus product would interest imperialist investors. Having no independent class force with which to back themselves up, the militarists end up selling their country's products to imperialism under the same old unfavorable prices. Such was the situation in Burma, as I understand it, and in Egypt and finally Algeria.

How then distinguish China, where the urban working class played no role in the victorious revolution, from Egypt or

Burma?

One important difference that sets apart some examples of "statism" in the colonial world from that of China is the fact that the Red Army of the Chinese CP succeeded in smashing the army of the previous regime and replacing it as the basis of the social order. But Algeria proved that even the relatively total replacement of one military machine by another formed in the process of a peasant-based liberation struggle was no guarantee of a transition to a workers state.

The following hypothesis, which I am advancing on my own (for lack of a better one), gives a qualitative addition to the earlier-mentioned criteria for placing China in the camp of the workers states: the perpetual mobilization and sense of participation of the masses, not the working class on a class basis, to be sure, but the poor peasants and youth (technically pre- or semi-proletarian). Unless we grant this mobilization and its general continuity (with ups and down) as the basis for placing China in the revolutionary camp as distinguished from Egypt, Indonesia, Burma, Algeria, etc., then are we not almost in the arms of the state capitalist theoreticians, who end by denying any positive overall gains for world revolution since the Second World War?

The Third Chinese Revolution started as a typically Asiatic peasant war. It became one with the permanent revolutionary process not by immediately linking up with the Chinese workers of the coast (the Maoists prevented this process from taking place in a direct fashion), but its objective interconnection with the post-World War II strike wave and revolts and the uninterrupted wave of national liberation struggles that shook the colonial world beginning at the end of the war. This objective interrelation distinguished China's revolution from all previous peasant-based antidynastic uprisings and wars.

The fact of China's continuing mass mobilization also distinguishes it from the Soviet Union and the Eastern Europe states that originated as the military extension of the USSR.

This fact underlies all of China's subsequent problems, too. From the very beginning the Chinese Revolution had to progress economically and it had to do this without demobilizing the masses, since this mobilization and the masses' sense of participation was the mainstay of the power. The bureaucracy feared, on the one hand, to mobilize the workers as a class for itself (through real Soviets) -- this would mean the end of the bureaucracy. They feared, on the other hand,

the demobilization of the masses -- this would mean the end of the Chinese Revolution and its possible counterrevolutionary reduction to the level of the bureaucratic capitalist states of the colonial world. If the masses should be demobilized, fundamentally, in the sense of as great a demoralization as the Soviet workers suffered in the Stalin counterrevolution, China might well cease to be a workers state, because the country's economic level is too low to withstand by itself the onslaughts and pressures of imperialism.

China's perpetual mobilization distinguishes it from Egypt and Burma, where mass passivity in the face of the rulers is the condition of normality.

In the absence of, and partly as a counter for, the workers' democratic system of councils, itself a method of perpetual mobilization, the Chinese CP leaders have artificially revived a now-and-then lagging mass mobilization. The last completely genuine mass mobilization was experienced in the fight against U.S. imperialism in the Korean War of 1950-53. The artificially ignited mobilizations are the Great Leap Forward (People's Communes) movements of 1958-1961 and the so-called Cultural Revolution of 1965-68. The periodicity of these mobilizations suggests something on the order of an historical law.

If the Communes and the "Cultural Revolution" had not been initiated by the bureaucracy, another form of civil war might well have erupted. It would certainly have been in less muted form -- between the proletariat and its allies on the one side and a new bourgeoisie arising in the rich peasantry and the administrative bureaucracy on the other. Trotsky always admitted this possibility for the USSR (The SWP insisted on it as late as 1953!) and it holds even truer for China. The reason this result did not appear imminent in the "Cultural Revolution" is that the entire bureaucracy's existence is based on allowing neither force to precipitate as a class for itself (that is, in this context, with its own vanguard party), and since the bureaucracy has the power and the initiative, it made its move first. At any rate, that's how I understand it.

4. China and Eastern Europe -- Two Roads?

The original development of scientific and critical thought in a society in which the masses are poor and where there is no Bolshevik party can come in only one way: through the privileged strata that have the leisure time to develop this critical thought. Indeed, this was the case with Marx and Engels. Thus, it is no accident that in China the first ones to develop a meaningful cri-

tique of the regime were the materially privileged academicians of Peking University. In fact, they were one of the most privileged layers of the population!

When the Mao clique organized sections of the masses to attack these academicians, they did so on the basis of demagogically solving one contradiction (the material privilege of the academic layer) with another (eradicating the more clear-sighted social critics and their organizations).

* *

The meaning of mass mobilization becomes apparent when one contrasts the deformed workers states of the East with those of the West. Just as Comrade Hansen warned, in 1955, about the dangers of granting the label "deformed workers state" to China on the basis of the institutional criteria used in E. Europe or the USSR, so it is even more dangerous to view political struggles in China through eyeglasses trained in Eastern Europe.

With the exception of the Yugoslav partisan movement, the only mass mobilizations of Eastern Europe since World War II are the mobilizations of the masses in the antibureaucratic struggle. The normal condition of life in these states is mass apathy and a grumbling jealousy of the Western standard of living that appears to the superficial as anticommunism. But the dialectic of events has shown that Marxism revives to the extent that the perspective of mass movement arises, because Marxism alone is the optimistic science of revolution and democracy.

