

Draft Programme
Part II
Appendices

The Party and the Masses

Why does the proletariat need a vanguard party, and how does this party lead the masses in making revolution?

The most basic answer to the first of these questions lies in the enormity of the challenge facing the proletariat: a system of exploitation with a vast and highly developed apparatus of control must be overthrown and a new liberating system must replace it. And specifically with regard to the U.S., when you consider what is required to mount an armed insurrection against the most powerful military machine in history, to go on to shatter that machine and win a civil war, and then to construct an entirely new society on the ashes of the old...it quickly becomes clear that this can't be done without organization, without politically far-seeing and powerfully organized leadership.

Mao Tsetung expressed this in a very concentrated way: if there is to be a revolution, there must be a revolutionary party.

The proletariat needs its own party to represent its interests—that is, the overthrow of the whole capitalist system of exploitation and the eventual elimination of all classes and oppressive divisions between people. To put it another way, the proletariat needs a leading core of people who have shown themselves to be dedicated and able to identify and fight for the fundamental interests of the proletariat through every twist and turn of struggle.

It is a fundamental principle of Marxism that the masses must emancipate themselves. But this is not going to happen spontaneously. The masses are not going to emancipate themselves without organization and leadership.

The reasons for this are bound up with the proletariat's particular place in society—its conditions under capitalism on the one hand, and its historic mission on the other. All this has great bearing on why the proletariat needs a vanguard party and what kind of party this must be.

The life of the proletariat in bourgeois society, combined with the bourgeoisie's

pervasive ideological influence and bombardment, means that the masses of proletarians will not become class-conscious on their own.

Beginning with the terrible and intentionally mind-numbing education and including the dog-eat-dog struggle to find a job, the long hours of back-breaking work (when work is found), the constant battle to keep one's head above water, the harassment of landlords, cops, merchants, and so on—all this is a weight on the masses, making it difficult for them to raise their heads.

On their own, the masses can and will certainly develop strong class feelings, a hatred of various forms of oppression, and revolutionary sentiments.

But the masses cannot spontaneously come to grasp the historic mission of the working class, that is, the need for it to lead a broad united front to forcibly shatter the rule of the bourgeoisie, replacing it with the rule of the proletariat, and then to continue the revolution with the goal of bringing into being an entirely new society—a new world in which the very division into classes and all oppressive social relations have been eliminated.

The ideology that represents the outlook and interests of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM), is a scientific outlook—the science of *revolution*. And like all sciences, it is generally first grasped by those with the time and opportunity to develop an interest in and to become familiar with the realm of intellectual inquiry, theory, etc.

In a society based on exploitation and with a division of labor embodying great inequalities—including the division between mental and manual labor—those who are first able to do this will mainly (though not only) be students, intellectuals, and so on. The task of those who do first embrace this ideology is to bring it to the class that it represents and that can and must take up this ideology as its own.

To sum up. Because of the material conditions of its existence, the surrounding atmosphere of bourgeois ideology, and the limitations of spontaneity, the

proletariat needs leadership: a group of people organized on the basis of an advanced understanding of society and revolution. And until society moves beyond its division into classes, leadership will be necessary.

The Party and the Initiative of the Masses

It is often alleged that leadership by its very nature stands above the masses, keeping them in a passive position, and that tightly knit revolutionary organization will ultimately put a bureaucratic brake on the activism of the masses. But what in fact stifles the masses is the capitalist system in all its exploiting, dominating, and repressive dimensions, and the force of habit that goes with living in class society. That is the existing situation.

So the question then becomes: what are the means to overcome this situation, how can the masses lift their heads and act in their own interests? And this is where the vanguard party comes in.

The vanguard party applies itself in a concentrated way precisely to solving this problem of developing the methods of raising the consciousness of the masses and releasing their creative energies and determination in struggling against and overthrowing the old order.

The party takes this task up with the political and ideological recognition of the need to narrow and ultimately overcome the gaps between leadership, with its more advanced understanding and commitment, and the broader masses.

Is a vanguard formation an impediment to the masses standing up, or is it an instrument for their emancipation? Bob Avakian, the Chairman of the RCP, has pointed out:

“Lenin’s argument in *What is To Be Done?*—that the more highly organized and centralized the party was, the more it was a real vanguard organization of revolutionaries, the greater would be the role and initiative of the masses in revolutionary struggle—was powerfully demonstrated in the Russian Revolution itself and has been in all proletarian revolutions. Nowhere has such a revolution been made without such a party and nowhere has the lack of

such a party contributed to unleashing the initiative of masses of the oppressed in *conscious revolutionary struggle.*”

Of course, what kind of organization is needed is, in the final analysis, a question of what you’re trying to do.

If the goal is simply to fan dissent and protest, or to build a movement that may take militantly to the streets around particular outrages but does not aim to overthrow the system, then one can dispense with revolutionary organization—a vanguard is not necessary, and for that matter there’s no need for revolutionary ideology.

But if the goal is to mobilize the masses to seize power from a murderous ruling class and to establish a new power that enables the masses to run and transform society, then you have to act on the implications of this: a vanguard party becomes essential.

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How does the party play its vanguard role, bringing the masses forward as a conscious revolutionary force? In what follows, we lay out some of the key principles and methods guiding the party’s work.

Proletarian Ideology and the Masses

One of the basic truths that MLM brings to life and bases itself on is the dialectical relation—the continual interplay and mutual dependence and mutual influence—between theory and practice, and the ultimate grounding of theory in practice.

MLM is drawn from, and is a continually developing synthesis of, the vast and ongoing experience of the proletariat, and all of humanity throughout history, in class struggle and in every other sphere of human activity. And the experience of the masses of people, and in particular of the proletarians, provides the basis for increasing numbers of them to grasp the truth of and take up and wield the revolutionary ideology of the proletariat, when it is brought to them by the vanguard party.

For this reason, when the party brings this ideology to the proletariat it is *bringing it home.*

The party must link the theory of MLM

with the struggle of the masses and in this way develop a revolutionary movement led by the class-conscious proletariat. It must constantly draw forward the advanced among the proletariat, and other strata, into the ranks of the party and train them as communists. Only in this way can the party continue to maintain, and deepen, its grasp of MLM and its ability to act as the vanguard of the proletarian revolution.

The Mass Line

The mass line is the method through which the party both learns from and leads the masses. To apply the mass line means to seek out and learn from the ideas of the masses and to apply the science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to concentrate what is correct in these ideas, distilling and synthesizing them into a more all-sided and correct reflection of reality and what must be done to change it. The party then takes this back to the masses in the form of line and policies, works to win the people to take these up, and unites with the masses to carry them out...summing up the results and then repeating the process.

The mass line is an ongoing process which links theory with practice and the vanguard with the masses in an ever-deepening way—all in the service of the masses' fundamental revolutionary interests.

The Spontaneous Struggle and the Party

The struggles waged by the masses around their conditions are of vital importance in preventing the masses from being crushed and in developing among the masses a sense of their ability to unite and fight back against their oppressors. But, in and of themselves, these struggles cannot lead to revolutionary consciousness or a revolutionary movement. By definition these struggles have limited aims and scope—most involve a demand for a partial change or reform and are targeted against a particular oppressor or aspect of state power.

Thus, the revolutionary party cannot take the view that the struggle of the

masses will spontaneously make the leap into a revolution. In addition to the inherent limitations of any single struggle, the bourgeoisie sends its political operatives into any mass movement of significance, promoting directions and lines which draw people more deeply into the suffocating “proper channels” of bourgeois political life.

Even struggles which spontaneously develop into very powerful outbreaks of mass upheaval will eventually ebb, leaving the system that spawned them intact, if battered. Surely the history of the United States—full of heroic mass uprisings by different sections of the people—proves this. The party cannot tail in the wake of spontaneous struggles and seriously call itself revolutionary.

But the genuine proletarian party does not stand aside from the masses' spontaneous struggles. Such struggles provide a strong basis for the work of the party. While at times the party must and should play a direct role in tactically leading, or striving to lead, these struggles, its most crucial and essential role lies in raising the consciousness of the masses, and developing their fighting capacity and organization—all as preparation for going over to something different: the struggle to seize power from the capitalist class when the time is ripe.

To paraphrase Lenin, the party must *divert* the many different streams of struggle from their spontaneous tendency to remain confined within the existing bourgeois framework. It must step by step transform them into a raging revolutionary flood-tide against the system as a whole. (How the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA carries out this work is discussed further in the appendix “Create Public Opinion, Seize Power! Prepare Minds and Organize Forces for Revolution. The Central Task of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.”)

Organizational Principles of the Party

A truly revolutionary party is the deadly enemy of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois state therefore constantly attacks it in different ways—attempting to sever its links to the masses and its ability to lead them—and ultimately seeks to destroy

the party altogether. For this reason the proletariat needs an organization that can counter the vicious repression of the bourgeois state apparatus in all its forms—including the spying, disruption, and outright murder carried out by the enemy’s police forces and agencies.

A vanguard party must be an organization that can continue to lead the struggle towards its revolutionary objective in the face of all such repression. The ability to do this must be mastered in a systematic and organized way—and on the basis of applying the most advanced ideological and political understanding. This is something that can only be done by a vanguard party basing itself on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

The party organizes itself on the basis of democratic centralism. This principle combines centralized leadership and the greatest degree of discipline with the fullest discussion and struggle over line and policies within the party. It also means the selection and political supervision of party leaders by party members, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

Differences of opinion are struggled out in a vigorous and principled way within the party; in the face of the enemy, there is the firmest unity.

This principle of democratic centralism is used to create a political situation inside the party in which there is both centralism and democracy; both unified line and broad initiative; both discipline and ideological struggle; and both unity of will and action and personal ease of mind and liveliness. All this greatly strengthens the ability of the party to correctly apply the mass line, deepen its roots among the masses, and, overall, to play its role as the advanced detachment of the proletariat in its revolutionary mission.

A Party to Serve the Emancipation of the Proletariat

For all the reasons gone into, an MLM vanguard is a vital necessity for the proletariat. Either there will be a party, or the masses will continue to suffer the horrors of the system. The advanced, class-conscious workers—and the masses of

revolutionary-minded people of all strata willing to take up the cause and outlook of the proletariat—must step forward to build, support, defend, unite with, and join their party, which in this country is the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.

Our Party is, in the most profound sense, the product of the masses and their struggle, not only in the U.S. but throughout the world. It is made up of proletarians and others who have fought back against oppression and, in the course of that, have sought out answers for why there is such horrendous oppression and so many continual outrages in society and the world, and what is necessary to finally put an end to them.

In doing so, we have drawn inspiration from the revolutionary uprisings of the oppressed in the U.S. and around the world, including the tremendous wave of struggles and wars of national liberation in the Third World in the 1960s and early ’70s. A very powerful role was played then by the heroic war waged by the Vietnamese people which delivered a resounding defeat to the supposedly “invincible” armed forces of U.S. imperialism, a defeat from which these imperialists have still not fully recovered politically.

Above all, we have drawn inspiration and profound lessons from the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China during that period. It was a mass upheaval, led by Mao Tsetung and other genuine communist leaders, which carried forward the revolution within socialist society itself. The Cultural Revolution represented the greatest advances made so far by the international proletariat and for the cause of emancipating all humanity.

Our Party has been tempered in and strengthened by the struggle against revisionism. Revisionism cuts out the revolutionary heart of Marxism—by distorting its basic principles and reducing Marxism to something that serves the preservation or the restoration of capitalism. We have learned from Mao’s great struggles against revisionism and have also waged struggles against various forms of revisionism within our own ranks.

On this basis, and through struggle to distinguish the correct from the incorrect and the revolutionary from the opportunist lines, our Party has taken up and

continued to deepen its grasp of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as our ideology. And we have joined with other MLM parties and organizations throughout the world in the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM).

We have continued to learn from, to support, and to draw strength from the resistance and rebellion of the masses of people worldwide, and in particular the people's wars and other revolutionary struggles led by the detachments of the RIM in many parts of the world.

Our Party is determined to fulfill its responsibility to make revolution to overthrow this monster, U.S. imperialism, and to contribute all we can to the world proletarian revolution.

The Party must constantly bring forward into its ranks those who dedicate themselves to the cause of international proletarian revolution, who seriously take up the weapon of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and carry out the Party's line and tasks among the masses. The mem-

bers the Party must attract are those whose dedication is not to narrow and personal interests, but to the historic mission of communism.

To win victory, the Party must be made up of those who embody the best qualities of the proletariat and are prepared for great sacrifice, jail, even execution at the hands of the ruthless enemy. But, even more fundamentally, they must be guided by the largeness of mind characteristic of the proletariat. They must study energetically and actively apply the science of MLM and be prepared to go against any tide that is opposed to MLM. They must be vanguard fighters among the masses and be ready to take up any post, fulfill any task that serves the revolution—not only in this country but internationally.

The Party must be made up of people whose lives are devoted to the revolutionary struggle of the international proletariat and the achievement of its historic mission: worldwide communism.

Revolution Means Waging People's War

The RCP,USA bases itself on the fundamental truth that this system cannot be reformed, and that revolution in the U.S. will mean revolutionary war! Mao Tsetung teaches us: "The revolutionary war is a war of the masses, it can be waged only by mobilizing the masses and relying on them."

Today, more and more, the oppressed people, especially those among the younger generation, hate the world they are forced to live in and recognize the system will never change. They say "the oppressors will never stop doing what they are doing—it only gets worse. If they want war, let's give them war!" We say, "Yes! Let's give them war, BUT *let's do it for real and let's do it to win!*" Let's do it with the orientation, strategy and doctrine that will provide the means for the masses to go up against and actually defeat the powerful armed forces of the imperialists.

Only a revolutionary people's war, led by a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist party, will lead to the seizure of power by the proletariat, and enable it to establish its dictatorship and bring into being a new society that will serve the interests of the masses of people and, above all, will serve as a base area for the world proletarian revolution. Mao Tsetung said, "The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history."

Throughout history the rising classes were forced to mobilize the masses in order to overthrow the old ruling class. But they did not have the need, interest, or capability of enabling the masses to consciously grasp the essence of the revolutionary process and their own role in it and to consciously take hold of and transform society in their own interests. In fact, this was impossible in those earlier periods of human history. But the proletarian revolution of this era is impossible *without* this.

The proletarian revolution is unlike any previous revolution in human history. Its aim is not to establish the rule of a new set of exploiters and oppressors dictating in the interests of a few, but the

complete emancipation of humanity and a society where the people are working in common for the common good of all. It is of fundamental importance that the way in which this revolution is fought must serve these goals.

Mao Tsetung said that all military logic could be reduced to "you fight your way and I'll fight my way." Our way means relying on the voluntary, determined action and support of the masses of people, led by the proletariat and its vanguard, and translating that into strategies and tactics that, through the course of the war, give the people's army the maximum amount of initiative, exposing and seizing on the strategic weaknesses of the enemy and bringing forward the strengths of the revolutionary forces. And doing all this in a way so that, as the masses of people wage war, they are developing their ability to become masters of society and to transform it in their interests. But how this principle gets applied, in the form of a strategy for revolutionary war, depends on the concrete situation and conditions the war is being carried out in.

One World Revolution— Two Basic Paths

In the oppressed nations the basic path to power is protracted people's war, a path forged by Mao Tsetung in leading the Chinese revolution to victory. Mao recognized it was possible in the oppressed nations for the revolutionary forces to take up the task of armed struggle as the *main* form of struggle from the beginning. Through a protracted period of armed struggle, the revolutionaries could gradually build up their armed forces and establish revolutionary base areas where the masses begin to exercise power. As the balance of forces shifts in favor of the revolutionary forces, and when the revolutionary forces have in large part encircled the cities, then war can be waged to seize the cities, deliver the decisive defeat to the counter-revolutionary forces and liberate the whole country.

This is possible because generally, in the oppressed nations, the development of the economy, under the domination of imperialism, is highly uneven—with only a few “enclaves” characterized by “advanced technology,” while the general character of the economy is backward, semi-feudal and not well integrated and articulated. The masses of people are in desperate conditions all the time, and in the countryside there are large numbers of brutally exploited peasants who can be the main force in waging and supporting the revolutionary war. And the backward and isolated state of much of the countryside can actually be turned into a strength of the revolution—the basis for relatively self-sufficient base areas serving as the backbone of the protracted people’s war.

Further, in these oppressed nations generally the central government’s authority and ability to “impose order” does not extend in a uniform and powerful way throughout the country. In addition, the roads, means of communication, etc., are unevenly developed. For these reasons, the ruling classes are not able to quickly concentrate and coordinate massive forces in all parts of the country and crush the people’s war.

In imperialist countries, the revolutionary road is, of necessity, different. The conditions in the imperialist states are generally ones where the grip of the ruling class on society is centralized in a strong national government and at the same time is powerfully and fairly uniformly extended throughout the country. The level of technology, including means of transportation and communication, is highly developed. Except in situations of serious crisis, the ruling class can concentrate massive armed force in any particular place—or even in a number of places—within a short period of time.

And, generally, while in these countries there are large numbers of proletarians and others whose daily conditions cry out for a radical change, there are also significant sections of the people, particularly in the middle class, who face such conditions only in times of extreme crisis. In ordinary times in the imperialist countries, the conditions for launching a revolutionary war do not exist.

In these countries, the launching of the revolutionary war depends on the erup-

tion of a revolutionary crisis in society as a whole, including serious dissension and contention within the ranks of the ruling class over how to rule and “maintain control.” Further, revolutionary war must rely on a revolutionary people—proletarians, and other oppressed people, in a combative mood, busting loose in massive upheaval, where increasing numbers of them are ready to “put it on the line” for a different future. And there must be large sections of middle strata no longer willing to accept the ruling class’ program, and who could potentially be won over as allies to the revolutionary cause.

Building on all the political organizing and the struggle of the masses that has taken place during the entire period preceding the development of the revolutionary situation, the party can lead the masses to seize on the eruption of such a revolutionary crisis: to forge a revolutionary army and to wage a revolutionary war. *This war must take the form of mass armed insurrections—in a number of major cities, at relatively the same time—leading to the establishment of a revolutionary regime in as much of the territory as possible, and then the waging of civil war to finally and completely defeat the old ruling class and its counterrevolutionary forces and consolidate the new revolutionary power over a much greater territory.*

Serious About Winning!

In their typical arrogant contempt, the ruling classes think of, and portray, uprisings against them in terms of “unruly mobs,” without political consciousness and disciplined organization, or as the actions of small bands of “terrorists” cut off from the masses of oppressed people and having no support among them. But an actual armed uprising—one that has a real chance at winning—cannot be either of these: it would have to be firmly based among the masses of the oppressed, and would have to draw in thousands, tens of thousands, and ultimately millions of them in various forms of combat and support activity.

Revolutionary war in a country like the U.S. would mean going up against a power structure that has a large, well-equipped military, with an advanced com-

munication and support system and massive amounts of technology and weaponry at their disposal. It would mean defeating an army that would be prepared and willing to bring down mass destruction and suffering on the people. Winning would require waging an all-out struggle to defeat and shatter the armed forces of the enemy, smash and dismantle their apparatus of repression, and consolidate power.

When the revolutionary opening comes the people's army would need to strike, launching the armed insurrection and holding nothing back, going on the offensive in an all-out battle for the seizure of power. It would need to "hit them" in such a way that the whole power structure could be "cracked" and be dealt paralyzing and decisive blows. It would need to bring to bear the strength of millions of the oppressed, leaping at the chance, at long last, to bring down their heartless oppressors—and organized into actual military formations and effective fighting forces, under the leadership of the proletarian vanguard.

This revolutionary armed force of thousands and millions would need to be wielded to strike concentrated and coordinated blows at the enemy forces—so massively and decisively that they are immediately set back, with some of their key units and formations overwhelmed and shattered. It would be crucial then to maintain and step up the revolutionary offensive, giving the enemy no breathing room but instead continuing to overwhelm, defeat and disintegrate its armed forces.

It would mean continually forging more battle-tested troops and more powerful military formations among the revolutionary armed forces. It would require relying on the masses for intelligence, logistical support, etc., while also making use of weapons and other equipment captured from the enemy, as well as enemy troops who come over to the people's side, integrating them into the developing fighting forces of the proletarian revolution.

It would be necessary to quickly link up the territories ripped away from the counter-revolutionary forces, consolidating these territories into a new revolutionary regime. This would serve as the base for waging the civil war to finally

defeat the remaining forces of the imperialists and their allies. The more the revolutionary war of the masses advanced in this way, the more people, including intermediate forces, would be won to the side of the revolution and away from supporting the imperialists and their counter-revolutionary war.

Proletarian revolution cannot be conceived of as an "armed general strike" or as a mass movement that gradually builds, draws in the majority of society, and eventually overwhelms the enemy. An actual armed insurrection would likely begin with a minority, made up of the most advanced forces in society, although this insurrection would actively involve millions.

In fact, one of the distinguishing features of the insurrection—and still more of the civil war—would be that, to a large degree, the reserves for the revolutionary side are found among people who are at first not actively involved, or who might be in the camp of the enemy at the start. The "drawing in" of many of the previously neutral or inactive forces, or those who were originally on the other side, to actively join and/or support the revolutionary armed struggle will be vital to the success of the revolution.

And the winning over of troops from the other side—through the combination of fighting and defeating them on the battlefield, as the main and decisive thing, and at the same time appealing to their basic interests as part of the oppressed masses—is also a vital part of revolutionary warfare. These characteristics are factors that give an insurrection a chance of winning *when it may well appear* on the surface that *there is no such chance at all*.

Our Strategic Strengths, and the Enemy's Strategic Weaknesses

To defeat the enemy on the battlefield while trying to preserve oneself in battle is the goal of any army. The revolutionary army must be able to rely on its own strengths, while depriving the bourgeois armed forces of the ability to fight in the way they want to fight. Being able to do this will mean the difference between victory and defeat.

Wars are never decided by weapons

alone, and in the case of revolution versus counter-revolution this is all the more the case. The characteristics of a revolutionary army, fighting a genuine people's war, are very different from those of a bourgeois army. The revolutionary army is guided by the ideology of the proletariat, including its internationalist stance of fighting in unity with the oppressed people of the world. It relies on the conscious activism of the masses of its soldiers, serving the people and fighting for their liberation, not for personal power or power for any small group or clique.

The imperialists do have real military strength, BUT they also have real and strategic weaknesses. And an overriding *weakness of theirs is that they fundamentally CANT rely on the masses of people, and overwhelmingly must rely on the technology they have.*

The imperialist army depends on utilizing their powerful arsenal and weaponry, intimidating and overpowering any force it goes up against. But when this gets neutralized, when their army is deprived of the ability to "fight their way," then the content and class nature of their army stands out for all to see: it is a blood-soaked imperialist army of plunder and exploitation that represents the interests of only a small part of society—a relative handful of exploiters.

With the first powerful blows of the insurrection, and then the continuing offensive, the revolutionary forces would aim to begin a process of warfare through which the revolutionary army can increasingly reveal and exploit the strategic weaknesses of the enemy, while bringing forward and relying on its own strategic strengths.

It is also very important to note that a revolutionary war to overthrow U.S. imperialism—a superpower whose role in the world has involved the extreme oppression of literally billions of people and the outright slaughter of millions—would send shockwaves of upheaval and rebellion all around the globe. And it is likely that a revolutionary war in the U.S. would mutually aid and be closely intertwined with mass upheavals and revolutionary struggle in Mexico, including the possibility of the revolutionary struggle in each country "spilling over" into the other. Obviously, the revolutionary prole-

tariat and its army would welcome such a scenario.

The Party Must Lead

Revolutionary people's war must be led by a vanguard party that consciously and actively applies the revolutionary science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM) to prepare for and then carry out this revolutionary war. In a country like the U.S., where the people's war—the armed insurrections followed by civil war—should be launched only when there is a revolutionary crisis in society, the vanguard party must view and approach all work prior to that time as all-around preparation for this.

It must maintain its revolutionary tenseness in order to do all it can to contribute to the hastening of such a crisis and to be in the strongest possible position to recognize and to seize on such a crisis. It must continue to develop its strategic military doctrine at the same time as it works to develop the revolutionary movement of the people, even before the conditions emerge that make possible the launching of the revolutionary war. And it must prepare so that, when the time is ripe, it is in the strongest position to transform the revolutionary organization that has been built among the masses into organization on a military footing, capable of incorporating millions and of leading them in fighting in accordance with the military doctrine that has been developed.