Mass mobilization is, on the other hand, a precondition for survival for China. Whatever perspective is outlined for political revolution in China, it could not be based on defense of individuals living in privileged conditions, where their critiques (often very profound) are developed separately from the masses. This cannot be seen as a major means for the revival of Marxism there, whereas in Eastern Europe, Marxism is being initially revived in exactly this fashion. (Many of the radical-revolutionary Soviet and Eastern European anti-Stalinists are sons and daughters of bureaucrats of the Stalin and Khrushchev era.)

Where will the revolutionaries come from? In Comrade Maitan's words:

"...there is no doubt that among the Red Guards and the 'revolutionary rebels' conceptions much closer to revolutionary Marxism than to Maoism developed. It is in each case among the most important detachments of the youth engaged in the August-September 1966 movements and the workers who unleashed the strikes of

January-February 1967 that the cadres of the antibureaucratic revolution will arise, for a real democratic socialist restructuring of the Chinese workers state. (Report to the World Congress, Intercontinental Press, Vol. 7, No. 26, p. 714.)

* *

On the basis of these observations, one might hypothesize why genuine Trotskyists like Germain and Maitan had not previously used the term political revolution with reference to China. Never hiding the ultimate goal of a system of workers, farmers and soldiers councils in the statements of the International Secretariat or the United Secretariat regarding the tasks of the Chinese Marxists, they left open certain implications of the more exact character of the struggle to establish the Chinese Revolution on a firm proletarian basis. If they omitted the term political revolution, was this perhaps because they wanted to avoid confusing the character of the antibureaucratic struggle in China with that in Russia and Eastern Europe, where the Hungarian Revolution had set a definitive example? (It would be instructive to know the reasoning.) With the advent of the "Cultural Revolution," it is now easier to see how the Chinese antibureaucratic revolution can come about -- through a process of going beyond the initial limits of a bureaucratically-initiated mobilization.

5. A Reply to a Critic of the Mobilization Hypothesis

A comrade pointed out that, abstractly speaking, mobilization of the masses is an empty vessel -- it depends on the content of this mobilization. He cited cases of Stalin's mobilization of sectors in Russia against the Left Opposition; I will cite a more recent example where, in Poland, the bureaucracy tried to mobilize the workers against the anti-Stalinist students through the use of anti-intellectual and anti-Semitic innuendoes.

The meaning of a mobilization is understandable only in its total context. Our fight to keep the antiwar movement in the streets -- even at times when the slogan "Bring the Troops Home Now" was not preeminent; even at times when the mass of the demonstrators hardly are the core of the industrial proletariat -- can be understood only in the context of its objectively anti-imperialist character.

The Maoist-initiated mobilization in China inevitably had contradictory aspects. It would be a crime to deny the negative sides of anti-intellectualism, the adulation of Mao Tsetung Thought, the disruption of scientific research and the

work of the trained cadres, the great expense to the workers state of the Red Guard movements, the worsening of relations with the USSR, the negative example with regard to institutionalized democracy. But the themes of equalitarianism, of rank-and-file control, of constant vigilance against material privilege play a progressive role insofar as they are freed from, or have a life independent of, the negative sides. These themes as a basis for mobilization would be praiseworthy: If they weren't so badly mixed up with the negative sides, we would be forced to come to Comrade Capa's conclusion of critical support to the initiators of the Chinese "Cultural Revolution" against their bureaucratic opponents. For these themes are necessary to the survival of the Chinese workers state.

6. What About the Moreno Thesis?

As part of Fifty Years of World
(continued on page 7)

Revolution, our movement published an article by Nahuel Moreno on "The Chinese and Indo-Chinese Revolutions." In this article, Moreno advances a theory to explain the class agency of the Chinese social revolution. He demonstrates that it is possible to view the Chinese poor peasantry as rural unemployed, that is, as part of the international and Chinese-national reserve labor army, and thus as part of the proletariat broadly conceived. If this answers, in part, the necessity for the leading role in the revolution to belong to a proletarian class, it also brings us closer to answering the question of why the workers state is so deformed, so tentative, etc. from the point of view of advanced industrial-proletarian political and economic institutions.

Moreno explicitly states that this theory is his own and is not necessarily shared by the rest of the world Trotskyist movement.

In addition, he gives a history of the Chinese Revolution that makes a very good case for the relative independence of the Maoist CP from the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy. He argues convincingly that the Maoists usually accepted the Stalinist line, rather than being materially controlled by the Kremlin, and in a few crucial cases followed another line in practice. He tries to show how the Maoist CP could ride the revolutionary wave to power in a manner no party directly controlled by Moscow has ever done. Moreno would probably agree with the inference of the document "Dynamics of World Revolution" that the CCP was a "blunt instrument" used in the process of the revolution.

I would like to know what the supporters of the SWP draft resolution on China think of the Moreno article. It should be possible to separate an appreciation of the article from agreement or disagreement with the particular tactic the comrade recommends for intervention in the "Cultural Revolution." (I do not agree with critical support to the Maoists against Liu Shao-chi, either.)

What, if anything, is wrong with the historical distinction Moreno makes between Stalinism and Maoism? Can the leaders of the SWP write a more accurate popular history of the Chinese Revolution that contains the point of view of the "hard line" on Maoism? What is preventing us from republishing the Moreno article in pamphlet form and selling it as widely as we once did our basic Cuba pamphlets??

Moreover, ought we not to note the difference between the role of the CCP as a "blunt instrument" used in the revolution from the role of the Spanish CP which became a "sharp instrument" to stab

the Spanish Revolution in the back?

7. An Objectivist Theory, An Accident Theory, or Philosophical Dualism?

If we reject the Moreno thesis and muddle along as many SWP members have been doing on the question of the Chinese Revolution, we stand in good chance of utilizing one or more of the following theories.

A. The Objectivist Theory. So great was the post-World War II anti-imperialist revolutionary wave that the CCP, although it was counterrevolutionary through and through, could not stop the revolution from succeeding although the CCP certainly did everything it could. In effect, the CCP's efforts to stop the revolution and behead it were "neutralized." According to this theory, the Chinese Revolution had no "head", not even a muddled one.

B. The Accident Theory. A series of unique events occurred to force the CCP to take power and carry out a social overturn. Chiang accidentally refused to listen to his American advisers and insisted on prosecuting the war against the Communists; they had to fight back and even arm the people. And finally, Truman, who wasn't very bright, became determined to push the Korean War up to the Yalu River and the Stalinist CP, to shore up their rear, finally established a workers state. In this accident theory, the understanding of Marxists that all unique events are conjunctural syntheses of general laws of historic motion is obliterated.

C. Eclectic Dualism. In this theory, if such it can be called, the "counterrevolutionary" nature of the Maoist CP (the subjective factor) is emphasized over and over again, up to and including the process of the revolution itself. Between the constant process of Maoist-Stalinist "betrayal" and the somewhat ignored objective processes of revolution (which even they admit exist), there appear to be no intervening processes! Unfortunately, this appears to be the "theory" of the Chinese Revolution that some of our "hard-liners" on Maoism appear to hold. It can hardly satisfy anybody intellectually and stands quite a distance away from the full power of Marxism. I used the word "appears" because perhaps these comrades do have a unified theory of the Chinese Revolution, which they have neglected to tell us about, that will resolve these apparent contradictions.

About these three theories of the Chinese Revolution, all I will say now is: Can't we do better???

8) On Definitions of Stalinism and Maoism

In the Chicago branch discussion on the multi-national Leninist party, Gus H. made the observation that we use the term Marxist in two senses -- a broad sense and a narrow, specific one (which applies, most strictly, to organized Trotskyists). A similar two-pronged definition of Stalinism might be useful: The most scientific, strictly limited definition applies to the bureaucratic caste in the Soviet Union formed in the period of retreat and defeat for the working class as well as the CP's whose policies are hinged on fundamental subordination to that bureaucratic caste.

But the Stalinist practices of CP's which do not follow the Soviet bureaucracy and of leaderships of independent workers states such as China fall in the second, broader definition: In this sense we may speak of a world crisis of Stalinism. We may even say that "Maoist Stalinism is a variant on the old Stalinism," leaving for later explanation the fact that Maoism reflects other pressures to which Stalin rarely, if ever, adapted. In other words, it is permissible to use the term Stalinist to describe those Maoist practices which coincide with the practices of Stalinism, thus giving the term a certain meaning in regard to formations which also reflect more recent, more positive pressures than Stalinism did in its heyday.

Now, on the question of the "bureaucratic centrism" of the Maoist leadership: Until I heard a direct report from the world congress, it was not at all obvious to me that this characterization was involved as a central point of the dispute. (It hardly stood out in the documents the way they were originally published.) Being trained in the SWP, I had to admit little familiarity with the use of the term "centrism." Over the past seven years, the only time I recalled its application to a current problem was when Mandel used the term to describe the Dubcek CP in the period of late summer-early autumn 1968. An inference one might draw from this characterization would be to define "bureaucratic centrism" as a regime, party or faction trained in a bureaucratic school but at least partly responsive to mass pressure initiated from below.

Centrist factions usually do not last long in their centrism, as the Dubcek experience proved. Perhaps Progressive Labor, in its first period after the split from the CPUSA, could be characterized in this light (One of our leaders even speculated about the possibility of our fusing with it!). Its centrism did not last long. The Maoist regime -- in the early period of the Chinese Revolution, 1947-53 to estimate roughly -- might have been designated as centrist during the process of the revo-

lution itself.

But after the consolidation of the new state, we have to stretch our original use of the term centrism if we wish to continue to apply it to the Chinese CP, or we have to say that Maoism represents a case of centrism sui generis, a centrism that is unusual by virtue of its organic connection with the workers state of China, which is in a middle position in reality, say, between the USSR and revolutionary Vietnam. (Even the Vietnamese leadership represents a form of "permanent" centrism... I haven't heard anyone claim that the Vietnamese leadership is 100 percent Marxist; yet it is hardly the same leadership as the one which executed Ta Thu Thau.)

Maoism, unlike the centrism of smaller groups not connected with a workers state, is capable of all sorts of twists and turns without ceasing to be centrist.

Thus, as an "overall" characterization, I prefer the term centrist rather than "Stalinist counterrevolutionary." (There will be no debate about the fact that many of the international stances of Maoism and the Maoists are objectively counterrevolutionary (the same is partly true, is it not, about Cuba's stand on Czechoslovakia); but that has to be proven to the masses not by phrases but by experience and positive results under Marxist counter-leadership.) Unlike short-term centrism, with Maoism it is no longer a question of our pressuring it to continue its leftward movement and waiting for the point at which this shift will halt. What we will see is the unfolding of the contradictions of Maoism. This process is analogous to the one shaking Stalinism over the last 20 years, with this difference: Stalinism per se was based in the contradictions of (roughly) the second quarter of the twentieth century; Maoism is based on the contradictions of the third quarter of the century. And there has been progress in the meantime.