The profound truth that people not weapons are decisive in warfare has to find expression in military strategy and doctrine and, more than that, in the actual waging—and winning—of revolutionary war when the time comes. It is not enough to be "braver" than the imperialist forces. The courage and daring, the capacity for self-sacrifice, of people fighting consciously for their emancipation and the emancipation of all humanity, the illumination and inspiration provided by MLM—all this *will* be a tremendously important factor for the revolutionary army of the proletariat. But, when the time comes, this must be given the fullest, most effective expression in military doctrine, actual military operational principles, actual military fighting forces and

formations, and concrete ways of fighting that can actually DEFEAT the enemy on the battlefield.

This military doctrine must take into account not only the strategic strengths of the revolutionary side and the strategic weaknesses and vulnerabilities of the other side, in a general sense. It must also address and indicate the basic solutions to the difficult, vexing problems that will have to be faced, such as: how the revolutionary army of the proletariat would be created, organized, and led on various levels, including how it would continually incorporate broader ranks of the masses; how it would move to encounter the enemy and then fight the enemy while paying due attention to the great destructive power that enemy has; how its fighting units would be organized and coordinated in battle; how and from where its forces would be equipped, trained, supplied, and continually re-supplied with the necessary means to not only survive but to fight—our way.

And once the revolutionary situation is immediately approaching—once it can be determined that the launching of the armed insurrection is something that must be done in the near future, or else the opportunity will be lost (perhaps for a long time)—once that is the situation THEN the overwhelming attention and efforts of the vanguard would have to be concentrated on immediate and concrete preparations for launching the insurrection (and then carrying forward the civil war).

It would also be necessary to be prepared for the possibility that there may be other armies in the field, representing other classes and groups in society who are fighting against the old order, and that it may be necessary to forge alliances with some of these forces. At the same time, the revolutionary army of the proletariat would have to maintain its independence and its crucial role as the most consistent, determined, and powerful force fighting the enemy, the decisive force in defeating the imperialists and counter-revolutionaries. Through all this, the revolutionary proletariat would be able to lead other forces among the people along the path that serves proletarian revolution.

Two Fundamentally Different Armies

Fundamentally, an army is a concentration of the society it is fighting for. The imperialist army and fighting style represent an outdated, dying system, that in no way-shape-or-form is in the interests of the vast majority of the world's people. Such an army is riddled with sharp class and national contradictions, and male chauvinism runs rampant. These contradictions come powerfully to the surface, and the morale of its troops is dealt heavy blows, whenever such an army is incapable of quickly overwhelming and pulverizing its enemy.

On the other hand, the proletariat's revolutionary army, with its bedrock among the most exploited sections of the proletariat but drawing in people from different parts of society, will concentrate in important ways the social and political relations of the future society it fights for. It will unleash, organize and coordinate the fighting determination and capacities of people of all nationalities—united in fighting to uproot all oppression.

It will unleash women as a mighty force for revolution in a way reactionary armies never can, enabling them to play a decisive role both on the frontlines and in commanding positions within the army. And the urgent insistence of masses of youth that the world should not be this way—this will have a very important place in the revolutionary army, which will give these youth a purpose and a focus for their outrage, a purpose worth fighting and dying for. The revolutionary army of the proletariat will give concrete expression to the masses' hatred for the capitalist system and the desire of millions to live in a different world.

The fighting style of such an army is also an expression of what it is fighting for. For example, the ability to continuously fight, as well as to move over large distances and then engage in battle without rest and with no fear of fatigue; and the great courage in battle and no fear of sacrifice that characterizes its troops—all this stems from and reflects the fact that this kind of revolutionary army fights with the lofty mission of liberating the masses of people and ultimately humanity as a whole from all oppression and

exploitation.

Only with the leadership of the vanguard party will it be possible, when the time comes, to forge a revolutionary army on this basis and to maintain that orientation through all the twists and turns of battle. War is a continuation of politics by military means, and in revolutionary war the politics and ideology of the revolutionary proletariat must guide the waging of the war. This war must never be divorced from nor fought by methods that run counter to this revolutionary mission, which is represented by the vanguard party and its ideological and political line: the party must com-

mand the gun; the gun must never be allowed to command the party.

The party must imbue the masses with the spirit and revolutionary outlook of "Fear Nothing, Be Down for the Whole Thing." It will instill in the revolutionary army as well as the masses who support it a largeness of mind and selflessness for the cause of proletarian revolution, leading them to make great sacrifices and conquer hardships in fighting for this cause. And it will help them keep their eyes on the prize all the way through so that they can defeat the enemy and win in the fullest sense!

CREATE PUBLIC OPINION, SEIZE POWER!

Prepare Minds and Organize Forces for Revolution.

The Central Task of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

Without state power all is illusion. Here and around the world, the masses need state power. The masses need to rise up and make armed proletarian revolution and build a whole new society on the ashes of the old. The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA exists to lead the people to do exactly this, at the soonest possible time.

Hastening While Awaiting

How would you get to the moment when mass armed revolution is the order of the day? A revolutionary situation emerges through a combination of huge shocks and changes in society overall (brought on by events like economic crises, wars, and revolutionary struggles in other countries) *in combination with* the work of revolutionaries all through the period leading up to it.

The Party cannot create a revolutionary situation; it must, in one sense, await favorable developments. *But* it can and must *hasten* the arrival of the conditions for the armed struggle for power. The Party does not overall determine the political challenges that it faces, but how it meets those challenges can have a huge effect on the political terrain itself. In other words, the Party must play a very dynamic role at all times, and that role will greatly influence when, how, and even if a revolutionary crisis actually does emerge.

The Party's orientation must be to *strain against* and *strive to transform* the limits imposed by the objective situation. The Party must be working at all times to push things closer to, and to prepare for, the conditions where the armed struggle can be launched. "How does what we are

doing today prepare us for and get us into position to be able to actually launch and win the revolutionary war, when the time is ripe?"—this is the yardstick with which our Party measures its work for revolution in the U.S.

The Party's Central Task

The Party does this through carrying out its Central Task: *Create Public Opinion, Seize Power! Prepare Minds and Organize Forces for Revolution*. The Party Chairman, Bob Avakian, has described this as "an all-around process and all-around struggle through which the consciousness, and also the organization and fighting capacity of the masses is raised in preparation for going over to the armed struggle to seize power when the revolutionary crisis breaks out."

This process and this struggle has a definite aim—simply put, we are working to bring the masses to the position where they are willing and determined to put everything on the line for revolution, where they grasp both the necessity and the possibility for this. This, in essence, is the "public opinion" we are creating.

This should not be understood as a process of "patient education." It is an all-around process with different dimensions—it encompasses mass struggles in various forms and building organization, both the Party itself and mass organizations of various kinds, as well as exposing the system, bringing to light its ugly features, its utter worthlessness, and the necessity of overthrowing it. And all this goes into preparing the masses and the Party itself for the all-out struggle to seize power.

The Pivotal Role of the Party's Press

Within this whole process, the Party's newspaper plays a pivotal role. Through its exposures, it reveals the different and conflicting class interests and class forces involved in all such events, and gives people a sense of the thoroughly reactionary nature of the system and the need for revolution. It battles the bourgeoisie in the realm of public opinion on the biggest issues and questions of the day.

The paper not only exposes the enemy and its crimes, it rouses the people in struggle and supports the outbreaks of protest and rebellion that repeatedly erupt among the masses.

Beyond the work of the Party to build mass resistance to the imperialist system, this system itself and its endless abuses and outrages all over the world, awaken people to political life and draw them into struggle. Especially through its newspaper, the Party can "stretch a line" into these protests and rebellions, supporting these outbreaks, helping those involved to draw the links between particular injustices and the overall oppressive nature of the system and how all this is rooted in the fundamental nature of this system, helping fighters on one front to become fighters on all fronts against the system, and influencing them in a revolutionary direction.

In an overall way, the paper analyzes the key events and struggles in the country and the world as a whole, using the method of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the line of the Party. As experience has repeatedly shown, those who regularly read the Party's newspaper and are trained in (or at least significantly influenced by) this line and outlook are better able to grasp the essence and importance of these questions and generally to act in a more conscious and determined way around them.

During the all-out struggle for power, the *class-conscious* section of the working class will form the backbone of the revolutionary army of the proletariat. At the core of that must be the vanguard party and those systematically trained in the party's line. That core won't suddenly spring into being—it needs to be forged and developed now, as a seed of the future

of revolution. And the newspaper plays a critical role in developing it.

The paper not only shows the masses, especially those awakened to political life and activity, why and how to support the many protests and rebellions of different sections of the people; it also enables them to see both the strengths and the limitations of all the different class forces that fight against the system. In this way people can come to understand that it is only the proletariat—the class whose exploitation is the foundation of the capitalist system, and which has nothing to lose but its chains—that can be the backbone of a struggle to actually overthrow this system and revolutionize all of society.

The Party's paper also brings out how the different sections of the working class are part of the single multinational proletariat in the U.S. and, further, how the proletariat in this country is one with the proletariat worldwide. It gives people a vision of the communist future and a sense of the experience of the proletariat worldwide in making revolution and carrying out the socialist transformation of society toward the final aim of communism.

It plays a key role in educating the masses with the internationalist stand of the proletariat and training them to actively apply this in supporting the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat and oppressed masses throughout the world. It takes on the dog-eat-dog ideology of the enemy in many different ways and explains the communist outlook and method for understanding, and changing, the world.

In this way, the paper plays a particularly important role in developing the *class-consciousness* of the proletariat—its sense of itself as a class that is antagonistically opposed to the bourgeoisie and the capitalist system, and that has the potential power to lead the people to remake the world through revolution.

The paper shows people that such a revolutionary struggle is possible—and it shows that there is a political party that can lead such a struggle, a political party that speaks and acts for those with nothing to lose but their chains: The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.

In short, the newspaper is pivotal in carrying out our Central Task as an all-

around process, an active process of exposing the system and of engaging the enemy in struggle, and building up the revolutionary organization of the proletariat and its allies—all as preparation for waging the revolutionary war, with the prospect of winning, when the time is ripe.

The role of the newspaper will assume even greater importance as the revolutionary situation develops, when events clatter with machine-gun speed and public opinion goes through rapid shifts and turns, when masses in their millions will be looking for guidance on how to live and how to die, and when the changing shape of public opinion will have very direct implications for the timing of a revolutionary uprising.

“Schools of War” and the War Itself

Our Party’s Central Task is also a means for dealing with a major contradiction we face in making revolution in a country like the U.S. The insurrection should not be started, as Chairman Avakian has put it, “until the system has gotten into deep crisis and the ruling powers are weakened and fighting among themselves, while growing numbers of the oppressed people are more and more refusing to put up with the system and more and more ready to put everything on the line to bring it down. But before you reach that point, you definitely cannot let the system and its enforcers just keep on beating the people down and robbing them without resistance.”

As Chairman Avakian goes on to say, “You have to lead the people to fight back, you have to move masses of people to battle the system in a way that is guided by revolutionary ideology and serves revolutionary aims. And through all this you have to build up the revolutionary consciousness and organization of the masses, with the Maoist vanguard party at the very core, and prepare the revolutionary people to wage people’s war when the conditions for that are ripe.”

The Party must support the masses when they fight back and often must take responsibility for initiating and organizing such struggles when the people face especially sharp attacks. In relation to

these struggles, and in regard to all the major questions in society and world events, the Party must expose the *real source of the problem*, which is not just this or that politician, boss, or cop, but the whole imperialist system. The Party must promote the *real solution*—proletarian revolution.

These struggles are not the war itself. Armed insurrection and civil war is something qualitatively different than even the hardest fought and most militant mass struggle, way beyond even a massive rebellion. But, viewed from the vantage point of preparing for such a revolutionary war, today’s mass struggles are *immensely* important.

Especially as the Party influences mass struggles and helps develop them “in a way that is guided by revolutionary ideology and serves revolutionary aims,” they can be *schools of war*, contributing to the development of the masses’ fighting capacity and sense of organization, stiffening their determination in the face of the enemy’s attempts to crush them, and helping them to see the need to build resistance as part of a revolutionary movement. This resistance can awaken and inspire others, dramatically revealing the injustice of the system to thousands and even millions more, and thereby helping to create public opinion for revolution.

Here once again the Party’s newspaper plays a critical role. Its exposures of the enemy propel the masses into battle. It popularizes those battles and other important struggles throughout society, galvanizing mass support and sparking others to rise up. It shows the real source of the problem and the real solution. It lays out guidance for the broad masses involved in these battles, helping them to firm up their ranks, keep the spearhead pointed at the main enemy, and unite all who can be united—at times waging polemics with other forces involved over whether and how best to do all that.

Revolutionary Organization

What is the importance of the orientation that “through all this you have to build up the revolutionary consciousness and organization of the masses, with the Maoist vanguard party at the very core”?

The seizure of power cannot be carried out by people just coming together on the spot when a revolutionary situation erupts. While millions will then suddenly flood into motion, with the potential to be organized and forged into an army, there will need to be a very cohesive force with an effective division of labor already in the field to seize on and lead this—to act as the backbone of that army and to enable it to launch the insurrection with the massive and concentrated force of tens of thousands, quickly incorporating millions, to defeat the counterattack by the armed forces of the ruling class, to maintain and strengthen the cohesion and fighting capacity of the revolutionary armed forces, and to successfully stay on the offensive.

To be able to seize on a revolutionary situation, the Party will need *tens of thousands of organized ties* in the major cities—masses trained in its line and under its leadership. These tens of thousands would be called on to lead millions when “all of a sudden”—that is, with the eruption of a severe crisis—millions start to bust loose. While the onset of a revolutionary crisis would enable the Party to recruit and forge organized ties on a far greater scale than during ordinary times, the Party cannot wait until the last minute to get started. The Party must urgently build this organization now in order to be able to make those greater leaps when the opportunity does develop.

The tens of thousands of organized ties must be painstakingly, consciously, and systematically built in the whole period of preparation leading up to the time of a revolutionary crisis. These organized ties must be built with the strategic objectives of the proletarian revolution in mind—they must be built *so wisely and so well* that the enemy cannot know where the lines of the organization run and cannot destroy or fundamentally disrupt this organization.

A vanguard party would face a tremendous amount of responsibility in a revolutionary situation in a country like the U.S. In order to determine exactly when to launch the insurrection, the party would need ties that were both firm and wide-ranging enough to enable the party to keep pace with the rapidly changing sentiments of different sections of the people in the midst of a ripening revolu-

tionary situation. The party’s organized ties would also enable it to divert and direct mass outpourings into a growing revolutionary torrent and bring broader ranks of the proletariat and oppressed masses to the revolutionary position as the crisis further developed.

The vanguard party would have to be widespread and well organized enough to be able to coordinate the insurrection in the major cities and continually strengthen and lead the revolutionary army in waging people’s war to defeat and shatter the armed forces of counter-revolution. Only in this way will the outpouring of millions demanding a better world not be misdirected and dissipated—or crushed and broken. Only in this way will the revolutionary opportunity not be missed—or thrown away.

Building the Party Itself Is a Crucial Part of Revolutionary Preparation

Many different kinds of organization will play an important role in the period of preparation for revolution, and then with the eruption of the revolutionary crisis there would be the need to rapidly bring into being many new organized forces of revolutionary masses, most especially the revolutionary army of the proletariat. *But the one force at the core of all this, through both the period of revolutionary preparation and all through the seizure of power itself, must be the vanguard party of the proletariat.*

The Party is made up of the most dedicated fighters for revolution, those who devote their lives to this cause and who struggle wholeheartedly to grasp and apply the revolutionary ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM). Building and strengthening the Party is essential to making revolution. This is a crucial aspect of carrying out the Central Task.

The Party must continually bring in and train fresh forces, particularly from the proletariat as well as the revolutionary youth, training all members to constantly deepen their grasp and application of MLM. Here, too, the newspaper is pivotal—both in ideologically and politically leading and training the masses and the Party members, and in its ability to

serve as one important organizational connection between the Party and masses. The paper is a key link not only in creating public opinion very broadly, not only in “preparing minds,” but also in “organizing forces.”

Strongholds and “Stretching a Line”

As a key aspect of revolutionary preparation, the Party must build organized strongholds of revolutionary activity in key proletarian neighborhoods and workplaces. In these strongholds the Party and the advanced masses set revolutionary standards and strive to command political leadership and authority.

The Party develops its “political authority” in such areas through a combination of leading the masses in struggle in a way that is guided by revolutionary aims, widely distributing its press, popularizing and struggling broadly for the communist way of looking at the world, helping the masses forge collective solutions to the problems they face, etc. These strongholds should also be hubs of internationalist activity, where masses know about and support Maoist people’s wars and other revolutionary struggles around the world.

These strongholds serve to create public opinion very broadly and play a key role in preparing the minds and organizing the forces who will lead the millions when a revolutionary opening emerges. Strongholds like this would be crucial, in the future, in forging the revolutionary army of the proletariat to seize that revolutionary opening.

At the same time, the Party must also extend its influence and build organized ties throughout suburban and rural areas. Organized ties in such areas are important as part of all-around preparation for revolution. And organization there would also be essential in preventing the imperialists from isolating and crushing the proletariat in the urban cores when the revolutionary situation arises and the insurrection is launched.

As spoken to earlier, one way the Party builds organized ties is by using its paper to “stretch a line” to the movements that arise among different strata in various places. This means bringing the Party’s

analysis to these struggles and, where possible, forging organizational links to the people and organizations involved.

“Stretching a line” serves a dual purpose: in addition to helping forge the key organizational links described above, it can also strengthen the struggles that arise among various sections of the people, helping them to focus their outrage and resistance against the enemy and maximizing their positive impact on public opinion and the political terrain overall.

Nurturing the Seeds of the Future Today

Our Party has struggled hard, over many years, to develop this understanding of how to carry out revolutionary work in a citadel of imperialism. This orientation involves carrying out revolutionary work from the “armed insurrection and civil war back”—that is, grasping first of all what is needed to begin a revolutionary struggle for power, and drawing the links between that and the work we do at every point in the process that precedes the development of the revolutionary situation and the all-out struggle for power.

This means doing our work—our exposure of the system, our support for outbreaks of protest and rebellion among the masses, our initiation and leadership of mass struggles, our building of organization, and all the other aspects of our Central Task—in such a way that the seeds of seizing power are nurtured and developed even in circumstances where the ongoing focus rests on creating public opinion in an all-around way for proletarian revolution.

The Party’s orientation of evaluating all its work in terms of how it serves the strategic objective of seizing power and contributing as fully as possible to revolution worldwide must be popularized among the masses. This will help the people to view all major world events—and to take part in major struggles in society—from the standpoint of influencing and moving things toward the eventual armed insurrection. Raising and popularizing this, now and in an ongoing way, is a necessary and crucial part of overall preparation for the armed struggle—for the shift in emphasis to the “seize power” aspect of our Central Task when the situ-

ation ripens.

As Chairman Avakian has written, “Such political preparation is the most important way to influence the political terrain now, to plant and nurture the seeds and shoots of a future armed uprising, to learn more fully the features of the enemy and all classes and strata in society, and to develop—especially among the advanced, with the party at the core—the political ability and ‘maturity’ to handle the extremely complex, tortuous, and magnified character of the revolutionary situation, when it does ripen, and of the actual revolutionary armed struggle for power.”

One aspect of this is the need to seize on crises, even “mini-crises”—such as military encounters and wars in which the imperialists are engaged, particularly where important blows are struck against them; or a financial panic, internationally and/or within the U.S. itself; or situations where serious conflict and even bitter contention among different factions within the ruling class bursts into the open.

Even where a particular crisis is not immediately accompanied by an outpouring of mass struggle, there may be potential for such struggle to erupt. And in such crises (or “mini-crises”), there is the basis for important revolutionary work, including further exposure of the system and the ruling class.

And especially when many different political forces come into motion and society is in an uproar of debate and controversy, it is crucial to maximize the gains for the revolutionary movement. These are times when many features appear in embryo that can school the Party and the masses and provide them with aspects of a “rehearsal” for the major crisis ahead.

When tens of thousands of mainly middle class youth militantly take to the streets to oppose the conditions of the masses in sweatshops around the planet and other effects of imperialist “globalization,” we can see not only the irrepressible desire of the youth to fight for a more just world but also how the “normal routines” of millions could be disrupted as they are suddenly drawn into active debate about world affairs.

Or when upsurges in Mexico inspire and activate people with ties to Mexico, immigrants, youth, and others within the U.S., we can see the potential for revolu-

tionary struggles in Mexico to even more powerfully reverberate into the U.S., and vice versa.

It is important in this light to recall the 1992 rebellion that erupted in Los Angeles. Proletarians and other basic masses of all nationalities powerfully rose up against the oppression of Black people and other oppressed nationalities. People in other cities followed suit, both with rebellions and other forms of struggle, including armed self-defense. Broad sections of the middle class got a big wake-up call, and many were won to sympathy and support for the resistance. At the same time, the police and then the National Guard had big problems enforcing “law and order” for several days.

In the events of that L.A. rebellion—and other great rebellions, too—we can see, again, outlines of what could happen on an even greater scale in a major social crisis: where the middle strata could be realigned in support of a fighting proletariat; where the authority and power of the ruling class would no longer be capable of intimidating and bludgeoning the masses into submission; where all the suppressed outrage would not only explode but be channeled and directed toward its source and toward the solution—the capitalist system and its overthrow.

This country has never seen a revolutionary struggle for power led by the proletariat. That’s true. But it did witness during the 1960s a revolutionary mass movement that shook it to its foundations.

The Vietnam War reverberated throughout U.S. society...and the whole world. The Black liberation struggle raged in hundreds of cities, large and small, and other oppressed peoples rose in widespread militant resistance. Youth very broadly, in the middle class but also among lower sections of the masses, rebelled against the suffocating and repressive “culture,” conventions, rules and regulations of the established order. The revolt of women against their subjugated position developed to a whole new and powerful dimension.

And increasingly, all these different streams of revolt began to find common cause and to support and unite with each other. People in their millions, including in the middle class, began to question the very legitimacy of the government’s rule.

A “revolutionary people” was emerging on the scene.

Sharp divisions developed within the ruling class over how to deal with their losing war in Vietnam and the social upheaval in the U.S.

And both the internal conflicts within the ruling class and the struggle of millions of people against the system reverberated in Vietnam itself, where the U.S. bourgeoisie’s main pillar of power—its own armed forces—began to crack and rebel, with not only individual soldiers but at times whole units challenging military authority to the point of attacking their officers and battling other units sent to quell them.

Since that time as well, in many parts of the world—in Iran in 1979, the Philippines in 1986, Eastern and Central Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and elsewhere—there have been major political crises and mass outpourings and uprisings that have played a key part in the fall of certain regimes which had previously been very powerfully entrenched.

It is true that in many of these countries the revolutionary road has features significantly different from a country like the U.S. And it is also true that those movements have generally been dominated by opportunist forces opposed to proletarian revolution and working to keep things under the control of the bourgeoisie and the imperialists. But they offer important lessons, even for proletarian revolution in a country like the U.S.

Events like these provide a glimpse of how a mass uprising of the people, in which the class-conscious proletariat is able to successfully contend for and win leadership, might be developed into an actual revolutionary war to overthrow bourgeois rule altogether.

All this gives a sense of what would go into a crisis severe enough to create an opening for a revolutionary struggle to seize power in a country like the U.S. Of course, no one can predict the exact makeup of such a crisis; when it comes it will, no doubt, have many totally unanticipated features.

Moreover, no one can predict exactly which crisis will actually mature into a revolutionary situation. So not only must the Party use such crises as “rehearsals” or “testing grounds,” it must also push every opening to the maximum, always

looking for the possibility of transforming something that begins as a “mini-crisis” into a full-blown revolutionary situation.

The Final Aim Must Guide All Our Work

As noted, this whole orientation—of focusing on the seizure of power and working back from there—has had to be fought for. The greatest danger for parties in imperialist countries has been the tendency to divorce the situation and the work of the party at any given time from the revolutionary goal—to put all one’s emphasis on building the struggles of today in a way that does NOT nurture the seeds of tomorrow, and, for all intents and purposes, to put revolution off into a never-never land.

To the extent that a party gets so immersed in today’s situation and struggles that it fails to concretely forge the links to the future armed uprising, it will promote illusions among the masses, help to restrain the struggle of the masses within limits acceptable to and easily contained by the bourgeoisie, and set the masses up for a devastating defeat when a revolutionary situation does emerge.