9. An Argument for a "Soft" Approach

One strong point in favor of a "softer" approach with respect to Maoism is the need to carefully select out the support to the Chinese Revolution from opposition to the ruling bureaucratic clique.

This is today relatively easy with respect to the USSR. Trotskyism is irrevocably identified with the Russian Revolution -- not even the Stalin era could erase that. There is Trotsky's own leading role; the continuity of experience represented by the Fourth International which goes all the way back to the Russian Left Opposition; the fact that

Stalinism in the USSR represented a decisive step backward from the Lenin era and the Trotskyists always had the benefit of the slogan, "Return to Lenin!"; and, not least, the fact that ours is the best history of the Russian Revolution. (Even the Maoist fellow-traveler Edgar Snow quotes favorably from it in his book on China written in the 1930's.)

No such advantages pertain to the Chinese Revolution. We participated in the Bring-Us-Home movement, objectively favorable to the development of the Chinese Revolution. And The Militant opposed the U.S. aggression in Korea, also in defense of the Chinese Revolution. But our effective role and influence in both these movements were minor; we have been able to do much bigger things in defense of tiny, heroic Vietnam. (We know this is also a defense of China, but this fact is not too widely understood.)

We criticized Stalin as the representatives of the Leninism he had overthrown, but we cannot speak with the same objective authority in the Chinese case. At any rate, not with the same conviction. Not yet. Our tendency to lean in the direction of stronger language, therefore, is not as effective as it could be in the case of Russia. It will appear dogmatic, a bit sectarian.

It is my opinion that we have to establish our defense of China on a more concrete basis. We need to be capable of explaining the Chinese Revolution without in the least appearing as though we grudgingly accept it, without being limited to a view of the Chinese Revolution filled with sentences entirely in the passive voice. We might utilize the Moreno thesis about the unique conditions of the formation of Maoism (Cf. his article in Fifty Years of World Revolution.)

Insofar as we are able to establish our support to the Chinese Revolution on a greater theoretic and practical basis, so much greater will be our ability to effectively combat the Maoist pseudo-Marxism for whatever influence they have on the basis of the reflected glory of the Chinese Revolution. This is a political necessity over which we cannot leap without a certain loss of effectiveness.

10. Combat Maoism -- An Additional Method

In the long run, our ability to

defeat Maoism will be enhanced to the degree that we expose the Maoists' claims to represent the interests of the Chinese Revolution. We probably could get by, here in the United States, with continuing to underplay this aspect of the struggle with the Maoists as long as we stood correctly on the strategy and tactics of the domestic struggle (as I think we are doing now). But why leave the door open for the Maoists in any sphere, when scientific socialism provides us with the tools for shutting it? In this light, read and re-read what Comrade Germain said about the need to apply and develop our theoretical and political superiority, which he called "our principal card." (Intercontinental Press reporting on the recent world congress, Vol. 7, No. 26, p. 698.)

To weaken the Maoists to the greatest extent possible, I would outline the following "four-point" program: 1) conduct an educational campaign to establish our ability to explain the dynamic of the Chinese Revolution and underline our support for it, differentiating ourselves from Stalinism and Maoism wherever appropriate or necessary (We've done this with Cuba and Vietnam already, so we have some experience to draw upon in this regard); 2) explain to the antiwar vanguard and the left in general how the defense of Vietnam is a defense of the Chinese Revolution.

Having done these two things more concretely than we have up till now, we can undercut the claim of the Maoists to represent the interests of the Chinese Revolution and prepare the political basis for 3) drawing the Maoists (or large sections of their ranks) into the antiwar and other united fronts, where we will 4) "love them to death," i.e., win their ranks to genuine Marxism (the YSA and SWP) and demoralize their leaders.

Points 3 and 4 are already apparently within our perspective. My contention is that they are made much more realizable if points 1 and 2 are seen as dialectical preparation; that is, we can try to accomplish the last two without waiting until we've applied the first two for a period, but the success of this effort will only be enhanced by the conscious application of the first two points.

July 26, 1969
Twin Cities

CHINA -- A FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE

By Mike Tormey

The task of a revolutionary party is to give political leadership to the proletarian struggle. This leadership it achieves on the basis of its program.

For the party to attain this end it must analyze each stage which the class struggle passes through and establish a policy and strategy which will answer the requirements of each period.

The Second International was founded on this principle. The development of capitalism rendered the masses susceptible to the illusions of reformism and brought about the degeneration of the Second International, which in the decades preceding the Russian Revolution adapted itself to the relative prosperity and the prevailing state of being. This knocked it off the class road; from there it was a natural journey to chauvinism.

The task was taken over by the Third International standing on the shoulders of the Russian Revolution which demonstrated the correctness of the program of the Bolshevik Party.

The failure of the world revolution in the years following the Russian October and the subsequent isolation of the first workers state was the overriding cause of the Thermidorian evolution in the USSR and led to the degeneration of the Third International.

Today the barrier between the working class of the world and socialism is the question of leadership. Until the working class solves the problem of creating the revolutionary party which can lead the masses in struggle, the outcome remains in doubt. The conscious factor of the Russian Revolution was the Bolshevik Party, which followed a policy permitting it to gain leadership of the masses in that revolution.

The future of the working class depends on the building of the Fourth International, the world party of social revolution. This party must understand the laws of the revolutionary epoch and thus the movement of the masses in the revolution and become its leader. All other parties are without value and will be crushed by history or by the bourgeoisie.

The first and foremost problem in building the International is that it must acquire and maintain a revolutionary program. This program must be assiduously defended against all external enemies as well as those internally whose characteristic trait is to yield to the mood of the moment, who are unable to resist what is fashionable. Ultimately

we know the program will create the party, but the role of vanguard will be fulfilled only by the party guided by the most advanced theory.

This is a period of preparation. The world Trotskyist movement is only in the process of becoming the leading party of the working class.

In this period of preparation, of building the Fourth International, the chief task must be one of ideology above all. Revolutionary parties are tempered in the midst of intense ideological strife, while basing themselves on the experience of the class struggle. In this struggle cadres will be created. These cadres will come out of the struggle with the ability to settle accounts with the political tendencies that stand between us and the working class, or those who threaten to divert the movement from the correct course.

We cannot jump out of the period we are in. We must pass through it, and a clear, precise ideological understanding is necessary, for it supplies the foundation for future success.

The tradition of a revolutionary party is built on the critical clarity of its history. A key to attaining this critical clarity is a review of the Chinese question in the International from at least 1949 to the present. Within the International there has never been anything approaching agreement on the Chinese question and there has never been anything approaching a serious discussion on the nature of the differences. There wouldn't be a discussion now except we (SWP) tried to smuggle in our line on Maoism in the Cultural Revolution document and the United Secretariat (U.S.) majority would have none of it.

The U.S. majority document on the Cultural Revolution, which is our document revised, demonstrates an adaptation to Maoism. The two versions of the document show that fundamental differences exist on the nature of the Maoist regime and what constitutes Stalinism. Behind these differences lies the question of how to construct the Fourth International.

These are not new positions for the United Secretariat majority; they never considered the Chinese Communist Party a Stalinist party. There historically were three positions in the International on the question of the Chinese revolution.

The first was Pablo's that the Chinese Communist Party broke with Stalin and took state power; this made it a rev-

olutionary party, and furthermore, this revolutionary party established the dictatorship of the proletariat in China.(1)

The second position was that of Comrade Germain. His position was and remains today that the Chinese Communist Party broke with the Kremlin, ceased to be a Stalinist party, mobilized the masses and conquered power. This transformed the CCP into a left-centrist party and a workers and peasants government was established. However, Germain went on to point out the "...permanent revolution unfurling before our eyes...." and that the CCP "...will be propelled by the logic of its position, of its class nature, and of its struggle to safeguard what has been conquered, to carry the revolution through to its completion."(2)

The "completion" he means is of course the dictatorship of the proletariat. This remains the position of Germain and the U.S. majority today except they now feel the Chinese revolution has degenerated or is degenerating.(3)

There is a natural bridge between the positions of Pablo and Germain. Germain says under mass pressure the CCP reformed itself and changed to a left-centrist party and is moving inexorably toward the dictatorship of the proletariat under the laws of permanent revolution. This concept of Stalinist parties, regimes, etc. reforming themselves under mass pressure is a hallmark of Pabloism, and this concept prepared the way for Germain's capitulation to Pablo.

The third position was originally articulated by Comrade Jacques B. of Switzerland and was subsequently adopted by Comrade Peng and the SWP. Briefly it is as follows: The CCP despite taking power remained a Stalinist party and established a bureaucratic dictatorship resting on the peasant armed forces and carrying out a policy of socialism in one country. Jacques B. called for political revolution.

The SWP did not codify this position until 1955. Previously there were internal differences on the Chinese question. For example, Comrade Novack gave uncritical support to Germain's position at the time of the Third World Congress and Comrade Hansen argued against calling China a workers state during our discussion in 1955.

Before the differences on China could be decided the Fourth International was split. The split was engendered by the SWP's issuance of the "Open Letter" attacking the leadership of the International, Pablo, Germain, and company. The political criticism of Pablo was correct, but organizationally it might have been a mistake. No political discussion was

held before the split, hence no dividing line was traced between orthodox Trotskyism and Pabloist revisionism.

Comrade Hansen, writing about this split on the bottom of page 3 in his "Report on the Third World Congress of the Fourth International Since Reunification" (Internal Information Bulletin, June 1969) states: "It was due to a series of very bad errors that were committed at that time by the leadership of the International under Pablo. It was aggravated by the fact that McCarthyism, which raged at that time in the United States, prevented us from being able to give a clear picture to the International of our positions on certain items; and a series of misunderstandings arose as a result of that. These were finally overcome, and we had the reunification of 1963."

A series of misunderstandings indeed! Who was misunderstood? What was the nature of the misunderstandings? Were they political? Did we issue the "Open Letter" through a misunderstanding? How were they overcome in 1963? Did we concede? Did they repent?

It is difficult to judge because no assessment has ever been made of the 1953 split. Comrade Hansen says: "We thought it best to leave that discussion to a period when it could be viewed in the proper historic perspective...."(4) That seems very practical. Leave the broad general fundamental questions for future Deutscher's to contemplate.