Lenin criticized this orientation as “the movement is everything, the final aim is nothing.” As we have said, the question is not *whether* to relate to today’s struggles, but *how* and with what aim. The Party works to win the masses to see that every major outrage in society, all the howling injustices throughout the world, are rooted in the capitalist-imperialist system and the rule of the bourgeoisie, and that there is only one solution to all this—proletarian revolution. And, through all its work, it forges in the masses the ability to carry through that revolution to victory.

The Party must carry out political work wherever the masses are found in significant numbers—in neighborhoods, workplaces, schools, and important mass organizations.

In recent years one significant development among the working class is that immigrant workers and lower-paid proletarians have begun to wage major struggles to organize unions. Other kinds of progressive political ferment (for instance, taking up struggles against police brutality) have also gone on among

unionized workers. This has created further openings for revolutionary work in relation to the unions.

At the same time, in carrying out such work, as in all the Party's work, it is necessary to resist the pulls to restrict things to the terms and limits of the immediate struggle and to put to the side the revolutionary line of the Party. This would amount to pitching things to the political level of the intermediate or even the more backward masses, rather than bringing forward the revolutionary mission of the proletariat, drawing the links between the particular struggle and that larger, strategic objective, and drawing forward the advanced to the revolutionary banner.

In general, it does not help the masses, and in fact it actually holds them back, to come to them with anything less than the whole truth of what is fundamentally required for humanity's liberation. Our highest goal and the greatest way to serve the people is to lead them to make proletarian revolution and move forward towards communism. Communists must be bold in this work and bold in representing this whole vision and historic mission to the masses.

Conclusion

Having gone into many different elements of the Party's Central Task, it is important to return to the overall character and objective of this Central Task. Chairman Avakian has summed up the whole process encompassed in our Central Task in a very concentrated way:

"You have to lead the people to fight back, you have to move masses of people to battle the system in a way that is guided by revolutionary ideology and serves revolutionary

aims. And through all this you have to build up the revolutionary consciousness and organization of the masses, with the Maoist vanguard party at the very core, and prepare the revolutionary people to wage people's war when the conditions for that are ripe.

"Build the places where we live and work as strong bases of support for proletarian revolution, with a deep and firm Party organization as the bedrock foundation. Spread our influence throughout society, especially where people are protesting and rebelling. Use the Party's newspaper as the hub and the guide in all this, in doing everything to help bring about, as quickly as possible, the conditions where we can begin the highest form of struggle—the fight for power over society.

"The thousands who are reached and moved now will be the backbone and the force to lead millions when, 'all of a sudden,' millions are starting to bust loose. When there is a great upheaval throughout society; when the victims on the bottom just won't take it anymore; when those on top are in real trouble and are fighting among themselves; when many of those in the middle support us, or at least don't feel like fighting to defend this system: Then it is time to strike—and to hold nothing back—time to take power by force and arms. That time is coming, and we must get ourselves and others ready for it."

CREATE PUBLIC OPINION, SEIZE POWER! Prepare Minds and Organize Forces for Revolution. This is the bridge from the present to the future; fulfilling this whole process is the Central Task of the Party.

The United Front Under the Leadership of the Proletariat

Part I: Why and How the Proletariat Builds and Leads the United Front

For a revolution to succeed in the U.S., a vast and diverse array of forces will have to be brought into the field of battle. For a revolution to succeed in the U.S., these forces will have to be united under the uncompromising revolutionary leadership of the proletariat and its vanguard party.

The united front is a basic alliance of classes opposed to imperialism led by the one class, the proletariat, that can marshal the necessary forces to overthrow the existing order and lead in creating a radically different kind of society. This united front is built in the midst of struggles and in relation to key political and ideological issues and conflicts in society.

In the specific conditions of U.S. society, the heart of the united front is the alliance between the struggle of the proletariat of all nationalities to end all oppression and exploitation through proletarian revolution and the struggles of the Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Native American, and other oppressed nationalities against their oppression as peoples.

Why must the class-conscious proletariat mobilize the strength and determination of different sections of people? In short, because the revolutionary proletariat is serious about winning, in the fullest sense.

In a country like the U.S., it will not be possible to launch and successfully wage armed insurrection without a vast array of allies in broad and diverse segments of society. Without this, how would the insurrection break out of and break through the efforts of the enemy to contain, suppress, and annihilate the insurrection in its initial strongholds in the urban cores—and seize countrywide power?

And after the proletariat has seized power, it will not be possible to carry forward the transformation of society as part of the worldwide proletarian revolution unless the class-conscious proletariat unites with, engages, struggles with and

leads these broad and diverse strata. And, over a whole period, the proletariat must bring about a radical change in their material conditions and world outlook—in accordance with the final aim of abolishing class distinctions altogether with the achievement of communism worldwide.

Bringing About a Favorable Repolarization

Right now, the alignment of forces in U.S. society is not the one needed to make proletarian revolution. Alignments, however, can dramatically shift, and relatively suddenly, in response to major changes in international, political, social, and economic conditions. (This happened, on a vast scale, in the U.S. during the 1960s and early '70s.) But the class-conscious proletariat does not passively await changes in objective conditions. Alignments are consciously “worked on” by the two major class antagonists in society—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

The bourgeoisie, as the ruling class, works to create and maintain a “reactionary polarization.” It does this through force and threat, through political manipulation and deception, through media lies and ideological campaigns calculated to provoke confusion, fear, and misguided resentment among various social strata.

In particular, the bourgeoisie aims to enlist the support of the middle strata for its attacks on the basic masses—from social spending cuts to heightened police-state repression, from anti-immigrant measures to the reinforcing of segregation and discrimination. In all of this, the ruling class tries to deflect the anger and anxiety of many in the middle class away from the system and towards the exploited and oppressed masses. This “reactionary polarization” serves to fortify the oppressive rule of the bourgeoisie by maintaining the “loyalty” of different

strata and isolating those on the bottom of society, seeking to convince them they will have no allies when they fight back.

The proletariat, through the leadership of its party, seeks to bring about a favorable repolarization. It aims for an alignment in which large sections of society, including among the numerically large middle strata, come to see their fate as being tied to that of the proletariat, and can ultimately be won to support, or at least not oppose, the revolutionary overthrow of imperialist rule. Revolutionary work today is aimed at this strategic objective, and is in fact impacting the political terrain precisely in this direction.

Many in the middle strata in the U.S. enjoy considerable privileges under this system and do not readily identify with the oppressed in the U.S. and other parts of the world. But radical change *is* in the fundamental interests of the great majority of people in U.S. society. They will gain far more than they will lose through proletarian revolution—not only the economic security and social well-being that capitalism cannot fundamentally provide but, even more importantly, a meaningful and liberating social existence.

So the bourgeoisie and the proletariat wage a “fight for the middle.”

The “Two 90/10s”

It is not possible to know, in advance, where all the different social strata and forces will line up when the showdown comes. That will be determined by the actual event. But the class-conscious proletariat must aim to win over the great majority.

Our Party calls this the strategic orientation of the “two 90/10s.” That is, the class-conscious proletariat must seek to win over the “90 percent,” whose fundamental interests ultimately lie with proletarian revolution, against the “10 percent”—the ruling class and its die-hard supporters—*within the U.S.* while doing this in unity with the “90 percent” *internationally*, the great majority of the people of the world who suffer exploitation and oppression under the domination of imperialism and its allies and puppets.

It must be recognized that there are significant contradictions involved in these “two 90/10s”—contradictions which

at times can become quite acute. In a country like the U.S., the requirements of upholding and applying proletarian internationalism and acting in accordance with the interests of the “90 percent” of the world’s people can, in a number of circumstances, bring the class-conscious proletariat into conflict with the more narrow interests of segments of society, particularly the more privileged strata.

In order to correctly handle these contradictions—and the often acute “tensions” involved—the proletarian vanguard must at all times keep uppermost the fundamental interests of the proletariat and masses of people worldwide and at the same time persevere, from a strategic standpoint, in its work to win over the broadest number from all strata among the people.

It must also be firmly grasped that this “90/10” orientation does *not* mean that it is first necessary to win over the great majority of the people before waging the all-out struggle to seize power. Even in the context of a revolutionary crisis, it is likely that far fewer than 90 percent will be in the camp of the revolutionary proletariat at the time when the armed insurrection must be launched. To “wait for the majority” under those circumstances would mean a historic opportunity would be lost and the proletariat would suffer a devastating setback.

Such an insurrection, and the civil war to follow, must indeed be the act of masses of people—it must involve millions in fighting and supporting this people’s war—or it will have no chance of success. But it is important to keep in mind that one of the distinguishing features of revolutionary war—including armed insurrection as well as civil war—is that a large part of those who are ultimately won to support the revolutionary side may at first be inactive, be at best in a position of “friendly neutrality” toward the revolutionary war, or may even at the start be in, or inclined toward, the enemy camp.

About one thing there should be no illusion: Revolution in this citadel of imperialism will have as one of its defining features the clash between “two sections of the people.” The bourgeoisie will mobilize substantial numbers behind its reactionary banner from among sections of the middle class and even from the working class.

The revolutionary proletariat must

work, all throughout the process preceding the development of a revolutionary situation, to win allies as broadly as possible and to lay the strongest basis for winning still broader numbers once the struggle for power has begun. It must dare to launch the revolutionary war when the time is ripe, and it must persevere in fighting, defeating, and dismantling the imperialist army and counter-revolutionary forces drawn from among backward sections of the people at any given time. But it must also persevere in the orientation of seeking to win increasing sections of the people away from the enemy camp and into the revolutionary camp as the revolutionary war advances.

Why must the class-conscious proletariat be oriented to unite the great majority, even though the balance of forces may be far from that at any given point? Because if the proletariat writes off potential allies, if it shrinks from waging that “fight for the middle,” difficult as it is, then it will fall short in making revolution. It will undermine its ability to bring about the most favorable alignment of forces, both in particular situations and in the overall process of the revolution; it will seriously undercut its ability to carry out its historic revolutionary mission.

International Factors

The united front within the U.S. must be built as part of a worldwide struggle to overthrow imperialism and all reactionary forces. It is being built in a world context in which national economies are highly integrated, in which political struggles and revolutionary movements in different parts of the world can have enormous international repercussions.

For instance, in the late 1960s and early '70s, the Vietnamese war of liberation against U.S. imperialism spurred forward and helped give a revolutionary edge to the Black liberation struggle and radical movements among other sections of the people in the U.S. itself.

The international situation will greatly influence the conditions and prospects for revolution in the U.S. Important international factors include whether the imperialists are bogged down in wars, the advance of revolutionary wars and the intensity of revolutionary upsurges

around the world, whether turns in the world economy are resulting in major economic dislocations, and whether victorious revolutions have led to socialist states.

The international situation will also greatly affect the development of and forms of alliance within the united front in the U.S. It will affect the specific character and degree of unity with the middle strata, the alignment within the broader working class itself, and the concrete policies that a successful revolution might have to adopt, including the concessions it might have to make to better-off strata in order to maintain their support.

The Basis for the United Front

U.S. society is teeming with contradictions and struggles: Repression and inequality faced by Black people and other oppressed nationalities, patriarchy and subjugation of women, attacks on immigrants, the alienation experienced by youth, economic pressures on the middle class, the demeaning of intellectuals and artists by the dictates of commercialization. These and other contradictions and struggles have specific historical features and particular social dimensions, but they are all bound up with the fundamental nature and fundamental contradiction of the capitalist-imperialist system. Herein lies the material basis for building the united front.

Broad social movements are critically important to the revolutionary process. Not only do they draw diverse sections of society into political life and struggle, but they also affect the proletariat. These movements draw proletarians into the struggle, and they influence the political atmosphere and terms of debate in society. This helps to awaken and embolden the proletariat.

So while the vanguard works to maximize the development of a revolutionary movement and revolutionary political atmosphere at the base of society, among the most exploited and oppressed, it also works to maximize the radical thrust and society-wide impact of social movements among middle strata.

The class-conscious proletariat aims to direct the many streams of resistance against the enemy, and to unite these

streams into a powerful revolutionary torrent. The united front is not about “wheeling and dealing” among political operatives for short-term advantage, nor is it the politics of “you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours.” It is a strategy for revolution, the class alliance to overthrow imperialism.

Maintaining Independence and Initiative in the United Front, Struggling for Leadership

The proletariat must “unite all who can be united.” But without the initiative and independent role of the class-conscious proletariat, the unity that is built with other class forces will not be as broad or as powerful as it can and must be. The proletariat, through its vanguard party, must strive to lead the united front. And unless the proletariat does achieve overall leadership of the united front, the united front will not serve revolution and the interests of the masses will suffer.

It is not as though this work of building the united front is carried out in a vacuum. Other class forces and programs contend for leadership of mass struggles and movements. Forces arise from the middle strata which often bring forward positive contributions, but also proposals and programs which represent the “in-between” position and vacillating character of the middle class. In addition, the bourgeoisie also has its political operatives, who consciously attempt to disrupt alliances among the people and steer the movement into bounds acceptable to the bourgeoisie.

The proletarian party has to analyze and sort out these different kinds of contradictions (which can often be tangled up together and confusing). It has to carry on the appropriate kinds of debate, discussion, and criticism of the different programs in the field, and work to point the spearhead of the struggle against the ruling class, uniting all who can be united and making sure that the interests of the proletariat and oppressed masses are protected and advanced.

Political leadership cannot be won if the proletarian vanguard acts in a disdainful and standoffish way towards forces with which it should be working to build unity.

But neither can this leadership be won if the vanguard fails to distinguish the outlook and programme of the revolutionary proletariat from those of other class forces. Nor will leadership be won if the vanguard abandons the strategic revolutionary interests of the proletariat in the name of meeting the demands of any particular situation or preserving the unity of any particular struggle.

It would be wrong, it would cut off potential allies, to insist that revolution be the basis of unity and dividing line in mass struggles, movements, and organizations in today’s conditions. But, while uniting broadly with many diverse forces for objectives short of revolution, the Party must, at every point and all along the way, boldly bring forward the banner of proletarian revolution and seek to win increasing numbers of people to this banner.

In all the work of developing the United Front under the Leadership of the Proletariat, the Party must pay systematic attention to building organized ties among different sections of the people. This has great strategic implications. (For a further discussion of this, see the appendix “Create Public Opinion, Seize Power....”)

The Party must also pay systematic attention to bringing forward and recruiting the most advanced fighters into its ranks. This is of decisive importance in strengthening the ability of the proletariat to broaden the united front *and* to win leadership within this united front.

Through the carrying out of this strategy, and through the twists and turns of this overall process, the proletariat increasingly comes forward under its own revolutionary banner, in particular battles and in the struggle as a whole. It increasingly mounts the political stage as a more and more class-conscious and powerful force. It develops its political understanding. It gains a deeper sense of its own class interests and politics, and of the strengths and weaknesses of other classes and strata whom it must unite and lead in order to make revolution.

The Strategic Orientation in Building the United Front

An important objective in building the United Front under the Leadership of the Proletariat is to move people from being

“fighters on one front” to becoming “fighters on all fronts.” People must be won to see that all the profound outrages in society and throughout the world stem from the same source: the capitalist-imperialist system and the rule of the bourgeoisie.

The united front, then, is not static but something dynamic and in motion. New forces repeatedly come forward, while others previously involved move to a more advanced position (and some others fall back, at least temporarily). And, as the contradictions of the imperialist system intensify, including as a result of advancing revolutionary struggles throughout the world, the sentiments of masses of people and their political orientation and activity undergo radical changes. As things approach and then reach the level of a revolutionary crisis, it then becomes possible, and necessary, to win very broad ranks of the people, not only among the proletariat but among other strata as well, to the revolutionary position.

At times like this, the strategic objectives embodied in the line of the Party will represent the immediate answer to the burning problems of the day, and will be seen as such by large sections of the people. It will then be the mass line—capable of galvanizing and mobilizing millions—that the urgent demands of the masses are only realizable through revolution.

At this point, the lines and programs of other forces, representing objectives and “solutions” other than proletarian revolution, will be increasingly shown to fall far short of meeting the urgent needs and demands of the masses. Those who insist on clinging to these lines and programs will be increasingly paralyzed politically—and/or will be shown to be clearly in the camp of imperialism and counter-revolution.

As this develops, through a combination of the intensifying objective contradictions *and* the all-around work of the Party, the basis of unity of broad mass movements and organizations, and of the united front as a whole, can and must be *revolution*: the all-out struggle to seize power under the leadership of the proletariat and its vanguard.

This is the fundamental orientation with which the Party must carry out its strategy of United Front under the Leadership of the Proletariat.

The Key Alliance for Making Revolution in the U.S.

The most important and strategic alliance for making proletarian revolution in the United States is the alliance between the struggle of the proletariat, of all nationalities, to end all oppression and exploitation through the overthrow of capitalism and the advance to communism worldwide and the struggles of Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Native American, and other oppressed nationalities to end their oppression as peoples.

The Party calls this the *solid core* of the united front under proletarian leadership. *It is crucial to the victory of the socialist revolution in this country.*

The whole history and development of capitalism in the U.S. down to today is bound up with national oppression. National oppression is built into the foundation of capitalist society in the U.S. and the whole structure of U.S. imperialist rule and domination in the world. (See appendix “Uprooting National Oppression and White Supremacy” for a detailed analysis of this point.)

National oppression hits those on the bottom the hardest, but it affects all classes and strata of the oppressed nationalities. This oppression has given rise to distinct national struggles and movements which have shaken the imperialist system and inspired broad sections of the population.

From the slave rebellions through the Civil War all the way up to the L.A. Rebellion of 1992, this has been an Achilles heel of U.S. imperialism. This was never more evident than in the historic struggles of the 1960s.

In the April 1968 weekend following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Black people in over 100 cities rebelled, fighting police, National Guard, and the Army itself. Around that same time, the Black Panther Party burst onto the scene and won hundreds of thousands of youth of all nationalities to see the need for revolution.

The Black liberation struggle sounded a clarion call to other oppressed nationalities, and revolutionary and radical organizations developed among Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, Native Americans, and Asian Americans. These struggles, and the support they garnered from all corners of

U.S. society (including large numbers of white people) and even internationally, shook U.S. society to its very foundations.

Much of the ruling class's social policy today, beginning with its severe police-state measures directed at the ghettos and barrios, is based on its fear of an even more powerful wave of such struggles, the basis for which could be seen again in the L.A. Rebellion in 1992. All this points to the great potential power of the movements of the oppressed nationalities against their oppression as peoples.

At the same time, the oppressed peoples are to a large extent part of the single multinational proletariat in the U.S. Blacks and Latinos make up over 30 percent of all machine operators, assemblers, and laborers, and are heavily concentrated in hospitals, health care, building services, and other sectors essential to the generation of profit and the maintenance of capitalism. They suffer dual oppression—national oppression and oppression as part of the multinational proletariat. This is a potentially explosive combination which puts proletarians from the oppressed nationalities in a crucial position in the process of proletarian revolution.

The oppressed peoples in the U.S. are a tremendously powerful force for revolution. Their fight for equality and emancipation is bound by a “thousand links” with the struggle of the proletariat for socialism and lends great strength to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat.

The only solution to national oppression is the overthrow of imperialist rule. That is to say, while national oppression has its own dynamic and will have to be resolved through particular measures and policies of the proletarian state to end inequality, *it is only through proletarian revolution—first of all the seizure of power but beyond that the thoroughgoing transformation of society and the whole world to achieve communism*—that national oppression (as well as all other kinds of oppression and exploitation) can be finally uprooted and abolished.

The class-conscious multinational proletariat, including large numbers of the oppressed nationalities as well as white proletarians, will fight consciously and directly under the proletarian revolutionary banner. Others from the oppressed nationalities will fight as part of national movements, under various banners. The

forging of the alliance of these two forces, around a program only realizable through and serving the proletarian revolution, will be of decisive importance for the victory of the socialist revolution in the U.S.

Forging the Solid Core

The Party must work to forge this solid core well before the revolutionary crisis erupts. Throughout the process of preparing for such a crisis, the Party must be making leaps forward in building and strengthening the links between the revolutionary movement of the class-conscious proletariat and the struggles of the oppressed nationalities against their oppression as peoples.

Historical and continuing national oppression and sharp conditions of inequality, along with the constant ideological barrage of white chauvinism (racism), have given rise to real national divisions within the U.S. working class. Combating this is a crucial part of the revolutionary struggle.

The class-conscious proletariat must build the struggle against national oppression by working at it from two sides—within the movements of the oppressed peoples and among the proletariat of all nationalities.

From one side, it must unite with the struggles of the oppressed nationalities and fight for the line and outlook of the revolutionary proletariat within them. The proletariat's representatives must support the most militant and uncompromising resistance against national oppression, and build ties especially with the most determined fighters in these struggles.

These national movements involve broad class forces from the oppressed nationalities, including middle class people who are very much in the cross-hairs of national oppression—from racial profiling to attacks on affirmative action. Their activism and resistance are positive factors for revolution. But ideologically, these forces incline towards reformism and nationalism. Sections of the Black bourgeoisie, hemmed in and restricted by monopoly capital, and also subjected to discrimination and racist abuse, may also be compelled to align with the people. As capitalists, however, they fundamentally seek markets and the ability to exploit

workers for profit.

These class forces are objectively part of the national movements and will, through political representatives, contend for influence and leadership in these movements. But if the outlooks of these class forces are in the leading position, the fundamental interests of the exploited and oppressed will be compromised.

So again, while the revolutionary proletariat seeks to unite as broadly as possible in these movements, it must maintain its independence and initiative and actively bring forward its revolutionary line and programme. In doing this, it relies on the proletarian masses within these movements.

On the other hand, there is the even more fundamental task of bringing the class-conscious proletariat of all nationalities into the front ranks of the fight against all oppression—including, as a crucial part of that, the fight against national oppression. With this understanding, in its bedrock work among the proletariat, especially the most exploited sections, the Party puts great emphasis on building the fight against white supremacy and national oppression and on mobilizing white proletarians, together with proletarians from the oppressed nationalities, in this fight.

This takes concrete expression in the exposure of national oppression that the Party carries out, especially through its newspaper. It also takes expression in mass struggles against various forms of national oppression: police brutality; the ruling-class policies of building prisons instead of schools and turning schools, as well as housing projects, into prisons; cuts in social welfare programs; the many-sided attacks on immigrants and chauvinistic “English-only” campaigns and other attacks on the languages and cultures of Latinos and other oppressed peoples; the continuing oppression of the Native American peoples; and the fight for the freedom of political prisoners, many of whom come from national movements.

The class-conscious proletariat builds the fight around these issues as part of building the struggle against all oppression, with the goal of overthrowing the source of all this oppression: the capitalist-imperialist system.

The battle against national oppression is a crucial arena and a pivotal part of

building the revolutionary movement, uniting the proletariat and masses of people around their real revolutionary interests, and laying the basis to wage and win the armed struggle when the time is ripe. Again, only proletarian revolution can thoroughly uproot national oppression.

Summing Up

The class-conscious proletariat of all nationalities must take the lead in forging and strengthening the solid core and building the united front as broadly as possible. The United Front under the Leadership of the Proletariat is the strategy for overthrowing the U.S. monopoly capitalist class and then continuing the struggle to transform society as part of the world proletarian revolution.

Chairman Avakian explains the united front in these terms: “The United Front under the Leadership of the Proletariat is an orientation and method, a strategic approach, for the realignment of class forces—the strategic realignment of class forces, in which the interests and outlook of the proletariat are brought to the forefront and established in the leading position through a complex and tortuous process of unity-struggle-unity.”

The United Front under the Leadership of the Proletariat is anything but a short-term gimmick. It has long-term implications, not only for the seizure of power but also for the continuing struggle to achieve communism. In carrying out this strategy, the proletariat gains an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of different classes and becomes conscious of itself as the class with the most fundamental and thorough interests in making revolution.

In applying its unity-struggle-unity orientation toward other forces which it strives to unite, and to lead, the proletariat strengthens its capacity to be the leading force in the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and ultimately its ability to rule society and lead others in remaking the world. The proletariat learns, as Lenin says, how to live alongside and transform other strata, both in their material conditions and their world outlook, over a whole historical period of continuing revolution, towards the ultimate goal of communism, worldwide.

The United Front Under the Leadership of the Proletariat

Part 2:

Who Are Our Friends, Who Are Our Enemies? A Brief Presentation of Classes in U.S. Society

Building the united front requires making a scientific estimate of the various classes and strata in U.S. society: who can be firmly united with, who can be won over or at least won to a position of neutrality, and the enemy that must be uncompromisingly struggled against and defeated.