Unfortunately in the last analysis broad principled politics are the only real practical politics. Anyone who tackles partial problems without having previously settled general problems will inevitably and at every step come up against those general problems whether they realize it or not. To come up against them blindly in every individual case means to doom one's politics to the worst vacillations and lack of principle.

I repeat, the differences on China today including the nature of the Chinese Communist Party, the Maoist regime and what constitutes Stalinism are the same differences that manifested themselves at the Third World Congress in 1951. These questions have never seriously been discussed in the International and the only reason a discussion is on the agenda today is that the United Secretariat majority wouldn't let us smuggle in our line and rewrote the SWP's document.

Under the program of Mao's New Democracy, which was nothing more than an ideological and political expression of Stalin's theory of revolution in stages, the peasant army led by Mao did

not conquer power but simply took it over from the thoroughly collapsed regime of Chiang Kai-shek. The peasant army after destroying the resistance of the Kuo-mintang (KMT) immediately took over the old bureaucratic superstructure.

The top bureaucrats in the Maoist regime replaced the KMT bureaucrats in the various state institutions. The Maoist regime failed to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. It surrendered to the old social system and compromised with the bourgeoisie.

In class relations this new regime was a "bloc of four classes," a coalition government. It upheld the sanctity of private property. The property relations it defended were bourgeois.

The revolutionary peasantry of China in the person of its ruling stratum (the Maoist bureaucracy) appropriated to itself the political and economic power which belongs to the working class. This power is directed against the workers and maintains the Chinese Stalinists.

For the Stalinist line to triumph in the Soviet Union a counterrevolution was required. This counterrevolution had to destroy the entire generation that led the Russian Revolution. Before he could impose his bureaucratic regime and insure the triumph of the counterrevolutionary line of socialism in one country, Stalin had to destroy the Bolshevik Party and the Third International.

This was unnecessary for Mao. The CCP came to power in China as a Stalinized party and naturally followed in Stalin's footsteps including wanting to build socialism in one country. We call for political revolution in both China and the USSR.

On the basis of our analysis of Maoism and the deformed nature of the Third Chinese Revolution, calling for political revolution in China is the natural extrapolation of our position. Now the United Secretariat majority also calls for political revolution in China. However, they have a different conception of the Third Chinese Revolution and Maoism than we do. The logic of their position is not to call for political revolution but to give critical support to Mao. Their call for political revolution stands in contradiction to their position on China. You know, even Mao called for a political revolution in China. But what he means by a political revolution is a social revolution, a revolution of class against class to exterminate the bourgeoisie and those taking the capitalist road.

The resolution on the Cultural Revolution adopted by the last world con-

gress is based on the draft submitted by the SWP with the original document undergoing some substantial revision to produce the final resolution. The first such revision the U.S. majority makes is to delete the word "Stalinized," used to describe the Chinese Communist Party. Comrade Hansen reacts to this deletion as though no disagreement had ever before existed on China. The implications of this change are considered in contexts ranging from editorial differences to their having a conception of Stalinism as existing only from 1934-37. The conclusion Comrade Hansen draws is that "...we ought to retain the label [Stalinized] and try to find some other solution."(5) That is, retain the label and try to make the politics conform.

This is truly a remarkable specimen of empirical thought: The wise politician keeps ahead of events; the unwise is led by them. The differences on China are eighteen years old; the removal of the word "Stalinized" by the U.S. majority should demonstrate they still retain the conception that the CCP is a centrist party. This means the U.S. majority has a different conception of what Stalinism is than we do. That is a fundamental difference. The only solution to solving that difference and the ramifications it engenders is ideological struggle.

Another major alteration, in line with the first is the removal of the word "opportunism" and the substitution of the phrase "bureaucratic centrism" to characterize the Maoist regime. If the Mao regime is bureaucratic centrist then Thermidor has not been accomplished in China. Bonapartism comes after Thermidor. Soviet Thermidor started in 1924 and it reached its consolidation in the smashing of the Left Opposition and the triumph of the theory of socialism in one country. On this basis Trotsky called for political revolution in the USSR. If Thermidor has not been accomplished in China then you don't have Stalinism and there could be a bureaucratic centrist regime which "objectively favored anti-imperialist struggles."(6)

But if this were the case why would anyone call for political revolution? The United Secretariat majority believes China is a degenerating workers state with a bureaucratic centrist regime. Their position should be and in reality is critical support to Mao. They call for political revolution through ignorance of what it entails.

The fact is, however, that China is a deformed workers state with a usurpatious Stalinist bureaucracy. Stalinist bureaucracy is first and foremost a social phenomenon. The Maoist regime represents privileged social groupings that have attached themselves to the

foundation of the workers state. Everything else, socialism in one country, peaceful co-existence and the Cultural Revolution are designed to serve the special interests of this parasitic caste headed by Mao. This should be A,B,C to the Trotskyist movement founded in opposition to Stalinism and the counterrevolution it represented, but it obviously is not.

Every political period confronts us (SWP) as the representative of the working class, with a specific task which becomes the urgent task of the day but which is always obscured or pushed into the background. The specific political task at the present time, which we must fulfill if we do not want to betray the lasting fundamental interests of the working class, is to clarify the differences in the International and resolve them. We must not be content with the achievements of the moment, with the gleam of the latest novelty. On the contrary we must point at once to those appearances of progress that are the basis for and guarantee of retrogression.

Rather than trying to delineate and clear up differences, the party has been appeasing the U.S. majority and as a result obfuscating what is at stake. I believe our position of neutralism with regard to the Cultural Revolution is an example of this appeasement.

In both the SWP draft and the U.S. majority draft of the Cultural Revolution document there is a statement that says: "From the available information -- and it is admittedly scanty and inadequate -- neither faction can be judged to be more progressive than the other." (7) This is not neutralism based on a lack of information, this is neutralism based on available information, that is, political neutralism. This position is not the same one we had in the fall of 1966 when even less information was available. Comrade Novack in the Fall 1966 International Socialist Review lists the program of the opposition in China.

- 1) They doubt the infallibility of Mao Tse-tung.
- 2) They claim to be better Communists than the present leaders.
- 3) They display 'sympathy' for the Khrushchev revisionists; that is, they want to unite the 'socialist countries' in face of a possible attack by the United States, heal the breach, and renew the Russian alliance.
- 4) They have criticized the excesses of the 'Great Leap Forward' and such wasteful efforts as attempting to produce steel in backyard furnaces.
- 5) They seek changes in economic policy and agrarian reforms.
- 6) They demand more intellectual liberty, freedom of expression and the right to dissent from the official line.

7) They may even have dared to suggest that Mao step down on grounds of health or age."

"Taken together, these positions would constitute a serious oppositional program to the policies of the Peking leadership." (8) In summing up George writes: "At the same time we have a responsibility to the revolutionary Communists, intellectuals, students and youth in China who are being unjustly victimized and slandered for demanding more freedom of thought and expression and the rectification of errors committed by the present leadership. We are on their side in the struggle for greater democracy and a more correct course." (9)

Comrade Novack has obviously just outlined part of the program of the Liu Shao-chi faction. What happened to our responsibility to these "revolutionary Communists," "intellectuals," "students," et al? When did we change our position to that of neither faction is more progressive, i.e., neutralism, and more important why did we change?

The United Secretariat majority feels that Mao launched the Cultural Revolution and mobilized the masses to carry out a reform of the bureaucracy because maturing contradictions were threatening a future real political revolution. Of course, we know that the Cultural Revolution was launched to crush the Liu Shao-chi faction and reaffirm Mao as sole arbiter. The logic of the U.S. position is to give critical support to Mao in the Cultural Revolution, which means critical support to Mao in crushing the Liu faction. On the basis of our original position, the SWP should join Comrade Peng and the Chinese section in calling for critical support to the Liu Shao-chi faction.

These contradictory positions are compromised by calling the Cultural Revolution an intrabureaucratic struggle, as though it had no social basis, and taking a position of neutralism. Neutralism means indifference, political unconcern in the factional struggle. But in practice indifference to the struggle does not mean standing aloof or abstaining from it. Indifference is tacit support of the strong, of those who are in power, in this case, support of the Mao group, if you please.

The neutralism of the United Secretariat majority is a thinly disguised expression of support for Mao's faction and the SWP is going along for the ride.

This is justified by Comrade Hansen when he says: "We support a different tendency which, insofar as we can ascertain, does exist in China, is moving towards Trotskyism, and may have conscious

Trotskyists within its ranks."(10)

This is like pulling a knife without a blade. Where does this tendency exist? What is its program? What is its position on the Cultural Revolution?

This position of Comrade Hansen's is totally off the wall.

If we are serious about Chinese Trotskyists we should address ourselves to the Chinese section and explain how they were wrong to give critical support to Liu. We should tell them about this new emerging tendency "which insofar as we can ascertain does exist" and we should share our sources of information as to how we know about this tendency and what its program is with the Chinese section. Naturally, it would be automatic to support such a tendency if it exists, but the reality of its existence is beside the question at hand.

The opposition led by Liu opposed the People's Communes and the Great Leap Forward adventure, opposed the deification of Mao, opposed Mao's policies on education and culture, supported "de-Stalinization," proposed to improve the living standards of the Chinese masses, and proposes a united front with the USSR to support the Vietnamese. We cannot be indifferent to these things; we should have given critical support to Liu. As Comrade Peng pointed out it is not the nature of any mass movement to realize at the outset the need for political revolution. Such a realization comes through direct experience and at first the masses support the reformist tendencies. The Chinese masses will come to realize the need for political revolution from their own experience in the course of struggle and not from anyong standing aloof from the struggle shouting

Footnotes

1) "Report and Discussion on the Third Chinese Revolution," International Information Bulletin, Dec. 1952, pp. 25-29.

2) See "Report and Discussion on the Third Chinese Revolution," pp. 1-17 and pp. 34-38. Also "What Should be Modified and What Should be Maintained in the Theses of the Second World Congress on the Question of Stalinism," International Information Bulletins, April 1951, pp. 4-7. [First quote is on page 12, the second is on p.37 of "Report and Discussion..."]

3) "The Cultural Revolution," by Ernest Germain, International Socialist Review, July-August 1968, p. 50 and pp. 60-61.

4) "Report on the Third World Congress of the Fourth International Since Reunification" by Joseph Hansen, Internal Information Bulletin, June 1969, p.4.

for political revolution.

Reunification took place in 1963 with two divergent positions on China. It is now 1969 and the positions have not been clarified. The SWP has not fought for its line inside the world movement, and we have compromised our theoretical position on China. The leadership has not carried out its responsibility to the rank and file of either the party or the International, especially to the Chinese section.