CLASS STRUCTURE AND EMPIRE

The United States is the chief beneficiary and chief guardian of the world imperialist system. Everything about the U.S. economy, and everything about the class structure of U.S. society, is deeply imprinted with the international relations of U.S. capitalism-imperialism.

Consider occupations. Huge sections of the U.S. population are engaged in activities linked to the financial, administrative, communications, and technological needs of the U.S. empire. Or take the major cities in the U.S. To one degree or another, they function as headquarters of the worldwide operations of capital and require many service workers.

The standard of living of the middle class is very much connected to the dominant and exploiting position of the U.S. in the world economy. Better-off sections of workers receive benefits too.

But there is a lower section of workers as well. Many low-paid proletarians in the U.S. work as part of “production chains”—interlinked factories or service centers extending through Latin America or Asia and into the U.S. At the same time, globalization of production shifts employment from historically better-paid and more stable factory jobs in the U.S. to the lower-paid service sector. The U.S. economy feasts on cheap overseas labor. Immigrants from the oppressed nations of Latin America, Asia, and Africa are pushed and pulled into the worst and

most degrading jobs in the U.S. economy.

This fact of empire has far-reaching political and strategic implications.

Because the wealth of the U.S. is inseparable from its privileged position in the world, there is a big basis for sections of the population to see their interests as lying with the preservation of empire. But this will be fiercely contested and fought out, because the U.S. is also a sharply polarized society.

For the have-nots on the bottom, there is a big basis to see their interests as those of the “wretched of the earth.” There is, in short, a social base for proletarian revolution and proletarian internationalism in the “belly of the beast.”

The ruling class propagates a certain view of U.S. society. They tell us that the great, great majority of Americans belong to a prosperous and mobile middle class. Then there are the rich: icons of success and “role models” for those who would “work” as hard. At the bottom of society is what the bourgeoisie calls the “underclass,” which it characterizes as being made up of the lazy, the losers, the lawbreakers, and the dysfunctional—to be despised, ignored, and suppressed when necessary.

This distorted picture of society justifies the status quo, confuses the middle strata, and dehumanizes the exploited and oppressed. It conceals the real class relations in U.S. society and writes the proletariat out of existence.

So what is the reality of classes in this imperialist country?

THE BOURGEOISIE IS THE TARGET OF THE REVOLUTION AND MUST BE OVERTHROWN

The ruling class of U.S. society is the bourgeoisie. This class owns and controls

the principal means of production, dominates politics and the cultural and intellectual life of society, and enforces its rule through a dictatorship that combines repression with deception.

The core of the U.S. bourgeoisie is made up of the monopoly capitalists.

For example, they hold the controlling interest in the huge monopolistic corporations and banks that completely dominate the economy of the U.S. The 100 largest manufacturing corporations control close to half of all manufacturing assets (factories, equipment, materials, etc.). The top 10 banks control over 40 percent of all commercial bank assets (loans, other financial investments, etc.). Four companies control 70 percent of North America's corn seed market.

The U.S. bourgeoisie presides over an empire. The economy of the U.S. is the "home base" of a global network of exploitation and plunder.

This empire is bound together by over \$5 trillion in overseas investments; by repressive neocolonial regimes (independent in name only) in the Third World that U.S. imperialism props up; by global institutions like the IMF, World Bank, and WTO that it dominates; and by a high-tech, genocidal military machine.

The U.S. imperialists are responsible for untold suffering in the world and in the U.S. itself. They will stop at nothing to defend and extend their empire and to preserve their rule. Ask no mercy and give none in return: this is the only method the proletariat can employ in dealing with them.

The core of the U.S. bourgeoisie makes up less than 1 percent of the households in the U.S. The bourgeoisie also includes the numerically greater but less dominant and less significant capitalists; they do not have controlling interests in monopolies and large financial institutions or major international investments, but they depend for their income on the labor of substantial numbers of employees and accumulate large sums in the process.

Within the enemy camp and part of the target of proletarian revolution and proletarian dictatorship are the loyal political agents and enforcers of the bourgeoisie and its dictatorship. These are the big-time politicians, high-ranking military officers, heads of the government bureaucracies, and those in general who willing-

ly perform the role of suppressing and terrorizing the masses of people: the police, judges, prison officials, etc.

The top heads of the trade union bureaucracy are also part of the enemy camp. They play a special role for the bourgeoisie in its efforts to maintain political and ideological domination over significant sections of the working class. They seek to confine the workers' struggles within a bourgeois framework. They promote reformist illusions, faith in the "democratic process," and "allegiance to America."

The position and generally high salaries of the trade union leadership, and the capital accumulated and invested by the trade union bureaucracy, are the product of the history of exploitation of the masses of workers in this country and, still more, imperialist super-exploitation abroad. New faces may take charge of this apparatus, and tactics may change, but these top labor leaders continue to play the same essential role: attempting to keep the working class in a position of political-ideological subordination to the capitalist system.

THE WORKING CLASS IS THE MAIN AND LEADING FORCE FOR PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION IN THE U.S.

The Proletariat and the Proletarian Revolution

The proletarian revolution is different from all previous revolutions in human history. Its goal is not the replacement of one group of exploiters by another but the reorganization of human society and the whole world on an entirely new basis: the abolition of exploitation and of classes.

This long-held dream of the oppressed is now possible for two reasons.

First, the productive forces of society—the tools, raw materials, machinery, and technology, etc., as well as the people themselves and their knowledge and skills—have developed to a high level. They are developed enough to provide for everyone's basic material needs throughout the world and, beyond that, for people's all-around development.

Second, there is a class that has the material basis to bring about radically different relations of people in production and in society as a whole. That class is the proletariat.

The highly developed production process in capitalist society requires thousands, and ultimately millions, of people, working together to mass-produce the things that people need. Before capitalism, production was typically done by an individual or small groups of individuals. Today, many individuals must work together to produce almost everything (even a farmer working alone, who is an independent owner-operator and part of the middle class, requires tractors produced by the collective labor of thousands).

The proletariat carries out *socialized* production. But standing at the end of this process is a handful of capitalist-imperialists who privately appropriate (take for themselves) this collectively produced wealth.

The proletariat represents the cooperative labor and cooperative efforts overall that correspond to the highly socialized nature of the productive forces.

That is why the proletarian revolution aims to establish socialized, common ownership of the means of production. That is why this revolution aims to organize people in a cooperative way to carry out labor and to distribute what is produced not for individual profit, but with the overall needs of the people and the further development of society in command.

The proletariat is the only class capable of bringing about this radically different way of organizing and utilizing the productive forces and of organizing society.

Today's productive forces are highly interconnected on an international level. This is the underlying reason why the proletarian revolution is an international revolution.

The proletarian revolution aims not only to abolish the division of society into different classes but also to overcome all inequality and oppressive relations between different peoples and nations and ultimately move beyond the division of the earth's people into separate nations, replacing this with a world community of freely associating and cooperating human beings.

Because of its position in social produc-

tion and in society, the proletariat has the *material interest*, the *potential power*, and the *objective outlook* to make a revolution that will abolish all forms of oppression and exploitation. No other force in society can lead the masses of people to real and complete liberation.

There Has To Be a Proletarian Class for There To Be a Proletarian Revolution... And There Is Such a Revolutionary Class

The ideologues of the bourgeoisie claim that new technologies have brought us to a "post-industrial society" in which the laboring classes are increasingly irrelevant—small in number and marginal to the functioning of society.

They act as if "bold investments" and computers guided by technicians somehow generate the vast wealth they like to flaunt. They don't want to talk about the fundamental source of capitalist wealth: literally hundreds of millions of workers (as well as peasants and farmers) whom they dominate across the globe.

They prattle on about "financial cyberspace," about how billions of dollars can be whizzed around the world "at the push of a button." But they don't want to talk about how goods are ultimately produced, warehoused, and transported, and services performed, in "real" space...requiring the efforts of "real" human beings... "real" wage-laborers...confronting capital at the local, national, and global level.

At the dawn of the new millennium, the proletariat is being formed and re-formed by the ceaseless drive of capital to expand and maximize profits. It is being formed and re-formed out of the diversity that is humanity—in the countrysides, shantytowns, and "megacities" of the poor and oppressed nations, and in the imperialist countries as well. The international proletariat is more numerous today than ever in the history of capitalism.

There Is a Revolutionary Class in the United States

There is a proletariat in the United States. It is part of an international class of wage-laborers whose labor is the foun-

dation of capitalist production and whose exploitation is the source of capitalist wealth. It is a large segment of U.S. society. And it embodies the potential to destroy the old order and to revolutionize society as part of the world proletarian revolution.

The U.S. working class is extremely diverse and is made up of different strata and sections. The working class in the United States constitutes over 50 percent of the total labor force, numbering some 70 million wage-laborers. It includes 12 million manufacturing workers, several million other industrial workers, and far greater numbers in service, retail, and office work (both in the private and government sectors).

The proletariat is found in the “smoke-stack” economy of auto, steel, machine tools production, etc., as well as in expanding job categories such as cashiers, health services, and truck drivers. It is found in the “new economy” of information technology—from immigrant proletarians forging, fabricating, packaging, and shipping high-tech products to armies of data entry and service workers.

Many in the proletariat, and this is especially the case among oppressed nationalities and youth, are not regularly employed and often experience long spells of unemployment.

The great bulk of the unemployed are part of the working class. Even in the “best of times,” millions are unemployed and underemployed; and the numbers of the unemployed soar in periods of crisis.

Capitalism’s “reserve army of labor” is an essential and integral part of capitalist accumulation. The desperate circumstances of the unemployed exert downward pressure on wages and conditions overall—and these proletarians are available to be exploited in accordance with the dynamics and demands of capitalist accumulation.

Sizeable numbers of proletarians are cast into conditions of homelessness and hunger. Many are forced into desperate survival measures—working odd jobs and exchanging goods and services in the “informal economy” of the ghettos and barrios, or moving between jobs and “hustles” and semilegal activities.

Over the last 20 years, capitalism has been reshaped. There has been intensified globalization and massive centraliza-

tion of capital. There has been technological transformation. There has been restructuring of employment and work relations, including attacks on the right to organize unions and bargain collectively.

But these changes, and the dislocations that have come with them, have *not led to the disappearance of the U.S. working class but rather to its recomposition*. This process of recomposition has involved the decline of more stable and better-paid strata, the expansion of low-wage service sectors, and the growth of more “flexible,” temporary, and part-time labor with little job security and few benefits.

The proletariat in the U.S. is highly multinational, consisting of Black, white, Chicano, Puerto Rican, various other Latino and Asian-American nationalities, and millions of immigrants from the Third World and elsewhere. The majority of the poor in U.S. society are white, but the oppressed nationalities have rates of poverty that are two and three times greater than that of white people.

Large sections of the proletariat work in segregated, caste-like conditions. They are slotted into and stuck in low-paying and less desirable occupations and jobs. Owing to the whole history of oppression by the ruling class, in various forms down to today, Black, Latino and other oppressed nationalities and immigrants are disproportionately represented in the lower rungs of the proletariat and suffer high rates of unemployment, including high levels of more long-term unemployment.

Women hold about half of all working class jobs. In the last 30 years, the proportion of women in the overall labor force has risen dramatically—a result of the decline of real wages, the growing number of single-woman and single-mother households, and the assault on welfare and other social programs. At the same time, women have also sought work out of a desire to break out of the narrow confines of the home and to participate in society more broadly.

The large presence of women in the working class is a very positive factor for building revolutionary unity and for the revolutionary struggle overall. Women will play a critical role in the proletarian revolution.

So there is a proletariat in the U.S. All the vital goods and services, from food and clothing to telecommunications and

computer chips, without which society could not last a day, are the product of the interlinked efforts of this class. The functioning of cities, from transport to janitorial services, depends on the proletariat.

Mobilizing Positive Factors

There are different strengths among different sections of the proletariat and basic masses in the U.S. A key task in forging the revolutionary movement of the proletariat is to combine these various strengths and give them class-conscious expression. What are some of these strengths?

There is the strength that comes from the situation of those proletarians working in socialized conditions—whether in large factories (about a third of all manufacturing workers are employed in factories with 500 or more workers); in smaller factories and sweatshops clustered together in industrial districts; or in hospitals, customer-service centers, and densely packed downtown office and hotel complexes.

These conditions bring with them an understanding of the need for discipline, cooperation, and organization, and broader social experience, including in some cases a mixing of nationalities. This gives potential backbone to the revolutionary movement.

There is the strength that comes from the life experience of those proletarians who are in and out of—or “locked out” of—the labor force, especially the youth of the inner cities. Their conditions of poverty, and the utter contempt the system has for them, give rise to alienation, volatility, and rebelliousness—which are necessary and vital ingredients for making revolution.

There is the strength that sections of immigrants from the poor and oppressed nations bring to the U.S. Many have a basic understanding of the crimes of U.S. imperialism; and some have direct experience in fighting it. This strengthens the basis for internationalism and bolsters the fighting potential of the proletariat.

The vanguard works to mobilize these and other positive factors.

At the same time, there are weaknesses that have to be countered as part of the process of bringing strengths to the fore. For instance, the condition of more regu-

lar employment can also have some conservatizing influences on workers (fear of losing the job, etc.).

Among the less regularly employed and more volatile sections, desperate life conditions result in some getting caught up in negative features of survival under this system. For instance, some young “semi-proletarian” males in the oppressed communities may have “one foot” in individualized non-proletarian and semi-criminal activities. Many of them are up against and to some degree fighting against the system. But for them to break with these semi-criminal activities and the outlook that goes with them, and to become conscious frontline fighters for revolution, the revolutionary movement has to help give their lives “revolutionary purpose.”

The point, again, is that the Party has to build on and give expression to strengths—and overcome weaknesses—in the context of building a revolutionary movement. The Party aims to bring together and “synthesize” out of the various working and living situations of different sections of the proletariat all positive factors that serve the cause of *proletarian* revolution.

Three Major Sections

The whole working class will not be won as a single bloc to the revolutionary banner. A decisive reason for this is that imperialism creates a “split” within the working class in the imperialist countries.

The upper sections of workers are tossed a share of the spoils of international plunder to corrupt them into defenders of the system. But only a relatively small number are permanently corrupted, while a much larger number experience only a temporary benefit at most.

In the U.S., there are three major sections of the working class.

There is a lower section of workers, numbering some 30 to 40 million, whose conditions of life and work are those of a downpressed proletariat.

In the words of the *Communist Manifesto*, they are: “a class of laborers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital.... Owing to the extensive use of machinery and to division of labor, the work of the proletarians

has lost all individual character, and, consequently, all charm...[the worker] becomes an appendage of the machine...the cost of production of a workman is restricted, almost entirely to the means of subsistence that he needs for his maintenance [and to bring up future generations of workers]... No sooner is the exploitation of the laborer by the manufacturer, so far at an end, that he receives his wages in cash, than he is set upon by other portions of the bourgeoisie, the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker, etc.”

One of the characteristics of this lower section of workers in the U.S. today is the instability of its employment conditions. Not infrequently, these proletarians are tossed in and out of work and from job to job (and many are detached from work for extended periods).

Along with life-stealing job conditions, another characteristic of this section of workers is low wages. Take, for example, workers ages 25 to 54 who are in families with children. For 1 in 5 of them, their yearly earnings are not enough to keep a family of four above the poverty level. While some of these workers are in multiple-income families, even so, many of these families still have a standard of living at or just above the poverty level. All told, about half of all working class families experience poverty at least once in ten years.

This is life today for a sizeable section of workers whose conditions urgently demand proletarian revolution.

Proletarians from this lower segment work in factories and sweatshops, in fast-food and retail establishments and malls, in warehouse and distribution centers, in hospitals and offices, on construction sites. Many work as day laborers.

Agricultural workers are also part of this lower section of the proletariat. There are 2.5 million hired farmworkers in the U.S. They are crop workers and livestock workers (on dairy farms, ranches, etc.). They are regular and seasonal farmworkers. Of the 1.8 million crop workers in the U.S., 850,000 are migrant workers who travel a portion of the year in search of work. About half of all crop workers are undocumented immigrants denied elementary rights.

Agriculture in the U.S. combines technological sophistication with an agricultural proletariat that is subjected to

intense exploitation, subhuman housing, exposure to toxic chemicals, and unremitting attacks on its ability and right to organize unions.

The unity between agricultural workers and industrial/non-industrial workers in cities, and suburbs and small towns, will be a decisive question for the proletarian revolution. This unity will be essential in order to conquer both the urban areas and countryside, to feed and maintain the revolutionary army of the proletariat, and to proceed forward, upon winning victory, to transform society.

The proletarians from the lower section of the working class must be brought forward as backbone forces throughout the whole revolutionary process. And they will play a decisive role in the revolutionary insurrection.

Another section of the proletariat consists of relatively privileged “bourgeoisified” workers. These workers are concentrated especially in large-scale industries—like auto and steel, heavy machinery, utilities, the postal service—and particularly where there have been strong unions.

This section of workers was built up after World War 2. As a result of the dominant position of the U.S. in the world, and coupled with the struggle of the masses, a big section of workers emerged whose jobs were relatively high-paying, with greater fringe benefits and opportunities for promotion, and with greater job security. Yet life was at best tolerable, not fine, for these workers.

Over the last 20 years, these workers have come under greater pressure from capital. Competition in the “global economy” has increased the compulsion of the capitalists to intensify the exploitation of these workers, to “downsize” their numbers, to undercut some of their privileges, and to create new “low tiers” of workers within these industries who receive lower pay and fewer benefits and protections.

The still better-off position of this more privileged section of workers, together with the special attention the imperialists will pay to keeping these workers in line, will tend to hold them back from being “the first to move.” But the bourgeoisie has changed “the terms of the bargain” for these workers. Also, there are significant numbers of oppressed nationality workers in these sectors. All this is creat-

ing a better basis to win these workers to the revolutionary cause.

A minority, but still significant number, of workers make up what Lenin called an “aristocracy of labor.”

These workers tend to be highly skilled craft and precision production and repair workers, employed in various industries from construction to telecommunications. They receive crumbs well beyond what has been passed along to the privileged sections of unskilled and semiskilled industrial workers in mass production industries. They have become a more or less permanently bourgeoisified group. While keeping the door open to winning some of these workers to the cause of revolution, the class-conscious proletariat must fiercely combat the influence of this labor aristocracy.

To sum up: Objectively, the proletariat represents the main material and political force for revolution in U.S. society. It is powerfully and strategically placed. Its interests correspond to, and it is the class capable of carrying out, the most radical transformation of society. And, for these reasons, it can be rallied to the cause of proletarian revolution and will provide the main forces for this revolution.

THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE OR MIDDLE STRATA

A critical question for the proletarian revolution is winning over or at least neutralizing as much of the petty bourgeoisie as possible. Comprising all the strata in between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, this is a very large and diverse group. It includes many different groups of small business owners, professionals, managers and technicians, intellectuals and artists, and small farmers who employ little or no wage labor. The petty bourgeoisie makes up about 35 percent of the U.S. labor force. In addition, there are some categories of technical workers and semi-professionals who occupy a kind of “grey area” between the petty bourgeoisie and the working class; they account for perhaps 5 to 7 percent of the labor force.

The bourgeoisie has built up the “mid-

dle class” to play a stabilizing and conservatizing role in society. And it pays considerable attention to maintaining the allegiance of these strata.

The bourgeoisie holds up as “models” the upper segments of the middle strata who enjoy relative stability and prosperity. It does this in order to promote grand hopes (and illusions). It also seeks to turn the insecurities and anxieties of broader sections of the middle class into fear and blame of the proletariat and oppressed masses.

Historically, sections of the petty bourgeoisie have acted as a social base for “law-and-order” and other reactionary movements. Left to their own, especially in times of social upheaval, sections are pulled to right-wing solutions in hopes of restoring stability and security and fortifying their privileges.

At the same time, there is the large number of “enlightened petty bourgeoisie” who historically have played important roles in radical and revolutionary upsurges, speaking out or acting against the savage injustices and inequalities and crimes of U.S. imperialism. However, while many in these strata want to fall on the progressive side of history, they are inclined towards illusions of reformism and pacifism in struggling against the system.

Today, there are significant numbers of people from the oppressed nationalities in the middle class. There are also large numbers of women in the professions. All this is a result both of changes in the U.S. and the world economy and of powerful struggles against discrimination and oppression. While in various ways this “middle class status” has a conservatizing influence, the continuing discrimination and abuses to which these oppressed groups are continually subjected propels many, even in the middle class, into resistance. This is overall an important positive factor for the proletariat in terms of realigning forces in society, including among the middle strata, in a way more favorable for the proletarian revolution.

Real wealth and power, which is actually concentrated in the hands of the ruling big bourgeoisie, is an unreachable goal for the masses of the middle strata. While sectors of the economy linked directly or indirectly to the explosion of “high tech,” legal and financial services, consultancy,

etc., have expanded in recent years—other more traditional segments of the petty bourgeoisie are under economic pressure.

Many small farmers, sectors of small business people, teachers, nurses, and low-skilled technicians, and others have been squeezed or been put on an economic treadmill. Small business (including the “dot-com”) is inherently unstable in an economy dominated by monopoly capital and subject to capitalism’s fluctuations and structural changes.

Many within the middle class are forced to work harder and longer to maintain their lifestyles, homes, and health plans. Others face the specter of job displacement. Many within the “care-giving” professions, like health, or in fields like education, see their desires to serve people sacrificed on the altar of cost reduction, or perverted by growing standardization and routinization.

Because of the contradictory situation faced by these strata, they tend to vacillate between the ruling bourgeoisie and the rising revolutionary proletariat—siding now with the one and now with the other. But in the final analysis, these middle strata have no future under this system...and no future at all other than to unite with the proletariat and its struggle to seize power and revolutionize society and the world.

Farmers

There are some 1.8 million farm owner-operators in the United States. 50 percent of U.S. farm products come from only 2 percent of the farms. But a significant portion of farm output—and this is especially the case for certain grains—is produced by a large number of small and medium-sized farmers who employ little or no labor.

Large capital, exploiting large labor forces, does operate directly in the farm sector—on giant farms harvesting fruits and vegetables, and functioning through other types of corporate enterprise.

But the main way monopoly capital dominates agriculture is by surrounding and controlling small and medium-sized farmers at the two ends of the farm cycle: at the seed, fertilizer, and machinery end, and at the processing and marketing end.

What little “independence” small farmers historically have had is rapidly diminishing. Many are going broke or barely getting by—under the pressure of “get larger or get out.” Many are farming land they have leased. Many are strapped by debt and derive the bulk of their income from off-farm activities. A significant number of these farmers are actually semi-proletarians who earn part of their livelihood by working as hired wage-laborers, even if often in fairly skilled categories.

Government support payments and crop-insurance programs, which go disproportionately to the largest farmers, do little to provide long-term security to small and even many medium-sized farmers. Poverty is widespread in considerable parts of the farm belts.

Growing numbers of farmers, such as in the chicken broiler sector, have become “contract farmers” to corporations. They still own some means of production but operate under production contracts that effectively mean that these farmers are buying nothing, selling nothing, and making few decisions about production. Here too semi-proletarian relations are emerging.

The main criterion of the proletariat in determining friends from enemies among the farmers is not the size of farms (though that will have to be taken into account to some degree). The essential criterion is whether or not and to what degree they exploit wage labor.

Some large farms, for example in grain, are worked entirely or overwhelmingly by their owner-operators (including the family), or may hire only a small number of laborers. On the other hand, some smaller farms—for example, in fruit and vegetables—employ significant numbers of wage laborers and depend mainly on these farmworkers for production.

In general, the revolutionary proletariat seeks to unite with those farmers who exploit little or no labor, on small, medium, or even large-sized farms.

While farmers in general cling to the outlook and illusions of petty proprietors, and while right-wing movements have taken root among some of them, the class-conscious proletariat must address the needs of small and medium-sized farmers (who do not exploit significant numbers of wage laborers). And it must bring signifi-

cant numbers of them into the united front it is building. In the revolutionary war, the struggle for political and military control of the rural areas will be a crucial one. This struggle and the subsequent transformation of society cannot succeed without a base of support among the farmers (see the appendix “The New Socialist Economy, Part 2”).

THE GOVERNMENT SECTOR

There are some 20 million government employees at the federal, state, and local levels. This is a broad and contradictory category.