The majority of the membership of the old International Secretariat as well as the new cadres of the Fourth International are not aware of the SWP position on China. For us to pretend that the differences on China are new or for us to continue to ignore them and compromise our position, is dishonest. The SWP should present its real position and carry out an ideological discussion and struggle, for principled positions. Theoretical sloppiness and theoretical compromise take cruel revenge in revolutionary politics. The United Secretariat majority's compromising attitude toward the Maoist brand of Stalinism places the International's very existence in question. They have revised one of the basic pillars on which our movement rests, namely our analysis of Stalinism. With so much at stake any continuation of our compromising position can not only mean disaster for the International, but also for our party. We must now proceed to launch a struggle to restore the basic tenets of Trotskyism to our movement.

July 30, 1969
Boston

5) "The Differences Between the Two Documents on the 'Cultural Revolution,'" by Joseph Hansen, SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 27, No. 4, p. 19.

6) "Original Draft Resolution on the 'Cultural Revolution' and Proposed Amendments Arranged in Dual Columns," SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 27, No. 4, p. 15.

7) Ibid., p. 11.

8) "The Political Crisis in China," by George Novack, International Socialist Review, Fall 1966, p. 142.

9) Ibid., p. 144.

10) "Report on the Third World Congress of the Fourth International Since Reunification," p. 28.

ON THE CHINESE QUESTION: A LESSER EVIL?

(In reply to Comrade Jan Garrett)

By Gordon Fox

NOTE: Before proceeding directly into the body of my criticism of Comrade Jan's article, "The Fourth International and the Chinese 'Cultural Revolution,'" it is necessary to apologize for the unfinished and unpolished nature of this article. I received Bulletin No. 5 only several days ago; August 8 is the deadline for articles to be submitted for pre-convention discussion. In addition, work on the Michigan petition campaign has made time to write an extensive article completely explaining my differences with Comrade Jan totally unavailable. I feel that, at this point, it is more important for me to elucidate some more general and basic criticisms than to make an exhaustive study of the dispute. Consequently, this article discusses only the basics, which in any event are more important. I ask the indulgence of the comrades who read this article and feel that I sound like a contact class -- for it is on some very general and basic points that Jan and the other comrades of the majority(1) point of view make their mistake. It is my hope that this brief and unpolished article will be a legitimate and, hopefully, significant (to the extent that it accomplishes its purpose) contribution to the pre-convention discussion.

* * *

It is customary, when engaging in polemics, to begin by pouring out lavish words of praise about the skill, style knowledge, etc., of the author of the opposing view. I shall forego this practice partially because I do not intend to engage in extensive polemics and partially because it is a worthless practice in any case. I shall simply compliment Comrade Jan here and now and be done with it.

The dispute over the Chinese question has centered around basically one issue: Is China objectively more revolutionary than the Soviet Union? The answer to this question is the main root of the differences between the majority and minority positions. This basic question, however, can be expressed in another manner, and, in my view, a better manner.

It is generally agreed that Maoism, China, and the CCP lead the ultraleft (although we must not forget, comrades, the bloc of four classes, Indonesia, and

(1) "Majority" and "minority" will be used herein in reference to the division at the recent world congress.

Pakistan) current in the proletarian movement today. Furthermore, it is agreed that classical Stalinism, the USSR, and the CPSU (again, we cannot forget the Third Period) lead the opportunist, the reformist wing of the world proletarian movement today. When reduced to bare essentials, then, we find the Chinese question reduced to a dispute over whether ultraleftism is better than opportunism. This is not an issue to be taken lightly.

When reduced to the basic question of opportunism vs. ultraleftism, the Chinese question becomes very clear. It is a common saying, and there is a considerable amount of fact to back this up, that opportunism and ultraleftism are two sides of the same coin. At this point, since I have never heard within our ranks a criticism of this position, it is appropriate to ask why some comrades feel that ultraleftism is objectively more revolutionary than opportunism.

The answer seems to be that some comrades confuse subjectivity with objectivity. Those who espouse revolution are not necessarily revolutionary. Those who want revolution are not necessarily revolutionary. Let there be no talk that those who espouse revolution are objectively more revolutionary than those who espouse reform. In order to be revolutionary, one must provide a correct political line for revolution. If this line is not provided, if an incorrect political line is advanced, thus alienating the masses from and throwing roadblocks in front of the revolution, one is objectively counterrevolutionary. Not a nice word. But let there be no mistake about it. Those who advance a line damaging to the revolutionary movement are objectively counterrevolutionary. Thus, we find Progressive Labor, an interesting example, in fact, objectively counterrevolutionary. We find furthermore that Maoism and classical Stalinism on the world scene play an objectively counterrevolutionary role.(2)

Maoism diverts the proletarian

(2) I speak here of most cases of confrontation with imperialism. In those instances in which the deformed and degenerated workers states have played revolutionary roles, these roles have been distorted, as in Eastern Europe and Korea and Vietnam after the Second World War. Their acts which have been objectively revolutionary have been largely accidental.

struggle. It alienates the masses through its ultraleftism. It furthermore provides an incorrect program which, even assuming that Maoism had political hegemony in any particular country, could not lead to revolution. Maoism alienates and then betrays the masses. It must be

smashed, as must classical Stalinism be smashed. There are no lesser evils in a struggle against the traitors to the workers movement.

July 29, 1969
Detroit