One component represents the state in its control and repression functions: high and middle-level bureaucrats, the police forces, prison administrators and guards, etc. These elements will not only side with the bourgeoisie but are an important weapon of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat and oppressed masses. (Cops and prison guards, for example, are not in the working class—they are part of the bourgeoisie’s apparatus of dictatorship.)

The other major component of the government sector involves activities linked to the state’s overall role in the functioning of the economy and society. These activities range from research and development to education, health, welfare, and housing services to sanitation and transit. Many performing these activities are blue- and white-collar workers. Others are in the petty bourgeoisie.

In recent years, employees in the government sector have been victimized by “government downsizing,” reorganization, and other attacks. Social service cutbacks have also led to cuts in employment. Over the past 15 years, many workers in this sector have engaged in hard-fought battles.

LUMPENPROLETARIAT

This is the “broken” and criminal class of society. It is in fact drawn from different classes and has its upper and lower rungs.

Those at the upper end are heads of major criminal activities and organizations. They often have considerable legit-

imate business investment intertwined with their crime operations, and often they meld with the bourgeoisie.

At the lower rungs are full-time petty criminals. Desperation and poverty force many poor people into crime. But most of these people are not part of the lumpen segment of society. The lumpenproletariat is made up of those whose defining life activity, and world outlook, centers on criminal activity and ripping-off other people.

With the development of the revolutionary movement, and especially as it gains strength, some at the lower rung will be won to the side of revolution. This will be the case particularly when things reach the stage of revolutionary war. But winning them to the revolutionary cause will be possible only by exercising an absolutely firm hand and sharply struggling to instill in them the revolutionary outlook of the proletariat.

The top criminal operators are deadly enemies of the proletariat, and their crime organizations will be smashed by proletarian revolution.

PRISONS AND PRISONERS

Who is in the prisons? Mainly proletarians and the poor. For what crimes? Mainly petty offenses linked to poverty. A massive program of criminalization of Black and Latino youth, and other youth as well, has resulted in a staggering increase in the prison population: more than 2 million, about a quarter of whom have been sentenced for nonviolent drug offenses.

At times, since the start of the so-called war on drugs, some major states in the U.S. have been spending more on prison construction than on education. The drug treatment programs much needed in society are few and far between.

The prison system is an instrument of bourgeois dictatorship designed to terrorize the masses broadly and to further degrade them. It offers no real retraining or rehabilitation but rather unspeakable brutality and, increasingly, slave labor. When prisoners rise up against these conditions, the proletariat unites with their just struggles.

The proletariat stands for the elimina-

tion of crime; the masses are its main victims. But crime and the ideology that goes with it are the outgrowth of capitalism. Crime can only be eliminated through socialist revolution. And the great numbers of those in prison will be rehabilitated through the revolutionary struggle to change the world.

In the process of seizing power, the revolutionary movement will storm the prisons, guns in hand, and offer the masses of prisoners the chance to join the revolutionary army. It will unite with those who take this road, unleash and guide their tremendous hatred for this system, and lead them in struggle to remold themselves into fighters for proletarian revolution.

SUMMING UP

A basic analysis of the main forces in U.S. society leads to these general conclusions:

In order to carry out socialist revolution, the proletariat must and will be the main and leading force.

The bourgeoisie, with the monopoly finance capitalists as the main force, is the target of the revolution. It must be overthrown and suppressed. This enemy will find firm support and shock troops particularly among the "labor aristocracy" and reactionary sections of the petty bourgeoisie.

The main and closest ally of the proletarian revolutionary movement is the struggles of the oppressed peoples for equality and emancipation. (See the appendix "Uprooting National Oppression and White Supremacy.")

The class-conscious proletariat can and must, through its revolutionary work and the forging of its united front, win over to active support, or at least to "friendly neutrality," large sections of the petty bourgeoisie, and even a section of the labor aristocracy, especially as the revolutionary movement further develops and grows more powerful (and some of the lumpenproletariat can also be won over).

This represents the basic class and social content of the united front under proletarian leadership, as the strategy for proletarian revolution. This strategy enables the proletariat to determine friends from enemies. It enables the proletariat to unite its own ranks, win over its allies, isolate the enemy, and ultimately defeat it.

The proletariat must build the broadest united front to attack and overthrow this enemy and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. It will then continue the revolutionary struggle, leading broad ranks of the people to transform both their material conditions and their world outlook in accordance with the advance to communism.

The Party Under Socialism, and the Transition to Communism

When the proletarian revolution is victorious, the position of the party in society undergoes a profound change and new contradictions, new—even more profound and more historic—struggles come to the fore.

The proletariat will now be in power. It will be facing the immense challenge of defending the socialist state, building a new and radically different economic, social, and political system, continuing the struggle to transform society, supporting and assisting revolutionary struggles throughout the world—and correctly handling the very real and often acute contradictions involved in all this.

Under these circumstances, the leadership of the party will certainly be no less important than it was in the process of preparing for and then successfully waging a people's war to seize power. But, in the new socialist society, the party will occupy the strategic positions of leadership in the government, the armed forces, the economy, and society as a whole—at the head of the proletariat in power. And further, within the party itself, there is the contradiction between leadership and the led: between the party leadership and the party members as a whole.

The fundamental objective of advancing to communism means and requires the elimination of class distinctions and oppressive social divisions and, together with that, the end of any need for a specialized, institutionalized leadership in society.

Viewed in relation to that fundamental objective, the contradictions involved with the party's necessary role as the leadership of the proletariat in socialist society stand out as very profound contradictions indeed. And these contradictions are, at the same time, an expression of the underlying contradictions faced by socialist societies as they emerge from the old society they have overthrown, in a world still dominated by imperialism. Not only is it the case that the remaining differences and inequalities, such as that between mental and manual labor, cannot be overcome all at once, or very quickly;

but the socialist state also stands in fundamental antagonism to the imperialist and reactionary states that “encircle it.”

So neither the need for the party's leadership in socialist society—nor the need to continue advancing toward the achievement of the conditions, worldwide, where such leadership will no longer be necessary—can be lost sight of, or underestimated, if the proletariat is to carry out its historic revolutionary mission.

The contradictions bound up with all this are, as mentioned, deeply rooted and pose complex problems and difficult challenges. But the essential means for resolving them lies in the all-around struggle to thoroughly revolutionize society through the socialist transition to communism—and, as a crucial part of that, to continually revolutionize the party itself.

This question—of revolutionizing the party—has proven historically to be critical for the proletariat. In both the Soviet Union and then China, socialism was reversed through the counter-revolutionary efforts of bourgeois cliques that grew up within the proletarian party, especially at its top levels. Society was turned back to capitalism, even though the labels still read “communist” for quite some time.

Lessons of the Cultural Revolution

Along with other Marxist-Leninist-Maoist forces throughout the world, our Party has devoted a great deal of attention to grappling with this problem. And we are continuing to seek out the deepest and most comprehensive lessons from the experience, both positive and negative, of the dictatorship of the proletariat in this regard. In particular, we have focused on the most advanced and concentrated experience of the international proletariat, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China.

The Cultural Revolution was a mass revolutionary upsurge led by Mao Tsetung.

It was aimed at preventing capitalist restoration and at further revolutionizing socialist society and its key institutions, including the Communist Party itself. For a decade, from the mid-1960s through the mid-1970s, the Cultural Revolution not only succeeded in beating back attempts by top Party leaders to take China back down the capitalist road but also brought about breathtaking transformations in the fundamental relations in all spheres of society and in the thinking of tens of millions of people.

Yet, as Mao himself said, one Cultural Revolution could not solve the fundamental contradictions involved and could not prevent capitalist restoration once and for all. And shortly after Mao's death in 1976, the "capitalist-roaders" in the Chinese Communist Party, led by Deng Xiaoping, finally succeeded in seizing power and restoring capitalism.

This overthrow of proletarian rule, coming after the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union in the mid-1950s, was a bitter and profound manifestation of a basic truth. The proletarian revolution is bound to proceed through twists and turns and even to encounter—and confront the necessity to rebound from—major setbacks along the way, both within particular countries and on a world level.

What are the most important lessons to be drawn from this experience and, more generally, the experience of socialist states so far, in terms of the struggle to prevent capitalist restoration and continue the advance toward communism worldwide?

To begin with, as Mao emphasized, while socialist society represents a great advance over capitalism and a radical change in class relations—with the proletariat rising to power and exercising dictatorship over the overthrown bourgeoisie and other exploiters and oppressors—socialism is not the end of the revolution but only the beginning of a whole new stage.

And socialism is not free of social contradictions. It is in fact driven forward by such contradictions, which find concentrated expression in the continuation, under the new conditions, of the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. More specifically, this finds expression as the struggle between the

socialist road, leading to communism, and the capitalist road, leading back to the old society.

Further, while the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and between the socialist and capitalist roads, goes on at all times, and in every sphere of society, there will be critical junctures when bourgeois headquarters which repeatedly arise within the party itself come into direct all-out conflict with the revolutionaries within the party and the masses more generally. At these crucial times, the entire direction of society is at stake, and the masses in their millions must struggle things out in an all-encompassing way.

The objective of the genuine communists in all this is not only to defeat a particular bourgeois headquarters and prevent the restoration of capitalism. Even more fundamentally, ever broader ranks of the masses—through both high tides of mass upsurge and the less intense but ongoing class struggle, through study and through practical experience—must gain the ability to distinguish genuine Marxism from sham Marxism and the socialist road from the capitalist road. In this way, the masses are strengthened in their role as masters of society—in their ability to rule and transform society toward the goal of communism.

And, as discussed earlier, a crucial aim of the continuing socialist revolution is to repeatedly revolutionize the party itself. This requires arousing the masses to expose and struggle against the party's "negative side"—the bourgeois aspects and forces that remain, or newly arise, within the party—and to criticize and supervise the party and party leaders overall.

In socialist society, there is the ongoing and long-term task of narrowing the differences between leadership—and those who do "mental work" generally—and the masses. These differences must be restricted to the greatest degree possible at every stage of the revolution, so that they can be fully and finally overcome as the proletariat, not just in the particular country but worldwide, carries through the transition to communism.

In order to continually narrow these differences, it is necessary to "attack them from both sides." There is the task, on the one hand, of involving the masses

in the administration of society, in the affairs of state, in shaping and running education, culture, and all other spheres of society, and in mastering technical, scientific, and other fields. And on the other hand, there is the task of involving intellectual, technical and administrative personnel, political leaders, etc., in productive labor and scientific experiment—as well as in political and ideological struggle and the study of Marxism and criticism of bourgeois ideology—together with the masses.

There will be those who resist this and do so bitterly. While the class-conscious proletariat seeks its own elimination as a class—through the achievement of a classless communist society—there will be some in the party who oppose the struggle to narrow and eventually eliminate the differences that are left over from capitalism and provide soil for its restoration.

This is not only because such people hold positions of power and do not want that position weakened or undermined. More fundamentally, it is because the advance of the socialist revolution involves and requires an increasingly radical break with the social relations, and the ideology, that characterize capitalism and exploitative society generally; and because, at every new stage in the revolution, new contradictions and challenges get posed, often acutely, and some people get “stuck” in the old ways of doing things and of thinking.

The International Dimension

Along with these issues, there is the international dimension. One of the most important questions to which our Party has been devoting continuing attention is the way in which the international situation and revolutionary struggles throughout the world are interlinked with and significantly influence the situation and the class struggle within particular countries, including socialist countries. This has great bearing not only on the struggle to seize power but also on the class struggle within socialist society once power has been seized.

The pressure and aggression from imperialist and reactionary states, and the overall dominant position of imperial-

ism in the world, create serious difficulties for the proletariat in power—and in particular provide more ground for capitalist roaders within the party. But so too, the advance of revolutionary struggles worldwide and the mobilization of the masses in the socialist country to support and assist such struggles provide vital strength—materially as well as politically and ideologically—for the masses and for those in leadership who are determined to continue the revolution on the socialist road.

Just as it is a hallmark of capitalist-roaders in socialist society—and of revisionist phony communists in general—to downplay or deny the importance of proletarian internationalism and to focus narrowly on the situation in “their own” country; so the importance of upholding and giving living expression to proletarian internationalism is a fundamental principle of genuine communists. Proletarian internationalism is a crucial part of strengthening the proletariat in its struggle to seize power, and to prevent capitalist restoration and continue the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat once power has been seized.

For all these reasons, it must be the profound orientation of the revolutionary proletariat that, having seized power, it will lead ever broader ranks of the masses to overcome, step by step, and leap after leap, those aspects of socialist society itself that represent the remaining elements of capitalism, and to fight together with the proletariat and masses in all countries to overcome the remaining domination of imperialism and relations of exploitation and oppression in the world as a whole.

The Vital Role of the Party... The Withering Away of the Party

It is in this way that the most favorable conditions will be created—and repeatedly forged out of difficulties—for continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, deepening the revolutionization of society, and, as a crucial aspect of that, further revolutionizing the party itself.

It is by continuing the revolution that a profound contradiction can be correctly

handled. This is the contradiction between the continuing need for and vital leading role of the vanguard party in socialist society, on the one hand, and the need, on the other hand, to continue bringing into being the conditions in which the masses themselves are ever more fully mastering and ruling society.

It is a basic truth that, in any society that is relatively large and complex, there will be a need for people to perform tasks of administration and coordination of the affairs of society. Ever since the emergence of class distinctions, exploitation, and a division of labor embodying social inequalities, these functions have been monopolized by a small handful and have represented and reinforced the rule of the few over the many.

Here again is the contradiction: It is out of these very social conditions that the need has arisen for an organized advanced detachment of the exploited class in capitalist society, a vanguard

party of the proletariat, to enable the masses of exploited and oppressed people to become conscious of their fundamental interests and role in revolutionizing all of society, and to lead them in doing so. Yet ultimately this revolution aims to bring into being the conditions in which such a vanguard—and in general the monopolization of the administrative functions of society by a small, distinct group—is no longer necessary, or possible, and thus “withers away.”

All throughout the revolutionary process—even before the seizure of power and in a magnified way once power has been seized—the communist vanguard must consciously grasp this contradiction. The vanguard must work consistently toward its resolution as a key part of the advance toward a communist world without class distinctions and without division between leadership and led, between those who make decisions and those whose role is to carry them out.

Consolidating the New Proletarian Power, Developing Radically New Institutions

The proletariat overthrows the bourgeoisie and seizes power. This is fundamentally true in the sense that it is only through the determined struggle of the proletariat and oppressed masses that the armed forces of the bourgeoisie can be defeated and a new political power established, resting on the armed might of the masses.

But at the same time, even as this is accomplished a new question immediately and sharply poses itself: how to smash and dismantle the old forms of rule and political institutions and create in their place new ones which actually represent, rely on, and involve the masses in ruling and remolding society in their interests and in the service of the world revolution.

As the armed insurrections and then the civil war are fought out, and as the proletariat advances through the back-and-forth of battle toward victory, seizing and linking up more and more territory and routing the enemy forces, further tasks will come onto the agenda.

There will be the urgent need for the masses to be mobilized to take control of structures and institutions, and to begin running and utilizing them to serve as a basis for the consolidation of power and the functioning of the new proletarian state. And then, with the final victory in this revolutionary war, there will be the need to more fully develop new structures and institutions that embody and serve the exercise of power by the proletariat and the profound changes that proletarian rule will begin to bring about.

The immediate aftermath of the victorious revolutionary war, with its high tide of mass enthusiasm, will witness a level of direct mass participation in political and social life, in making and carrying out decisions in every sphere, that today can hardly be dreamed of. Yet, huge as these immediate changes will be, they will also, in another sense, be only the first steps to where society ultimately needs to go—that is, to the mass administering of all spheres of society without the

medium of a state. But from the beginning, decisive steps must be taken, representing a radical break with the past, in order to fully consolidate the new proletarian power and lay a foundation for further advances.

Radically Breaking with Bourgeois Political Institutions

The Party concentrates the highest interests of the proletariat. And so the Party must play the decisive role in leading the masses to forge the new institutions. But this cannot be done just by appointing Party members, and/or elected representatives of the workers and other oppressed masses, to take charge of the old institutions or of institutions different in name but structured along the same old lines.

The existing bourgeois state stands as a hostile force over and against the masses of people. Its laws, rules, and protocols are designed to drive home and enforce the powerless position of the masses as *outsiders* who can only come before the authorities with hat in hand.

All of that must be swept away, and new institutions must be forged which embody *proletarian* rule. The new rules and structures must fundamentally serve the goal of eliminating all the oppressive divisions in society, and to do this in the only way it is possible—by drawing ever broader sections of the people into the task of exercising state power along radically new lines.

If workers are selected as judges in the courts, for example, but the courts have the same position above the masses and follow the same rules and procedures as before, then these worker-judges will quickly turn into oppressors of the people. The courts will yet again serve as instruments of bourgeois dictatorship over the masses.

Or take the set-up of Congress and the presidency, and its parallel structure on the state and local levels in the U.S. today. Not only is it the case that those officeholders who exercise any real power must faithfully and ruthlessly serve the bourgeoisie, but beyond that, this whole electoral and governmental set-up encourages and rewards self-seeking careerism and corruption. Most of all, it keeps the masses in a passive position and ignorant of the actual workings of political power.

So these institutions must be dismantled and replaced with ones which closely link the leaders to the masses and serve to activate and mobilize the masses to further revolutionize society. The same is true of all the institutions in society.

Destroying the Old and Creating the New

The destruction of the old and the creation of the new are closely interconnected. In the revolutionary struggle to seize power, the Party and masses will have forged new forms of organization. And in the uprising itself, a revolutionary army of the proletariat will have been built.

These new organizations and alliances—led by the Party and resting on the active participation of the masses—will be the forerunner and embryo of the new state institutions representing the rule of the working class, together with its allies from other classes. For example, organizations will have been built in the communities of the oppressed to wage resistance to the enemy and to provide collective solutions to various social problems. They will, to the degree they grow and take on responsibility as a revolutionary situation develops, be an important part of the foundation of base-level structures of proletarian power after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

At the factory or workplace level, newborn organizations of workers will also have been created in the buildup to the actual seizure of power. These will be further developed and will play an important role in administration on that basic level. At the same time, previously existing organizations, including trade unions, which have been transformed into actual vehicles of struggle serving the revolu-

tion, will be integrated into the overall structure of mass revolutionary organization and administration on the basic level.

These organizations will pay attention to the working and living conditions of the workers. But their *main* task will be to mobilize the workers to wage political struggle and to take part in administration on the factory level, etc. Secondly, and on the basis of these politics, they will mobilize the workers to carry out socialist production (see the Appendix “The New Socialist Economy, Part 1”).

In all these new organs of political power and administration, and at every level of society, the Party will above all rely on the masses. It will work to continually draw broader ranks of the people into active participation in ruling and transforming society.

One of the main forms of involving the masses in all aspects of this will be institutionalized forms of leadership and administration that combine representatives of the masses; technical and administrative personnel; and Party cadre. These “three-in-one” forms will help link the masses with administration, as well as help break down divisions between experts, technicians, etc., on the one hand, and the basic masses on the other.

This model of leadership and administration was developed in socialist China in the form of revolutionary committees, which were forged in the course of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. They represented a new advance in simplifying leadership and administrative bodies and, most essentially, in further involving the masses in these functions and in the running of society overall.

The Armed Forces of the Proletarian State

The armed forces of the proletarian revolution can never win victory if they are structured and commanded along the same lines as those of the bourgeoisie.

The purpose of the bourgeois armed forces—to carry out reactionary war against the interests of the vast majority of people in the whole world, including in the U.S.—is reflected both in their strategies of fighting and in their internal organization. They are built on a dictato-

rial hierarchy. Their hierarchy rests on the absolute authority of superior officers and most fundamentally on the intimidation of the rank-and-file soldiers and their ignorance of the real purpose of the wars they are called on to fight, as well as of the plans and policies guiding particular campaigns and battles. These armed forces are shot through with white supremacy and male supremacy; rape is promoted, sometimes even openly, as a right of conquest.

In contrast, the armed forces of the proletarian revolution must and will be based on a simplified structure, closely linking officers and rank-and-file soldiers, without saluting, “yes-sirring,” and other privileges of rank. More than that, they will be based on political education, discussion, and struggle among the troops, involving officers together with rank-and-file soldiers. The aim of this is to continually raise their consciousness as to the objectives and the character of the war they must fight, as well as of particular campaigns and battles—and other important political questions of society and the world.

The revolutionary army will conduct education and struggle against racism, and root it out where it occurs, along the lines of what will be done in society as a whole (see the Appendix “Uprooting National Oppression and White Supremacy”). Women will not be objects of plunder in the proletarian army, but will participate as comrades in every respect, including as commanders. In this army, rape will not be tolerated, and any member of the army who commits rape will be given the ultimate punishment.

Most importantly, these armed forces, unlike those of the bourgeoisie, will be closely linked with and rely on the masses of people for support and will represent and fight for their fundamental interests.

At the same time, the masses in their tens of millions, beyond the regular armed forces of the proletariat, will be organized into militias on the local levels to assist the overall armed struggle and maintain the new order as it is achieved. And, as the revolutionary forces carry out the armed struggle and defeat the armed forces of the bourgeoisie, they will not only shatter and disintegrate the enemy’s military organization but will win as many of its soldiers as possible to the rev-

olutionary cause. Those won over will be reeducated and integrated into the armed forces of the proletarian revolution in accordance with its basic principles.

This whole process of consolidating the armed forces of the new proletarian state will be quite complex. This is all the more so because, once the revolutionary situation has emerged and the armed struggle to overthrow the imperialists has begun, it is possible that there will be several armies in the field, fighting against the forces of the old order, under banners other than that of the class-conscious proletariat.

Where this is the case, the Party and the revolutionary army of the proletariat led by the Party will face the necessity of relating to these forces on the basis of their program and actions. Where it is necessary and possible in order to advance the overall fight, the revolutionary army of the proletariat will unite and coordinate with these other forces, while at the same time bringing forward and struggling for the line and programme for which it is fighting, which requires and serves proletarian revolution.

Even more important, the revolutionary army of the proletariat, led by the Party, will have to play a vanguard role *on the battlefield*, in defeating and smashing the armed forces of the reactionaries. Through all this it will be possible—and necessary—to achieve victory for the proletariat on the battlefield and to consolidate a unified revolutionary army of the new proletarian state, under the leadership of its Party.

The nature and justness of its cause and the methods that stem from it will mean that the army led by the proletariat and its Party will fight with a determination, a heroism, and a conscious, voluntary discipline that no bourgeois army can ever achieve. All this must be applied and further developed once this revolutionary war has won victory and the proletariat has seized and consolidated power.

The same basic principles must also be applied, upon the seizure of power, to the destruction of the old and the creation of the new police and security forces, courts, and other government institutions, and to the formulation and upholding of laws themselves, as well as specific policies of the government. While a constitution em-

bodying these principles must and will be developed, merely this will not be enough.

Under the overall leadership of the Party, the conscious activism of the masses must be aroused and their vigilance heightened to involve them in all aspects of political life. They must be relied on to politically supervise the organs of power and the leadership within them. And the masses must be relied on to suppress and exercise uncompromising authority over the overthrown bourgeoisie and other counter-revolutionary elements: punishing them according to their crimes, crushing their resistance, and compelling them to abide by the dictates of the working class.

Only in this way can political power, for which tens of millions will have fought and sacrificed, actually be in the hands of the masses. Only in this way can the dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie be firmly established and the socialist transformation and development of the economy, as well as all other spheres of society, be undertaken, as part of the world proletarian revolution.

Conclusion

The revolutionary ferment during and in the wake of the armed uprising will provide favorable conditions to draw millions of newly awakened masses into the exercise of state power. The exact forms this new power takes will depend on concrete conditions, the collective initiative and experimentation of the masses, and the lessons gained from experience. New and arising forces as well as veterans must be drawn into the new organs of power.

The mass organs of power at the base levels of society must be integrated into the larger state-administrative structure of the new society. And these organs of power must also enable the masses to concern themselves with “affairs of state”—that is, the biggest political issues that determine the overall direction of society. In all this, the Party must provide leadership and guidance so that the outlook and interests of the revolutionary proletariat remain at the helm.

Proletarian Dictatorship, Democracy and the Rights of the People

Having seized power through a wrenching process of struggle, involving tremendous heroism and sacrifice on the part of millions of people, the proletariat will suppress any attempts by the overthrown bourgeoisie and counter-revolutionary forces to restore the old society, with all its horrors for the masses of people. Not to do so would be a monumental betrayal of the masses of people, not just in the particular country but worldwide, and of the proletariat's historic revolutionary mission. And the exercise of this dictatorship by the proletariat over the bourgeoisie is absolutely essential for and makes possible the carrying out of radical changes in society which represent the highest interests of the masses of people and ultimately of all humanity.

The Class Character of Democracy and Dictatorship

So long as classes exist, democracy can only be *class democracy*. And so long as the bourgeoisie and the proletariat exist, society can only be organized on the basis of either the bourgeois (capitalist) mode of production, or socialism. *There is no middle way.*

The bourgeoisie will always and everywhere fight relentlessly to defend and extend its ability to exploit the masses (and to restore that ability when it has been deprived of it); and that means it must and will exercise the most ruthless dictatorship over the masses.

The proletariat also aims to defend and extend the production relations that *it* embodies—socialist production relations—and the political and social institutions that correspond to these production relations. To do this it must exercise dictatorship over the bourgeoisie, and do so no less relentlessly and thoroughly. But, at the same time, the dictatorship of the proletariat is and must be radically different from any previous form of the state.

First of all, it is dictatorship *by the masses*—it is the masses of people who are and must be relied on to suppress the

overthrown bourgeoisie, and any newly arising exploiters, and to prevent the restoration of the old oppressive order. Second, this proletarian dictatorship represents and makes possible unprecedented democracy and rights for the masses of people. Finally, and fundamentally, the aim of this proletarian dictatorship is not simply to fortify the position of the proletariat, led by its vanguard party, as the ruling class in society. Rather, the aim is to carry forward the transformation of the production and social relations and the political institutions as well as the thinking of the people in order to advance, together with the proletariat and masses of people worldwide, toward the final goal of eliminating class distinctions and all oppressive divisions in society. And with that will come the elimination of the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat itself—for any state, and any specialized and institutionalized bodies of people to rule and administer society, apart from the people as a whole.

As discussed in the Appendix “The Party Under Socialism, and the Transition to Communism,” this will occur through a complex, worldwide process marked and driven forward by class struggle within socialist society, in close interconnection with the struggle internationally; and the revolutionization of the leading institutions of socialist society—most especially the party—is a crucial aspect of carrying forward the overall revolutionization of society. Democracy in socialist society must be situated and understood in this context. Not only is it democracy that includes the vast majority of the people and is practiced on a far greater and more meaningful scale than anything practiced under capitalism, but it serves to strengthen the exercise of all-around dictatorship by the proletariat over the bourgeoisie and the advance to communism.

The Nature and Role of Democracy in Capitalist Society

Democracy in capitalist society, includ-

ing the much-advertised “American democracy,” is a fraud. It is democracy only for and among the ranks of the bourgeoisie, which decides every major question and exercises a ruthless dictatorship over the proletariat and the masses of people in general.

It is true that, particularly in relation to the middle classes in the U.S., the bourgeoisie has been able to conceal to a certain degree the sharp edge of its dictatorship. Its world domination has enabled the bourgeoisie to throw some crumbs to significant sections of the working class as well as the petty bourgeoisie, and this has brought some relative stability to its rule.

But this overseas domination is itself defended by armed force and terror: the platform of democracy in this country—worm-eaten as it is—rests not on its Constitution or Bill of Rights but on the dominant position of the U.S. in the world system, its role as the leading exploiter of the masses worldwide, and on fascist terror in the oppressed nations. Ask a peasant from El Salvador or Guatemala who watched an army backed and “advised” by the U.S. murder her entire village; ask the parent of a child dead in Iraq because U.S. “sanctions” made medical care impossible; or ask a revolutionary in Peru or Turkey, or dozens of other places, hunted down, tortured, and then either killed or imprisoned for years by police trained and funded by the CIA—they can testify to the foundation of “democracy” within the U.S.

Even within the U.S. itself, for all that the bourgeoisie prattles on about “democracy” and “human rights,” any serious challenge to its rule is met with vicious force.

Consider the consistent and merciless repression of the oppressed peoples in the U.S. and especially the bloody suppression by police, national guard, and army units directed against mass uprisings of Black people and others during the high tide of struggle in the late 1960s and early ’70s. Think too about the murder of dozens of Black Panther Party members and other revolutionaries, along with the jailing of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of revolutionary and radical activists. Look at how political protests are often brutally attacked by paramilitary police forces who use tear gas, rubber bullets, and other “non-lethal” weapons to maim demonstrators and who arrest and beat

people indiscriminately. Recall the numerous economic strikes in which the police and even, at times, armed troops have enforced the “right” of the owners to continue production and fire the striking workers. Then the real picture of phony democracy and actual dictatorship for the masses in this country begins to become clear. And while the bourgeoisie makes a special point of coming down hard on any radical political expression from the proletariat, even movements based in the middle strata find themselves very quickly up against police spying, “black out” or distortion by the media, intimidation, jail time, beatings and even outright murder ...once they depart from the tightly approved limits of “dissent.”

The whole of U.S. history—from its foundation in genocide against Native peoples and the kidnapping and enslavement of Africans down to the present day—is one long chain of atrocities graphically illustrating Mao Tsetung’s analysis that “political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.”

In addition, the more or less “normal functioning” of capitalist society, upon examination, reveals that the bourgeoisie and its representatives thoroughly dominate political affairs. They monopolize the ownership and use of the mass media and control access to vital information about political issues and world events. Further, the very division of labor of capitalist society determines that the millions of working class and other poor and oppressed people are prevented from having any significant voice in the political life of capitalist society. And again, should they attempt to do so—which necessarily brings them into direct confrontation with the capitalist state—the repressive forces of its dictatorship are ruthlessly unleashed against them.

In recent decades, the bourgeoisie has gone even further to enforce a day-in day-out atmosphere of repressive intimidation aimed against the proletariat, and especially against Black, Latino, and other oppressed peoples. The massive imprisonment of the youth; the rampaging and ever-present police in the ghettos and barrios; the use of the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service, or “La Migra”) to turn immigrant proletarians into virtual outlaws; all this has been designed to break the spirit of those the

bourgeoisie considers to be “social dynamite” and to pre-emptively repress any revolutionary movement among them. Beneath the facade of democracy lies the reality of dictatorship.

“But what about elections?” the bourgeois commentators say. “Surely the communists can’t deny that people can vote in America?” True, but these elections are really nothing more than rituals in which the masses are allowed to choose which political operative of the bourgeoisie will oppress and crush them. And the electoral process is used to “legitimize” that oppression.

Rather than threaten or even impede the power of the imperialists, the bourgeois election ritual actually *strengthens* them. These elections put the masses in a passive and isolated position, training them to confine their political aspirations and activity to whatever their masters see fit to allow. Soon people either become disgusted with “politics” altogether, or they are forced to lower their sights and give up any higher aspirations. No matter which candidate gets elected in these farces, the bourgeoisie and the capitalist system *always* wins.

Democracy for the Masses

With this understanding, the accusations of the capitalists that communists and socialist society stand for “the destruction of democracy” are hypocritical and turn the truth upside down. In fact, communists stand for, and socialist society represents, the destruction of *bourgeois* democracy—that is, bourgeois dictatorship over the proletariat and the masses generally. Further, socialist society will bring *real and unparalleled democracy for the masses of people* through the dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie. The rights of the masses of people—which under capitalism are suppressed and curtailed and in essence come down to the right to be exploited and oppressed—assume a completely different dimension and are of a qualitatively higher order once the proletariat has overthrown the bourgeoisie and established its own rule.

First of all, the most basic right of the masses in the new society, which they can never exercise under capitalism, will be

the right to be masters of society, in every sphere, and to transform it in their interests. On a basic level, for the first time ever, the masses will have the right to collectively join together to wipe out starvation, do away with discrimination, reorganize production to meet human needs rather than profit, and to make many other urgently needed and profound changes. This won’t be because of some law or resolution on paper but because the masses will have state power, backed by guns, and because the economic system will no longer be organized on the basis of private profit.

The masses will have the right, for the first time ever, to directly participate in struggle over the key political questions confronting society and in the actual administration of the state. They’ll have the right, for the first time ever, to exercise dictatorship over—to subdue and suppress—the forces who want to resurrect exploitation, who want to reverse the uprooting of white supremacy and male supremacy, who want to restore a situation where a relative handful control all the economic and political power, who want to revive the plunder of other peoples and nations.

But these rights of the masses and their role as masters of society must find expression in concrete policies and actions, above all in political life and struggle. The most crucial question for the newly established proletarian state is to draw the millions and tens of millions of working class and other formerly oppressed people into the task of exercising political power.

The essential role of the institutions and organs of the new power must be to draw the masses into administering everything from economic planning to the suppression of counter-revolutionaries. The means must be developed and the political atmosphere created in which the masses debate everything from the purpose and shape of educational institutions to how best to support revolutions in other countries. This will be a matter of combining the mobilization of the masses and mass movements with the development of *organizational forms* through which the masses, under the overall leadership of the Party, increasingly carry out the actual administration of the state and of society as a whole.

As pointed out in the Appendix “Consolidating the New Proletarian Power, Developing Radically New Institutions,” the immediate aftermath of the seizure of power, with its high tide of mass enthusiasm, will witness a level of direct mass participation in political and social life, in making and carrying out decisions in every sphere, that today can hardly be dreamed of. Yet, huge as these immediate changes will be, they will also, in another sense, be only the first steps to where society ultimately needs to go—that is, to the mass administering of all spheres of society without the medium of a state.

Moreover, it has not proven to be possible to sustain people through every ebb and flow of social life at the same high pitch of enthusiasm of revolutionary times. On a deeper level still, socialism will inherit the legacies of capitalism, in which the proletariat has been both denied the training to master politics and administration and has been influenced by the methods and “force of habit” of bourgeois society.

Thus, the direct mastery of the masses over society cannot happen all at once, nor will it develop in a straight line. But it will be the policy of the state, through all the ebbs and flows of the class struggle during the socialist period, to progress as far as possible at every stage in doing this. And the more that society can dig up the soil of inequality left over from capitalism—as, for example, the difference between mental labor and manual labor is broken down through many different policies and struggles—the more broadly and directly will the masses be able to rule.

Debate, Dissent and Diversity in Socialist Society

Our Party has seriously studied and learned a great deal from the proletariat’s experience in ruling society, both in the Soviet Union and in China, before capitalism was restored in each of those countries. This experience reached its highest point in China during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, especially as regards widespread mass debate and struggle over the direction of society. The proletariat needs to learn from this experience, building on its positive points and taking them even higher.

Broad political debate and struggle throughout society must be an essential element of proletarian rule. To foster this, the state will make available to the masses of people the vast means of communication that have been previously monopolized by the bourgeoisie. Television, radio, printing presses, billboards and other vehicles for the expression of political views will provide time and space for groups and representatives among the masses to put forward and struggle over their ideas on the major political questions and social concerns of the day and on world affairs; and the masses as a whole will be organized, in the factories, neighborhoods, farms, schools, armed forces and so on to hear and debate these views and to struggle out these questions in general.

The Party will put great emphasis on fostering debate, dissent, and diversity in socialist society. It will certainly enter into and strive to lead the debate and struggle among the masses; at the same time it will take care to encourage an atmosphere where the masses freely express their ideas.

Specifically, the expression of views and opinions by the masses that are contrary to those of the Party will not be discouraged and in fact will be valued for whatever they raise that helps the Party and the masses to better understand things. Only when it represents the attempts of actual counter-revolutionaries to bring about the overthrow of the proletariat’s political power and restore capitalism will the expression of such views be suppressed. And in that case, too, the masses themselves will be relied on to struggle against, expose, and suppress such people and to distinguish through such struggle what are backward and mistaken ideas among the masses and what are actual attempts at fomenting counter-revolution.

The proletarian state need not fear dissent and, again, should value it. Dissent—even dissent coming from a fundamentally oppositional point of view—has an important role. It may bring to light—or shed new light on—important problems or shortcomings of the socialist state.

In particular, dissent can play an important role in sparking debate and struggle over the unresolved contradictions and problems facing socialist society in moving towards classless, communist

society. But unless it is clear that there is “space” for such dissent in society, unless people feel that they have room to disagree with those in authority, unless an atmosphere is created in which the masses actually grasp not only the possibility but the importance of their debating and wrangling over all the questions of the day—then any dissenting views and sentiments will be forced underground, the vigorous debate and struggle necessary to actually move society forward to communism will not flower, and the atmosphere in society will become lifeless and boring.

The question here is not *whether* the proletariat should exercise dictatorship, but *how* it should exercise it. The proletariat, with the leadership of the Party, must control the economy, as well as politics, the media, culture, and so on. But dictatorship and control by the proletariat need not mean, and should not mean, that no opposition is allowed. On the contrary, socialism can only advance to communism in an atmosphere characterized by vigorous and free-flowing debate and contention, which will greatly contribute to the identification, analysis, and resolution of contradictions on an ever higher level.

Selection and Supervision of Leadership

The basic principle that will be applied in selecting leaders and generally in governing socialist society will be *democratic centralism*. This combines the broad initiative of the masses and their exercise of the rights that have been discussed—most fundamentally their right to rule and transform society—with the leadership of the Party.

Political leaders and leading bodies will *not* be chosen in a contest between self-seeking careerists trying to promote themselves into positions of power over the masses and to establish economic as well as political relationships characteristic of capitalism—not, in other words, through the bourgeois electoral process. For one thing, thousands of revolutionary leaders will have emerged and been tested in the course of the struggle to seize power. Then there will be the ongoing process of selecting leadership once the proletariat has won power, including the

constant need to get rid of the stale and bring forward the fresh.

Through consultation between the Party and the masses, leadership will be established and developed from the basic levels of society to the leading political positions in the national government. Leaders themselves will continually emerge and be tested and tempered from among the masses and mass revolutionary struggle.

The standard for leadership will be demonstrated devotion to the cause of proletarian revolution, the determination to grasp and apply the revolutionary science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism in a living way, and the ability to inspire and lead the masses in the same course. The masses and mass organizations in every institution throughout the country will be relied on by the Party not only in selecting such leadership but also in politically supervising it—struggling with and assisting leaders to stay on the revolutionary road, and replacing or overthrowing those who persist in taking the capitalist road.

In this context, elections will have a role as *one* means of selecting and developing leadership, and keeping it truly accountable to the masses. But the basic approach and objective will be to arrive at a consensus among the masses with regard to matters of leadership. All this will contribute to the overall process through which the masses, with the leadership of the Party, will increasingly master and transform all spheres of society; through which the masses will increasingly take up the functions that, in the initial stages of socialist society, are of necessity concentrated in the hands of Party cadres; and through which the need for the Party as a special, institutionalized body of leadership will eventually be surpassed and eliminated.

Supervising Leadership and Actively Engaging in Political Life

In supervising leadership, the masses will have the right—and it will be the policy of the Party and state to encourage and unleash them—to criticize their leaders, on any level. And more generally the masses will have the right to hold meetings, organize demonstrations, put up

posters, go on strike, pass out leaflets, and so on—again, with the exception of actual attempts to promote and organize the counter-revolutionary overthrow of the rule of the proletariat.

To assist the masses in continually developing their revolutionary unity and in making the distinction between disagreements—even sharp ones—among their own ranks on the one hand, and the views and actions of counter-revolutionaries on the other, the Party will not only provide overall leadership to this but will establish and publicize basic guidelines. These basic guidelines would be along the general lines that ideas and actions should:

- help to strengthen, not undermine, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the mastery of the masses over society;
- aim to carry forward, not oppose, the socialist transformation of the economy;
- promote unity, on a revolutionary basis, between different nationalities and between men and women, not division and inequality between them;
- promote the further revolutionization of society and the advance toward communism, not the reversal of the revolution and the restoration of capitalism;
- uphold proletarian internationalism, not chauvinism and nationalism;
- strengthen, including through criticism, the leading role of the Party, not weaken it;
- foster the ideology of the proletariat and the revolutionizing of people's thinking, not the ideological poison of the bourgeoisie and the force of tradition and habit.

Of course, there will be many views and actions on the part of people who are by no means counter-revolutionaries and do not seek a return to the old society, which nevertheless fall on the wrong side of the general criteria outlined above. Lively, vigorous debate and struggle will make it possible to win such people over to the correct, forward course and to learn the most from their views, criticisms, suggestions, etc. The process of debate will also make it possible to drag into the light of day and deal firmly with the minority of people who are pursuing counter-revolutionary objectives, wherever they are—including, and of special importance, within the Party itself.

In line with the previously stated orientation toward and policy on dissent, the general criteria sketched out above will not themselves serve the purpose of determining which views can and cannot be heard—and people will not have to agree with these criteria in order to exercise their rights. Instead, the point of such criteria will be to strengthen the ability of the masses to determine the correct line of advance and unite around it and, in opposition to this, to identify the incorrect course and struggle against it, exposing in the process counter-revolutionary ideas, actions, and forces and moving in the appropriate ways against them.

As a general method it is important that such reactionary ideas be allowed in (or dragged into) the open air and exposed. Only thus can they really be thoroughly criticized and defeated. Only in this way, and not in a hothouse, can the masses increasingly grasp and apply revolutionary ideology and politics.

These basic rights and this general policy will not, however, be applied to the bourgeoisie and its agents. They and all proven counter-revolutionaries will be politically suppressed—by the action of the masses and the armed force of proletarian dictatorship when necessary. Put simply, they will be dictated over and will not be allowed to stage protests, organize meetings, and so on. This is not to say that no reactionaries will ever be allowed to speak in the media or even publish their views. The proletariat in power will make some allowance for this, using such material to strengthen the critical ability of the masses and to force leadership to take a hard look at things—including itself.

Bearing Arms in the New Society

The same principle—that is, of keeping a firm grip on state power while increasing the mastery of the masses over all spheres of society—will be applied to the question of bearing arms. Not only is it a fundamental truth that proletarian revolution can only succeed in overthrowing capitalism through the armed struggle of the broad masses, but in the same way the power established by the proletariat must and can only rest on the armed

might of the millions and millions of the working class and its allies.

For this reason, under the rule of the proletariat, the masses will not only retain their arms but will be further trained in the use of various weapons. This, of course, does not mean that everybody will walk around with a gun strapped on, like the old Wild West movies, but that militias will be broadly organized, in factories, neighborhoods, schools—throughout society. Only the bourgeoisie, its agents, and other forces seeking to undermine and overthrow the new society will be excluded from this. And as for them, not only will they have no right to bear or use arms, but they will be the object of the armed dictatorship of the proletariat.

The role of these mass militias, in overall coordination with the regular revolutionary armed forces, will be to help safeguard the proletarian state against its enemies—both within the country and outside it, both those openly hostile to the revolution and those who claim the mantle of Marxism and often are even leading Party officials but are exposed as actual counter-revolutionaries.

Here a crucial question comes into sharp focus. The guns must be in the hands of the masses for the revolution to be made, defended, and carried forward. But this is not mainly a matter of whether the masses literally possess arms, whether they are organized into the militia, etc. All this is important, but most fundamental is the question of the political consciousness of the masses who possess these arms and who make up the armed forces and militia.

The masses must be educated and trained in the basic outlook and method of Marxism, in theory and practice, and enabled through both study and concrete political struggle to distinguish genuine from sham Marxism. Only through this process will they know what to fight for and what to fight against, what to uphold and what to suppress, what they should put their lives on the line to defend and what to crush—and only in this basic sense will the guns really, politically, be in the hands of the masses and will they be able to maintain their rule over society and revolutionize it in accordance with the class outlook and interests of the proletariat.

Legal Rights and the Legal System

The proletarian state will also put into place a new legal system, which will enable the masses to protect their interests and their rule in society while also protecting individuals who may be accused of a crime. The capitalist legal system does not seek truth or justice, but functions to repress the masses, to settle conflicts among bourgeois forces, and to protect and preserve bourgeois property relations.

The proletarian legal system will involve and rely on the masses in actually getting at the truth of a given situation and determining what crimes have been committed and by whom, or the rights and wrongs of different disputes. At the same time, this will be combined with established principles to guide the search for the truth as well as to protect individuals from mistakes or abuses. And through the combination of representatives of the masses and leadership and experts in the legal sphere, there will be a process of continually summing up experience in this sphere and further developing and refining these principles and guidelines.

Religion

An important question that the proletarian state will have to deal with is religion and religious activity. The socialist state will uphold people's right to worship and to hold religious services and will provide them with the necessary facilities and materials for doing so. Religious people will not, however, be allowed special privileges, nor will they be permitted to use religious activity as a means to promote reactionary political movements. The proletarian state will monitor and regulate their finances to prevent them from becoming a source of capital or otherwise employed in violation of the principles and laws of the socialist state.

When forces do arise within the new society who attempt to carry out counter-revolutionary political activities and/or the exploitation of the masses under the cloak of religion, they will be prevented from doing so and politically suppressed, together with counter-revolutionaries of all other kinds. But as long as religious

people do not actively organize against the continuing revolution, they will be allowed to hold services and other similar activities.

At the same time, communists are atheists: they do not believe in supernatural forces or beings of any kind and instead understand that it is the masses themselves who, through taking up and applying the principles of Marxism, must and will achieve their own emancipation and continually advance humanity's understanding of and transformation of nature. And further, they recognize that the role of religion is to instill in the masses the sense that they are powerless before the forces of nature, and those that rule over them in society, and to console them in their misery rather than arousing them to rise up and abolish the source of it through revolutionary struggle.

The Party, as the leading force of the working class and in the proletarian state, cannot and must not attempt to force people to give up religious beliefs. Rather, it must wage an ideological struggle over this question and rely on those among the masses who hold such beliefs to cast them off on their own. And this

they will do, as they come to see—through the advance of the revolution, the masses' increasing mastery over society, and their continually developing ability to know and change the world in general—that these religious beliefs are incorrect and, more, that they are a burden carried over from capitalism and the dead weight of backward tradition.

Therefore, the proletarian state will, on the one hand, uphold the right of people to believe in religion and, on the other hand, will propagate atheism and educate the masses in the scientific world view of Marxism in opposition to all religious beliefs.

Through the educational system and other means, the *Bible*, the *Torah*, the *Koran* and other religious works and doctrine will be analyzed and criticized with the science of Marxism. In this way—and in general through the process of ideological struggle and persuasion, together with the overall advance through the socialist revolution toward communism—the masses themselves will be enabled to break and cast away the bond of religion and other mental and material shackles and achieve their full emancipation.

Internationalism and International Relations

The proletariat is an international class. It faces a common enemy—the imperialist system—throughout the world and has a common goal—communism—that can only be achieved on a world scale. As a class, the proletariat can only win its emancipation by ending exploitation and oppression in *every form and everywhere*.

The outlook of the revolutionary proletariat and its vanguard party is and must be internationalism, not nationalism. The fundamental allegiance of the proletariat is not to any one nation but to the cause of the world proletarian revolution.

Internationalism enables workers in every country to recognize and act on their common interests with the exploited and oppressed throughout the world. It enables the masses of people to fight in unity with the resistance, revolutionary struggles, and revolutionary wars all over the world that are going up against the imperialists and reactionaries.

The Party must work, through the whole period of preparation for revolution, to train the masses in proletarian internationalism. Revolution cannot be made in an imperialist country unless a decisive section of the masses has been won to such an internationalist stand.

The broader movement must have a revolutionary internationalist *core*. This is a section of masses who deeply understand the criminal nature of what “their own” rulers do all around the world and who are determined to stand with the proletariat and oppressed people of the world in fighting against imperialism and reaction.

Relying on this internationalist core, the Party will lead in boldly opposing chauvinist appeals by the bourgeoisie to “put aside politics and defend the country” and will instead seize on international difficulties (wars, etc.) faced by “its own rulers” as openings to intensify the struggle against them. Should there be an imperialist war, the revolutionary proletariat will dare to fight against the inevitable spontaneous wave of patriotism. It will bring out the people’s true

interests in opposing any imperialist war and winning the masses to welcome the defeat of their own rulers.

This is not a matter of a few statements or resolutions now and then. The Party has to train people in internationalism through a thousand concrete instances and struggles. It must win the proletariat, as well as other sections of the people, to render support to Maoist people’s wars and other revolutionary struggles around the world, to support socialist countries wherever they come into being, to contribute everything possible at every point to the world proletarian revolution and the international communist movement, to oppose every imperialist act of aggression, and to build the revolutionary movement in the U.S. as part of the world revolution.

The proletariat in the United States has a great responsibility and a great mission: to carry out a revolution which, once victorious, will mean the defeat and elimination of a monstrous international exploiter and oppressor, justly hated by masses of people all over the globe. When this revolution succeeds, hundreds of millions worldwide will rejoice and will step up their own revolutionary struggles.

At the same time, the class-conscious proletariat and revolutionary masses in the U.S. draw great inspiration, strength, and support from the revolutionary struggles of proletarians and oppressed people throughout the world, especially where this finds its highest expression in people’s wars led by Maoist parties. Indeed, it is impossible to conceive of making revolution in the U.S. in isolation from this international revolutionary struggle.

The revolutionary proletariat in the U.S. is also greatly strengthened by the fact that the vanguard party in this country, the RCP,USA, is a part of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), which unites parties and organizations in many parts of the world on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. The RIM serves today as an embryonic center for the world proletarian revolution and is committed to forging a new Communist

International that will even more broadly and powerfully unite the world's Marxist-Leninist-Maoist forces.

It is a point of fundamental orientation that the revolutionary struggle in every country must be waged as part of the world proletarian revolution. And wherever the proletariat seizes power, it must build its new socialist state as, above all, a base area for this worldwide revolution.

Internationalist Policies of the New Socialist State

With the seizure of power by the proletariat through revolutionary war, the new socialist state arising on the ashes of U.S. imperialism will base itself on the principles of proletarian internationalism. While the exact application of these principles will depend on specific world conditions, some fundamental points can be set forth now.

The proletariat in power will renounce all wars of aggression and plunder in word and deed. Having defeated the U.S. imperialists in war, the proletariat will move immediately and decisively to bring about the surrender and dismantling of any remnants of the armed forces of imperialism and counter-revolution that might remain in the new socialist territory. And it will do everything possible to bring about, in all parts of the world, the dismantling of any remaining armed forces and military bases of the former U.S. imperialist state.

If revolution in the U.S. takes place in the context of inter-imperialist war, the victorious proletariat will immediately pull its state out of that war and will stand against and expose the criminal nature and conduct of such a war.

The proletarian state will renounce all imperialist alliances, such as NATO. It will break all ties with institutions like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organization, and other vehicles of imperialist domination. All secret treaties and agreements made by the imperialists to serve their plunder and wars will be made public.

The socialist state will immediately cancel all unequal treaties and end all colonial relationships, direct or indirect, with other nations.

Before the seizure of power, the revolu-

tionary proletariat in the U.S. will support the people of Puerto Rico in the struggle to cast off U.S. domination and in particular to take advantage of any serious crisis of U.S. imperialism to break its grip on their country. Upon the seizure of power, Puerto Rico will be immediately freed—that is, if the Puerto Rican people have not already won their liberation. Likewise, control over Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands will be relinquished, and measures will be taken to assist in overcoming the destructive legacy of U.S. colonial rule.

Base Area for Revolution

Once again, the new socialist state must be built, first and foremost, as a base area for the world revolution. Socialist states have been, and are likely for some time to be, established in a world in which imperialism remains dominant. Consequently, the new socialist state will face the prospect of being “encircled” in various ways and even subject to outright military assault.

Thus the socialist state must defend itself—this is of vital importance not just for the masses within the socialist state itself but for the international proletariat and the world proletarian revolution. But survival of the socialist state, as important as it is, cannot be an end in itself.

Fundamentally, the defense of the socialist state must be conducted as part of advancing the world revolution. This means facing up to life-and-death conflict with the imperialists, including their tactics of economic blockade, sabotage, assassination, and military attack. It means being prepared even to put the socialist state itself at risk in order to advance the world revolution overall, particularly when there are opportunities to make key breakthroughs in the world revolutionary struggle.

With this as a basic orientation, the new state power will support just wars of national liberation and socialist revolution. And the vast productive forces of the (former) U.S.—in large part accumulated through the plunder of other countries—will be unleashed not only for the benefit of people here, but to assist the exploited and oppressed the world over in their rev-

olutionary struggles and in the revolutionary transformation of society once they have won state power.

The Party and the socialist state will devote systematic attention to leading the masses to study, discuss, and debate world affairs—particularly the challenges confronting the world revolution—and to mobilizing the masses to concretely support revolutionary struggles throughout the world.

Through political work, struggle, and education, the masses will increasingly come to see the workers, peasants, and other oppressed of the world as brothers and sisters and comrades in a common revolutionary cause. They will be motivated not just to have feelings of solidarity with but to support—and to make sacrifices in order to more powerfully support—just struggles against imperialism and reaction, and especially to unite with people's wars led by Maoist parties as heroic battalions in the international proletariat's common struggle for a communist world free of class distinctions, exploitation, and oppression.

The new state will forge the closest unity with any other socialist states, and will render full support to the international communist movement.

As a tactical measure the socialist state may establish state-to-state relations with reactionary regimes. It may carry out trade and so on with these countries, maneuvering in this arena to defend the gains of the revolution, to develop the socialist economy, and so on. But this must always be done on the basis of revolutionary principle and in particular must be subordinate to supporting revolutionary struggles throughout the world, including in the countries with which state-to-state relations have been established.

Policy Towards Borders

For the class-conscious proletariat, there is nothing sacred about the existing territory and borders of the U.S., which were carved out through mass murder and wholesale robbery by the ruling class. The proletariat within the U.S. will strive to liberate as much of that territory as possible, while encouraging and assisting revolution in other parts of North America and in Mexico in particular.

Ultimately new borders will be established. Their location and character will depend on several factors, but most essentially on the development and outcome of the revolutionary struggles on the continent, on the need to defend the rule of the proletariat wherever it has been established, and, above all, on what most serves the further advance of the proletarian revolution, not only in this particular part of the world but in the world as a whole.

The current border between the U.S. and Mexico is a two-thousand-mile bloody scar gouged out by Yankee imperialism. Today, from one side, this border is like a sieve, allowing U.S. capital to flow freely into Mexico, exploiting its people and resources and wreaking havoc with its air, water and, above all, the lives of its people. From the other side, this border is a militarized zone, criminalizing and terrorizing those coming north in a desperate search to find work and feed their families and/or fleeing bloody repression.

The revolutionary struggles in the U.S. and Mexico will be closely intertwined, as people north and south of the current border strive to defeat our common enemy. Advances in each country will spur forward the struggle in the other, at times spilling over the border, pounding at a crucial faultline and potential great vulnerability of U.S. imperialism—its close interconnection with Mexico in a relation of imperialist domination and oppression. All this will greatly strengthen the revolutionary struggle overall. It is this struggle that will determine the final shape, location, and character of the U.S.-Mexico border. But under no circumstances will this border be what it is today: a fortification of privilege of one nation over another.

Armed Forces of the New State

Once the proletariat has seized and consolidated power, it will need powerful armed forces to defend itself against attempts of the defeated enemy to stage a comeback, as well the attempts of hostile imperialist powers and reactionary states to subvert, sabotage, and even wage warfare against the socialist state. The proletariat's armed forces will be organized according to completely different princi-

ples than those guiding reactionary armies (see appendix “Consolidating the New Proletarian Power, Developing Radically New Institutions”).

An important aspect of this will be the approach to the development and use of the high-tech weaponry that is at the *heart* of imperialist war-fighting strategy. The proletarian armed forces will not be lured into the imperialists’ “arms race.” The new proletarian state will not attempt to defend and advance the interests of the masses by spending trillions of dollars on nukes and other weapons of mass destruction. This would tremendously distort the new socialist economy: it is a “race” that the proletariat cannot win and does not want to win.

Moreover, the actual use of nuclear weapons, especially modern high-yield ones, would dictate a kind of warfare that runs counter to the principles of people’s war, including its most important principle: while weapons are an important factor, it is people, not weapons, that are decisive.

The proletariat in power, while producing and being prepared to utilize some high-tech weaponry, in accordance with its basic principles and military doctrine, will fundamentally rely on the people—those enlisted in its revolutionary armed forces, the millions who make up the people’s militias, and the broad masses as a whole—to defend the socialist state and defeat counter-revolution. It will rely on the people to enable the dictatorship of the proletariat not only to survive but to carry forward the socialist transformation of the society and at the same time, and above all, to support the world revolution.

As for the question of ridding the world of nuclear weapons, the proletarian state will take up the struggle to abolish nuclear weapons—and this struggle will be fundamentally different from the phony “disarmament” talks of the imperialists. However, the remaining imperialists and other reactionaries, being desperate gangsters, will not so easily give up these weapons. This makes it quite likely that it will be a long time before all nuclear weapons are finally abolished—although the destruction of the U.S. imperialist state will be a mighty stride in that direction.

A Focus of Struggle in the New Socialist Society

History has shown that the correct handling of the contradiction between the need to build and defend the existing socialist state(s) and the need to promote the advance of the world revolution has proven to be an extremely difficult problem.

For this reason, whether or not to adhere to the policies set out above, and the basic orientation of putting the interests of the world revolution first, will be a focus of sharp struggle in socialist society, including right within the leadership of the party and the state.

As long as capitalism and exploitation exist in any country, this will be a base for the bourgeoisie in its attempts to defeat the working class, even where it has seized power, and to impose capitalist rule everywhere, restoring it where it has been overthrown. And wherever capitalism rules and maintains backwardness, it stands as a great barrier to the people in all countries in transforming society and developing the rational use of the world’s resources and productive forces for the common good of the masses and ultimately all of humanity.

The international proletariat can emancipate itself only by emancipating all humanity; it can achieve communism only by eliminating the rule of capital, the chains of exploitation, and the scars of class-divided society everywhere. Our aim is to “conquer the world.”

Uprooting National Oppression and White Supremacy

The history of the development of capitalism in the U.S. is a history of the most savage oppression of the Black, Native American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Hawaiian, Asian, and other oppressed peoples. Today this oppression continues and, in many ways, has intensified. For these reasons, the proletarian revolution in the U.S. must urgently take up this question for solution.

The proletariat aims to achieve a classless communist society where all national and “racial” antagonisms are overcome and the division of the world into nations is superseded by a world community of freely associating human beings. But to bring that about, injustices must be dealt with and the causes of national oppression must be removed. The rights of oppressed nationalities must be upheld, and great-nation chauvinism and white supremacy combated. An important feature of the socialist transition period, of the continuing revolution under socialism, is the achievement of equality between all nations and peoples. This is the necessary path to the ultimate abolition of all national antagonisms and boundaries, and the very existence of separate nations altogether.

Why Imperialism Cannot Do Away with National Oppression

The conditions faced today by the oppressed peoples in the U.S. are truly barbaric. They meet with discrimination at every turn, solely due to the color of their skin or the language that they speak. As members of the proletariat (and in their majority the oppressed nationalities are proletarians), they get either the lowest-paid, most dangerous, and most back-breaking jobs, or else no jobs at all. They get the worst housing, the worst of bad health care, and the worst education and other social services. To take one horrendous example, the infant mortality rates of most of the oppressed nationalities

are double that of whites, and in some areas triple! Their cultures and languages are suppressed, mutilated, and ridiculed.

In recent years, the imperialists have literally filled the prisons to bursting with youth of the oppressed nationalities. (If the Black population of the U.S. were a separate country, it would have the highest incarceration rate of any in the world!) At the same time, the imperialists have flooded the neighborhoods and schools of the oppressed nationalities with brutalizing, murdering racist thugs in blue uniforms.

All this and more is daily life for the masses of the oppressed nationalities. And it is these conditions that the proletariat in power must and will eliminate.

The capitalists today have thousands of laws on paper outlawing discrimination, but still discrimination thrives and intensifies. This is because they have a greater law in command—“the law of maximizing profit”—and under this law all of society is kept in a twisted state. Such deformities fully conform to their interests.

The oppression of Black and other oppressed peoples in this country is not only a matter of racism but, even more fundamentally, of the oppression of nations and national groups. This oppression is essential to the functioning of the capitalist system in the U.S. It is built into the foundation and whole framework of capitalist society in the U.S. and the whole structure of U.S. imperialist rule and domination in the world.

National oppression is profitable for the imperialists. The people of the oppressed nationalities are in their majority members of the U.S. proletariat, and are *super-exploited* due to the national oppression they suffer—that is, the capitalists use the systematic segregation, lack of opportunity, and discrimination against these workers to pay them extra-low wages and thereby get extra-high profits. The capitalists also use the existence of this superexploited section of workers to drive down the conditions of the working masses overall.

In addition, the imperialists use the whole structure of white supremacy and the corresponding mentality that it breeds among whites—including even those who are poor, powerless, and exploited—as an important part of the “social glue” that keeps the whole system together. Many white proletarians are seduced into thinking that they have a stake in maintaining privileges that result from white supremacy and thus in defending the status quo against their true class brothers and sisters. In this way, white supremacy sows deep divisions within the working class itself and seriously weakens its struggle.

For all these reasons and more, the imperialists could not do away with national oppression and white supremacy, even if they wanted to. As Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP, has written, “socially as well as politically, any attempt to really sever this national oppression from the fabric of U.S. society and reshape the society without this oppression would completely ‘unravel’ and tear apart the whole social fabric as it now exists, as it has been historically developed under capitalist rule. Obviously, while we, representing the revolutionary proletariat, welcome this, the imperialist ruling class absolutely does not and cannot.”

Immediate Measures of the Proletariat on Coming to Power

The proletariat has no interest whatsoever in maintaining any aspect of national oppression; on the contrary, it has the most profound interest in destroying white supremacy root and branch, and developing true equality of nationalities.

In socialist society, inequalities—or any remaining aspects of them—are both leftovers of the old society and breeding grounds for capitalist restoration. The proletariat in power will continue the fight to uproot national oppression. This is necessary to maintain and strengthen the unity that it will have built up in the process of preparing for and then carrying out the revolutionary struggle to seize power. Even more fundamentally, it is necessary because of the basic goal of proletarian revolution: the elimination of classes and *all* forms of oppression.

So the proletarian dictatorship will move quickly against the institutions and legacies of national oppression. Discrimination, for example, will be immediately and forcefully banned in employment, housing, and all other areas. The army of police—which rains down systematic terror in the ghettos and barrios and other areas where the oppressed nationalities live—will be destroyed. Just punishment will be handed out to its hired thugs, and in its place will be armed and organized revolutionary militias made up of the masses in these neighborhoods and areas.

Segregation in neighborhoods, schools, and the like will be banned and integration promoted. Racist/segregationist groups will be broken up, and those like the KKK and Nazis who have initiated attacks on oppressed nationalities will be immediately and mercilessly crushed. The leaders of such groups will receive the ultimate punishment. And if, for example, somebody in a workplace jumps up and starts some racist mouthing off, although he will probably not be jailed, unless he is actually part of organizing a reactionary movement, the masses of all nationalities will be mobilized right then and there to wage a sharp struggle against all this and to isolate and defeat such reactionary poison.

The new socialist state will take immediate and special measures to change the situation of social inequality. For instance, as opposed to the way in which capitalism enforces systematic discrimination and essentially closes off whole spheres of society to the oppressed nationalities, the new proletarian state will provide the resources, support, and leadership required to overcome all inequalities between nationalities and all barriers to full and equal participation in every sphere and on all levels of society. This will have nothing in common with the hypocritical tokenism of the bourgeoisie, but will be based instead on recognizing the crucial importance of fully overcoming the legacies of discrimination and national oppression and backing this up with the power and moral force of the proletarian dictatorship.

It will require struggle to win the masses of all nationalities to see the absolute necessity for these measures in order to develop—and even to keep—the victories of the revolution.

For instance, in tackling the task of rebuilding neighborhoods after the seizure of power, Party members and other class-conscious people will not only struggle with others who do not grasp the urgent necessity for this but will set an example in practice, in self-sacrifice and voluntary labor, in order to see to it that the neighborhoods at the very bottom are rebuilt and improved first. If this policy is not actively applied, then the basis for proletarian power would be seriously undermined, because the oppressed people would rightly feel that things were no different than before—with the oppressed still on the bottom.

Over the long-term, the state will give preference in resources and assistance to the less developed and backward areas, in coordination with and on the basis of the overall development of society. And in the immediate situation after the seizure of power, the policy of “raising up the bottom” will be applied across the board.

With regard to agriculture, the proletariat in power will give special assistance to Black, Chicano, and Native American farmers who have continued to work the land but who have endured discriminatory burdens, including being denied access to government loan assistance, etc. It will also take into account the fact that many oppressed nationality farmers were by various means driven off the land that they owned or worked, and that some may desire to return to and farm that land. In such cases, land and resources will be provided, in line with the overall agricultural policies of the state. (See the section below “The Proletariat’s Approach to Land and Borders,” and the separate appendix “The New Socialist Economy—Part 2: Agriculture, City and Countryside, Ecology, and Planning.”)

Combating Racism and National Chauvinism

The proletariat will take aim at all the oppressor-nation chauvinism and racist views which the bourgeoisie insists are part of “unchangeable human nature.” Obviously this is a protracted process. But the first and giant step is sweeping away the capitalist system—which is the source of this garbage, and which in turn

thrives on it.

The overthrow of this system will put an end to the way that capitalism forces people into a dog-eat-dog existence, including competition for jobs, housing, and other necessities. This will uproot a major prop of racist ideas among the people.

But the influence of racism has been deeply embedded in American society. It has been fostered and promoted for generations and centuries by the workings of the capitalist system and the conscious policy of the ruling class. And it will take a determined, many-sided, and deep-going struggle—utilizing the educational resources and other agencies of the proletarian state, together with the mobilization of revolutionary masses—to root out this racism and the national oppression that it reflects and reinforces. This the proletariat in power can and must do—in order to remain in power and, moreover, to continue the revolution to abolish all oppression.

Education about the lives, cultures, and history of oppression and resistance of all the formerly oppressed nationalities will be widely and deeply carried out in the new society. The capitalist source of the problems of all the different oppressed peoples will be constantly exposed and hit again and again. The common myths among the people will be discussed and debunked, in large part by relying on organized exchanges between the masses themselves; and the lies of the bourgeoisie will be ruthlessly and thoroughly exposed.

All this will be greatly aided by the constantly closer contact that people of different nationalities will experience, as the policies of integrating the workplaces, neighborhoods, and schools are carried out—thus breaking down the ignorance-breeding separation in which bourgeois ideology generally feeds.

Equality of Languages and Cultures

Many different peoples live within the U.S., speaking many different languages. The class-conscious proletariat stands opposed to the blatantly chauvinist “English-first” and “English-only” policies of the bourgeoisie. In the new socialist society, the state will provide resources

and will mobilize and rely on the masses to help ensure that people will not be forced to speak English in order to participate fully in the life of society and the struggle to transform it. The basic orientation will be to promote respect for the languages and cultures of all peoples as part of the overall struggle to uproot all inequality between nationalities.

In areas where many people have Spanish as their first language, both English and Spanish will be taught in the schools to students of all nationalities, and this will be promoted more generally in society. English will not be the only linking language in society, and efforts will be made (beginning in the areas with large concentrations of Spanish and English speakers) to work toward the goal of making the entire population fluent in both Spanish and English.

A flowering of the cultures of the formerly oppressed nationalities will be promoted.

The proletariat will encourage and support the development of distinct national forms of culture, while not confining artists to any particular community or cultural form. Traditional forms among the various peoples will be respected and developed and, at the same time, will be increasingly infused with revolutionary content.

In the U.S. today, the influence of the cultural forms and creations of different nationalities do get spread, and there is an exciting “cross-pollination.” This is favorable for the proletariat and will be built on when it wins political power. In fact, a lively intermingling of cultures of different peoples, not only in the U.S. but throughout the world, will be developed in a higher and better way in socialist society.

Through all this a powerful, uplifting proletarian culture will be created: rich in diversity but expressing a unified revolutionary internationalist content and inspiring the masses of all nationalities to fight for their common revolutionary interests.

Only far in the future, when communism has been achieved, including through the struggle for national equality, will nations be superseded and will national differences, including in the area of cultures, be completely overcome. At that time, new cultural forms will flower, giving expression to the reality of human-

ity as a freely associating, and at the same time richly diverse, global community. (A further discussion of these questions is found in the appendix “Art, Science, Education, Sports and the Challenge of Creating a Whole New Superstructure in Socialist Society.”)

The Proletariat’s Approach to Land and Borders

The different oppressed nationalities in the U.S. have their own particular features and problems that must be solved. The Native American peoples have a long history of lands being stolen and their cultures being suppressed. The oppression of the Puerto Rican people within the U.S. is closely linked with the colonial status of their homeland, which must be freed. Black people have the history of slavery and of the historical process of their formation as an oppressed nation in the “Black Belt” area of the South. The Chicano people have the particular history of U.S. oppression of Mexico, the theft of its land and the maintaining of backward, less developed conditions in large parts of the Southwest, and the U.S. government’s “war on immigrants.”

But along with these important particularities, there are certain broad features common to many or all the oppressed peoples that must be grasped and dealt with by the socialist state—by mobilizing the masses of people of these nationalities and at the same time mobilizing the proletariat and the people as a whole to take up these questions.

The proletarian revolution in the U.S. will not be a simple affair. It will involve many complex phenomena and varied social movements—many led, even at the time of revolution, by different class forces and mobilized under different programs. This will be true particularly, though not exclusively, of the oppressed nationalities. It is possible that, at the time of the all-out struggle for power, there will be a number of different armies in the field. While there is only one fundamental revolutionary solution to the contradictions of society, this solution has many varied aspects, which will propel different social forces into motion.

Upon victory, and in fact in order to achieve victory, the Party will have to

lead the class-conscious workers in assessing the different forces in the field, establishing principled unity with them wherever possible, and struggling with them for the revolutionary program of the proletariat, while seeking to resolve differences without force. In these ways, the greatest number can be won to stand with the revolutionary cause of the proletariat.

The question of land is an important one in the history of a number of the oppressed peoples of this country. While this is not today the central question for most of them, it is one that has continued to give rise to struggle and will certainly do so in the future, particularly in the context of civil war.

The borders of the U.S. are not sacred to the class-conscious proletariat in this country—forged as they were in the blood of oppressed peoples and through outright robbery by the ruling class. The question of borders and land will not be approached by the proletariat on the basis of U.S. history—that is, on the basis of chauvinism. Instead it will be approached on the basis of winning as much as possible for the international proletarian revolution. This will take into account the struggle for equality and liberation of the oppressed peoples within the present U.S. borders and the historical domination of the U.S. over Mexico. A key factor in all this will be the ways in which events in the U.S. and Mexico, and in particular the revolutionary struggles, interrelate and how the U.S./Mexico border region is affected by this.

Forms of Self-Government

The socialist revolution aims to achieve the unity of the masses of people on a revolutionary basis. The class-conscious proletariat generally favors the establishment of a unified socialist state in the largest possible territory, which provides the most favorable conditions for building socialism and promoting world revolution. But for this unity to be real and not forced, it must be based on genuine equality between nationalities, and the legitimate rights of the various oppressed peoples must be honored.

In the struggle to uproot the legacy of national oppression and white supremacy, one important policy of the proletarian

state will be to uphold the right of the various oppressed peoples to forms of autonomy/self-government. This would be exercised in areas of sizeable historic concentrations of these oppressed peoples, within a single (multinational) socialist state. This will mean that, in contrast to things like the “Indian reservations” under the present system, the real needs of oppressed peoples for some land and resources under their autonomous authority will be met; and, at the same time, the proletarian state will provide special assistance to the people of these autonomous areas in developing these areas.

The people in the autonomous areas or regions will have the right to self-government under overall guiding principles that promote equality, not inequality; unity, not division between different peoples; and that serve to eliminate, not foster, exploitation and oppression.

This would mean, for example, that the autonomous government would set policies relating to education in that area, determining how to apply these overall guiding principles. It will also mean that the masses of people in these areas would be preserving and developing national practices and customs—but also evaluating them and struggling over their content according to these same principles.

Autonomy will mean, in regard to language and culture, that the styles, forms, and expressions common to an oppressed people will be given priority in publications, in the creation of cultural works, etc., within the geographic area where autonomy is applied. And these will be popularized throughout society as well.

All the specific land and autonomy policies regarding different oppressed nationalities will NOT mean that the oppressed peoples will have to live in these areas—that would amount to a new form of segregation. And it will be the case that many, many people of these nationalities will want to live, work, and struggle side by side with people of all other nationalities in other areas of the new multinational socialist state, participating in this way in the unprecedented remaking of all society, including the struggle to uproot national oppression. But the proletarian state, while favoring and encouraging unity and integration, must and will ensure formerly oppressed peoples the right to autonomy as part of the policy of

promoting real equality between different nations and peoples.

The Black National Question

Black people in the U.S. are not simply a “racial group” (or an “ethnic group”) but are an oppressed nation. Their roots are in Africa, but they developed into a separate and distinct nation based on their historical experience in this country.

The key moment in welding together this African-American nation occurred after the U.S. Civil War. The Black ex-slaves, who had fought and died for their freedom, attempted to secure basic civil rights and land at the end of that war. But the bourgeoisie betrayed its promises and, after a few short years of Reconstruction, violently disarmed the Black masses, depriving them of all rights and forcing them to labor in serf-like oppression in semi-feudal conditions on the plantations, this time as sharecroppers. The white plantation owners—many of them former slave-owners or their descendants—used lynch mobs, the KKK, Jim Crow laws, and other means to maintain this oppression.

In these conditions, Black people were welded into a nation, with all the essential characteristics of a nation: common territory, common language, common economic life, common culture and psychological makeup. More particularly, they were forged into an *oppressed nation*, separate from and dominated by the oppressor, European-American nation, in the area of the “Black Belt South” (so-called because of the color of its soil—an area that runs in an arc from parts of Maryland through northern Florida and as far west as East Texas, and that includes significant parts of Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Arkansas, Tennessee, Louisiana, the Carolinas, and Virginia).

This national oppression underwent further development, particularly in the period of two great waves of Black migration: from the World War 1 years until the Great Depression, and again during and after World War 2. Due to a number of factors, particularly changes in southern agriculture and the needs of urban industry, millions of Black people were pushed off the land and pulled into the northern cities. In great numbers they were transformed

from peasants into proletarians—still subjected to national oppression (in many new forms) and concentrated in the most exploited sections of the working class.

These changes, together with the building resistance of the Black masses north and south, along with a wave of anti-colonial and national liberation struggles around the globe, gave rise in the 1950s to the civil rights movement and then, in the '60s, to the Black liberation struggle. Once again, just as it was after the Civil War, the question was posed very decisively: can Black people and will Black people be integrated, or assimilated, into this society on the basis of full equality? And once again, this system betrayed Black people and gave its thunderous answer: NO! THIS WILL NOT BE DONE.

Today Black people are still brutally oppressed under capitalism, and equality is nowhere to be found. In the wake of the 1960s, a small (but significant) section of Black people “made it” into the comfortable section of the middle class (though they, too, suffer from “racial profiling” by the police and many other forms of discrimination and oppression, and their economic situations are often very precarious). The masses of Black people have had to bend every effort just to keep from falling further behind, and about one third suffer *much* worse conditions today than they did in 1970!

Thus there remains today a common experience and common oppression as a people for Black people of all classes, and a continued existence as an oppressed nation within the boundaries of the U.S. today. Because of this whole history and present-day reality, the revolutionary proletariat upholds the right of Black people to establish autonomous rule in the Black Belt South, as well as other areas in which they form large concentrations.

In addition to the right of autonomy, for the Black nation there continues to be the right of self-determination, up to and including secession—that is, the establishment of a separate Afro-American Republic in the Black Belt South. The proletariat does not favor this under now foreseeable circumstances. But upon achieving power, or in the armed struggle to win it, if there are indeed significant forces based among Black people raising this demand, the proletariat will take this into account. It will approach this question in

light of the overall situation and the importance of weakening the enemy and strengthening the revolutionary forces—on the basis of revolutionary principle.

Whether to support a particular move for a separate state among Black people or to oppose it will depend on all this. But the proletarian state and the proletarian forces nearing power will be firmly opposed to deciding this question through the use of force, as the imperialists do. Rather, the proletariat will rely on the masses, especially in this case the masses of Black people, and will work to resolve the question non-antagonistically and in a way that serves the larger interests of emancipating all the exploited and oppressed.

The Chicano National Question

The history of the Chicano people is rooted in the conquest of the Southwest by the U.S. ruling class in the war they waged on Mexico in 1846-48, the domination of U.S. imperialism over Mexico, the maintenance of backward conditions in large parts of the Southwest, and the persecution and exploitation of Mexican immigrants. Dispossessed of their land, treated as foreigners in territory stolen by the U.S., persecuted if they defend their right to a culture and language different from that of the European-American nation, discriminated against in jobs, housing, education, and all realms of U.S. society—this common economic and social history, and these shared conditions of oppression, persecution, and discrimination, have forged the Chicano people into an oppressed nationality within the U.S.

Many Chicanos trace their roots to the Southwest while many more are descendants of waves of immigrants from Mexico. The Chicano people are historically linked to the Southwest and are concentrated there today. But there are significant population concentrations of Chicanos living in other parts of the U.S. Even within the Southwest, Chicanos can differ in their language and culture. But Chicanos share the common experience of oppression which is reproduced and reinforced through the maintenance of the Southwest as a relatively backward and impoverished region, imperialist domina-

tion of Mexico and the superexploitation in the U.S. of immigrants drawn from Mexico, and the caste-like concentration of Chicano and Mexicano people in the lower rungs of the U.S. proletariat.

Among the Chicano people, there is a righteous and profound sense of historical injustice and theft of land. The proletarian state will uphold the right of the masses of Chicano people to land denied them through the violation of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, which sealed the U.S. rip-off of land from Mexico in 1848. This Treaty supposedly guaranteed Chicanos certain basic rights—like the right to land, water, and the equality of the Spanish language. But like the treaties the U.S. made with the Native peoples, these rights were quickly trampled upon.

The proletariat will uphold the right of Chicanos to establish autonomy (i.e., self-government within the larger proletarian state) in large areas of the Southwest. This may take the form of a single autonomous region or several autonomous areas. While significant economic transformations have taken place in the Southwest, large parts of the region have, as mentioned, been kept in a backward state, and in areas like South Texas the oppressed face the most extreme, “Third World”-like conditions of poverty in the U.S. The socialist state will provide special assistance to the Chicano people in developing these areas.

The application of autonomy policies with regard to the Chicano people will need to take into account several factors: how the revolution unfolds in the U.S.; how proletarian revolution in the U.S. interrelates with revolution in Mexico; developments in the U.S./Mexico border region; and the requirement that the proletariat respect the historical land claims of other oppressed peoples in the Southwest, especially the Native peoples.

The Rights of the Native American Peoples

Native Americans also have special conditions and history in regard to the land question. The total American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut population numbers 2.5 million.

The bourgeoisie literally wiped out

some Native American peoples altogether. They kidnapped entire generations of Native American children, putting them in government “schools” in which they were forbidden to speak their languages or observe their customs. They have repeatedly forced Native peoples off their lands and onto concentration-camp-like “reservations”—where unemployment averages 50 percent and extreme poverty is widespread, where alcoholism and the suicide rate are among the highest in the U.S. Today there are continuing and often intensifying battles over land, mineral, and water/fishing rights waged by American Indian peoples.

To justify this shameful history, the bourgeoisie has viciously mocked the Native American peoples in the culture at large, with its idiotic cowboys-and-Indians movies and games, the insulting and stubborn use of racist caricatures of Native Americans as emblems of major sports teams, etc.

In undoing this long-standing atrocity, the proletariat will, through consultation with the masses of the American Indian peoples, establish large areas of land where they can live and work and will provide resources and special assistance in developing these areas. Here many of the same principles of autonomy outlined above will apply, including the right to self-government within the larger socialist state.

In regard to practices of native peoples such as traditional medicine—usually dismissed as “pure mysticism” (or occasionally commercialized for profit) by the capitalists today—these will be studied for those aspects that have underlying scientific content and these aspects will be promoted and applied generally by the proletariat.

As mentioned above, there are complicated and sometimes overlapping historical land/territorial issues bound up with the various national questions in the U.S. (for instance, overlapping land claims of Native peoples and Chicanos in the Southwest), as well as issues involving the border with Mexico. The proletarian state will work to resolve these matters in a way that promotes equality and unity throughout society and that promotes internationalism. Only the proletariat and its state are capable of tackling and resolving these questions in such a way.

Puerto Rico: A Particular National-Colonial Question

The oppression of the Puerto Rican people within the U.S. is closely linked with the colonial status of their homeland, which must be freed.

Beginning with the brutal landing of U.S. troops in 1898, Puerto Rico has been crudely dominated by the needs of U.S. capitalism. U.S. corporations seized the best land and forced small farmers to become cane-cutters on U.S.-owned plantations. Many were then swept out of the countryside into sweatshop factories—or all the way to the U.S. The people of Puerto Rico earn only one-third of the average income in the U.S. and face the constant threat of unemployment, while billions in profits are sent to enrich U.S. corporations. At the same time, the U.S. imperialists have turned Puerto Rico into a military outpost and staging area for their invasions and interventions in the Caribbean and around the world. Their weapons tests have caused great destruction to the Puerto Rican offshore island of Vieques.

Millions of Puerto Ricans, overwhelmingly proletarian, have had to leave the island for the barrios of the U.S. in search of work and a better life. But a half-century after the largest migrations from the island, they face high levels of unemployment, have been forced in large numbers onto welfare and crammed into crumbling housing, and they have seen their culture and language assaulted.

The Puerto Rican people, both on the island and in the U.S., have a proud history of resistance, including armed movements for independence and national liberation. And the United States government has repeatedly resorted to brutal suppression against that resistance.

The RCP,USA supports the struggle for the unconditional, total independence of Puerto Rico and the complete social liberation of the Puerto Rican people. Upon seizing power in the U.S., the proletariat will immediately put an end to the colonial domination of the Puerto Rican people, unless they have already won their freedom. In addition, the victorious U.S. proletariat will support the right of the Puerto Ricans living in the U.S. to return to their homeland if they choose. At the same time, the exploitation, oppression,

and discrimination against Puerto Ricans who remain in the U.S. will be eliminated, as an integral part of the new society's struggle to uproot all inequalities.

Hawai'i

While Hawai'i is today part of the U.S., the revolutionary struggle in Hawai'i is not likely to unfold so directly in step with the struggle in the "continental U.S." But given the presence of the U.S. military in Hawai'i and other factors, there will be significant interrelation between the revolutionary struggle in Hawai'i and in the continental U.S.

We support the struggle of the proletariat and masses of people in Hawai'i to shatter the rule of the U.S. imperialists and to establish socialist rule in Hawai'i.

Historically, the native Hawaiian people exercised sovereignty—which the U.S. rulers took away by force and deception. The indigenous Hawaiian people constitute a minority of the population in Hawai'i, but the proletariat recognizes the right to self-rule in some form on the part of the indigenous Hawaiians. The relations among the different peoples in Hawai'i and between Hawai'i as a whole and the new proletarian state in the continental U.S. will have to be worked out concretely through the struggle to make revolution and build socialism in the former U.S.

Revolutionary Standards in the Fight for Equality

In carrying forward the fight against national oppression, the new state will adopt a variety of measures and policies, including, in some cases, the application of principles of autonomy in urban areas.

For example, the proletariat in power will take into account the legacy of white supremacy and will make it possible for people among the formerly oppressed nationalities to live among people of their own nationality in their own communities. Some may desire this as a way to provide mutual understanding, reinforcement, and support in standing up to the legacy of national oppression and any remaining manifestations of it—while the struggle is carried forward to eliminate

inequality and oppression from society as a whole.

This may be necessary because, among the nationalities who have suffered from national oppression and white supremacy, there will be people who may still feel the need to be able to, at times, just be among people of their own nationality—even while they welcome the revolutionary unity that is continuing to develop and deepen among the masses of all nationalities, and welcome the chance to take part in all spheres of society on the basis of equality among nationalities.

To correctly handle questions such as these, the proletarian state will apply a standard of supporting and promoting those things that help to overcome the whole history and legacy of national oppression in the U.S., while opposing those things that set back the struggle against white supremacy.

The socialist state will develop concrete policies that will encourage and promote the development of comradely relations among people of all nationalities, in every sphere of society. More specifically, it will foster and provide for the development of communities and neighborhoods, as well as workplaces and schools and other institutions, where people of all races and nationalities not only live and work side-by-side but actually develop close and deep relations of friendship and mutual support in the context of the overall struggle to revolutionize society and to eliminate and eradicate all inequalities and oppressive divisions among people. This struggle will be, and can only be, carried out on the basis of the increasingly conscious and voluntary unity and struggle of the masses of people of all nationalities.

Further, autonomous areas will not be walled off from the larger society. The proletarian state will foster a vibrant and dynamic interchange on many fronts—economic, political, cultural, scientific, etc.—between the different autonomous areas and the rest of socialist society, as well as among the different autonomous areas themselves. All realms of society will pulse with the energies of the people—in different ways and from different angles—rooting out national oppression and developing equality and unity between all peoples, all as part of the overall revolutionary struggle to advance

to communism.

As indicated earlier, while all these measures are necessary to deal with the special forms of national oppression and its whole historical basis, this certainly does not mean that the masses of oppressed nationalities will be concerned only with ending their own oppression. In fact, they are in their majority workers, part of the single multinational working class in this country, and many will be in the front ranks of the overall struggle to revolutionize society and change the world.

In relation to all this, many backward ideas will persist, much ideological struggle will have to be waged, and important aspects of the social relations will remain to be fully revolutionized. But the overriding thing will be that the proletariat and masses of people will at last be living in a new and very different society. It will be a society which allows, encourages, and assists them to consciously unite for a bright and classless future where the oppression of one people by another, or one part of society by another, will be buried in the prehistoric past.

Ending Discrimination Against Immigrants

The world system of imperialism, with its crises and wars and its “normal workings,” uproots people from their homelands on a massive scale. It forces hundreds of millions to move from one end of the earth to the other in search of livelihood and survival.

In the U.S. today, there are millions of immigrants from Mexico and other parts of Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia/Pacific Islands, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and many other parts of the world. Their presence has greatly strengthened the internationalist character of the revolutionary movement in the U.S. The majority of immigrants are an integral part of the single multinational proletariat in the U.S., enriching the potential and forces for proletarian revolution in the belly of the beast.

In a country that is already highly stratified and segregated, whole groups of immigrants are shunted into caste-like conditions of employment, housing, etc. Immigrants are concentrated in low and unskilled jobs in manufacturing as well as in agriculture, and as janitors, busboys, servants, and so on. They are often herded and locked into menial jobs and the worst housing, and are denied decent health care, education, and other social services.

The bourgeoisie brags about its “great melting pot” as it lures immigrants into its cheap labor pools. At the same time it actively fans anti-immigrant and anti-foreign hysteria throughout society to degrade and isolate immigrants and keep them in subhuman and superexploited conditions.

Immigrants are a key and dynamic factor in the U.S. economy, making up about 12 percent of the U.S. workforce. In addition to the majority of immigrants who are proletarians, there are significant numbers of immigrants who fill the need of the U.S. capitalists for trained professionals, educated abroad, who can be employed at lower cost than their counterparts educated and trained in the U.S. itself. Some immigrants are small business people and investors.

The class composition of different immigrant groups is a direct result of selective immigration policies carried out by the U.S. imperialists.

There are substantial numbers of immigrants from countries such as Cuba and Vietnam, where revolutions have ousted regimes backed by the U.S. imperialists. To a large degree, these immigrants, especially those who were exploiters and oppressors in their “home countries,” have been welcomed into the U.S. by the ruling class. Many have been given special benefits and privileges and built up as reactionary forces, although there are also many Cubans and Vietnamese who are poor and part of the U.S. proletariat.

Throughout U.S. history, immigrants have been scapegoated and demonized to suit the changing economic and political needs of the U.S., domestically and in foreign policy, and this continues today. Japanese were put in concentrations camps during World War 2. Arabs are painted as “terrorist” suspects. Chinese are “model minorities” one day and “sneaky spies” the next. Haitians and Africans are cast into “America’s most wanted” along with the African-American population in this racist country. And Mexican workers are abused as “freeloaders” and “criminal aliens” for coming to El Norte to work.

The Stand and Policies of the Revolutionary Proletariat

The uncompromising stand of the proletariat and its vanguard Party is to build fierce resistance against all the attacks on immigrants—against attempts to dehumanize immigrants and deny them rights, and against racist attacks on non-European immigrants.

Upon seizing power, the proletariat will forcefully and immediately end the many abuses that immigrants had been subjected to under U.S. imperialism. No human being will be “illegal” or “alien.” No longer will anyone have to “live in the

shadows” for fear that contact with any authority figure—from school and hospital personnel to the police—could result in being jailed or deported.

The military forces used to terrorize and brutalize immigrants—the immigration authorities and Border Patrol, anti-immigrant vigilantes, and the police, as well as the imperialist army, marines, and so on—will all be smashed. The U.S.-Mexico border will be totally transformed (see the appendix “Internationalism and International Relations”).

No one will be punished or humiliated for not speaking English or for speaking with an accent. No longer will the vibrant languages, cultures, and histories of immigrant peoples be suppressed and demeaned. Instead these diverse and rich histories, cultures and languages will be learned from and promoted as an exciting part of the flowering of a new socialist culture and education.

Feudal and other customs that oppress women will be the subject of mass education and struggle, relying on the masses themselves to throw off such burdens.

Among the roughly 30 million immigrants living in the U.S. at the beginning of the 21st century are millions from countries dominated and plundered by U.S. imperialism. The ruling class fears that these immigrants may weaken the internal cohesion and fabric of the U.S., and potentially undermine the power of U.S. imperialism as an international tyrant.

The proletariat welcomes these brothers and sisters and aims to mobilize and embrace their rich experiences of fighting Yankee domination in their native lands. To bring down U.S. imperialism and build socialism, the proletariat will fully tap this knowledge and experience, as one important part of the overall revolutionary potential of the various immigrant peoples.

The struggles of immigrants in this country have enriched many movements of resistance and inspired other people, including among the middle strata, to oppose injustices such as the crimes of U.S. imperialism in Central America. Despite vicious repression, immigrants

have historically played key roles in many struggles, including battles that led to the establishment of International Women’s Day (March 8) and International Workers Day (May 1st), and more recently in the 1992 L.A. rebellion. The militant struggles of immigrant workers at the lower rungs of society strengthen the proletariat’s fighting capacity as a whole.

There are common forms of oppression, as well as resistance, shared by non-European immigrants and Black, Native American, Chicano, and other oppressed peoples in the U.S. The proletarian revolution will abolish the discrimination, racism, criminalization, repression, and police brutality of the old society.

The new socialist state will abolish all forms of exclusion of immigrants from decent housing, health care, education, and all other economic, social, and political institutions of society. There will be equal and complete access. Employment with dignity and respect will be available to everyone as part of helping to build socialism. No newcomers will face being segregated into neighborhoods of crumbling, overcrowded, and unsanitary housing. All forms of discrimination against immigrants will be outlawed.

The basic orientation of promoting respect for the languages and cultures of all peoples, and the principle that people will not be forced to speak English in order to participate fully in the life of society and the struggle to transform it, will be applied to immigrants. (See the appendix “Uprooting National Oppression and White Supremacy.”)

Immigrants will be invited to teach new generations of youth about the countless horrendous crimes that the U.S. and other imperialists have committed in their countries of origin. And the contributions of immigrants will be encouraged and cherished in all aspects of transforming society and working to advance the world revolution toward its final aim of communism.

In the communist future, the idea of borders that divide and rank people will be as absurd as the idea of “racial divisions,” and the word “immigrant” itself will lose its meaning.

The Proletarian Revolution and the Emancipation of Women

Throughout the entire revolutionary process, in order to create the conditions for communism, the struggle must be continually waged to overcome and uproot the inequality and all the oppressive relations and traditions that shackle women. The class-conscious proletariat won't stand for anything less than the complete emancipation of half of humanity.

The oppression of women is a great outrage and a hindrance to the all-around development of human beings and society. And for the first time in the long history of class society, human beings now have within their reach the ability to overcome the age-old divisions that keep women in a subordinate position. **WOMEN HOLD UP HALF THE SKY!**

Women and Capitalism

The dominant social relations between men and women in this society perfectly mirror the economic relations—exploitative. While it has been a hundred years or so since women in the U.S. were quite literally the property of their husbands or fathers, in many ways these property relations still exist. Traditional morality, the “right” of the husband “to be the boss” in his own home, the inequities of divorce laws, and spousal abuse laws stacked against women are all examples of this.

Rape and physical abuse are forms of violence used to exercise power and control over women—one in four women in the U.S. will face some form of sexual assault in their lifetime. Today the most dangerous place for a woman is, ironically, her own home.

“Size zero” beauty standards, starvation thin bodies used to sell the “American dream,” and futures that hang on being a successful sexual commodity leave most women with such a sense of worthlessness that eating disorders and other self-destructive illnesses are now epidemic among young women. The diminishing access to abortion and restrictions on women's overall control over reproduction—all this shows how little women in this society control, even in

relation to their own bodies.

Women now make up close to 50 percent of the workforce, and the overwhelming majority of women will work at some point in their lives—suffering discrimination in pay, job classification, opportunity for promotion, coverage of health plans, etc., as well as sexual harassment on the job. Most women, in effect, also work another job...at home, taking care of family and domestic burdens.

The Family under Capitalism

The nuclear family under capitalism is a basic unit of society. It is key to maintaining social control and cohesion and existing property relations: caring for and reproducing the next generation; doing much of the socializing of children; passing down property and propagating traditional values. A woman's traditional role is the linchpin of keeping this social and economic unit together, which is why the idea that a “woman's place is in the home” is so sacred to the ruling class and reactionary movements.

Over the last several decades, the “model” traditional nuclear family has significantly broken down. Most women are now working and are no longer full-time housewives. 50 percent of marriages end in divorce. Immigrant families must often exist across borders. Many family households are now headed by women, and one of three children is now born “out of wedlock.”

The changing role of women and the family and the need of the imperialist world economy to draw more women into the labor force are more and more coming into conflict with the imperialists' need to enforce traditional values and maintain the cohesion of the family. These changes and contradictory needs of capitalism are like two plates of the earth's crust colliding—capable of producing major earthquakes and upheaval.

Reactionary movements to drive women into submission and obedience to the authority of men are arising out of this mix. But so too is the outrage and

rebellion of women throughout society—and the emancipatory struggle of the proletariat, which can and must unleash the powerful fury and potential of women as a mighty force for revolution.

A Measure of the Thoroughness and Success of Any Revolution Is the Degree to Which It Mobilizes and Emancipates Women

Upon seeing the powerful role of women in the Paris commune—the very first proletarian revolution—a terrified bourgeois of the time cried, “If the French nation were a nation of women, what a terrible nation it would be.” The proletariat is the first class in history in whose interest it is to fully unleash the fury of women as a force for revolutionary change—and the proletariat will act on this, in a way that the bourgeoisie never can and never would.

The woman question—that is, the position and role of women in society, and more specifically the abolition of the oppression of women—is much more than a mere question of democracy and equality. It does involve the need for equality, and the proletarian state will set about accomplishing this from the first stages of the revolution. But the liberation of women reaches far beyond, is much more deepgoing than, the achievement of democratic rights.

The subjugation of women is central and fundamental to the division of society into classes. It is bound up with the whole history of antagonistic class relations, and it is a fundamental aspect of the oppressive divisions of labor throughout human history. The liberation of women is bound up with the elimination of all this—and the attainment of communism. It is that fundamental a question.

For this reason, the struggle to emancipate women will not be confined to any one realm, but will go on throughout society. In every sphere—from employment to culture, from the revolutionary army to sports, from education and science to positions of responsibility in the new state—this question will be raised and will be the source of ongoing struggle in order to ensure the full equality of women

in the socialist society. The role of women and the struggle to liberate them will play a great and central role in the proletarian revolution. It will be a great source of strength in carrying this revolution forward all the way until communism is achieved.

BASIC TRANSFORMATIONS UPON COMING TO POWER

Upon coming to power, the proletariat will carry forward the struggle to break the chains which hold back women from a full role in society. There will be an immediate ban on discrimination of any kind against women, including in work and pay as well as in every other sphere of society.

At the same time, special measures will be taken to deal with particular problems and needs of working women—such as pregnancy. Birth control will be encouraged so that women can avoid unwanted pregnancy, but birth control will not be the sole responsibility of women. Attention will be paid to developing methods of birth control that do not endanger or unduly burden women. The right to abortion will be guaranteed, and the capitalist policy of forced sterilization, directed against poor women and particularly women of the oppressed nationalities, will be ended.

Physical abuse of women and children will not be tolerated. Rape will be severely punished but more fundamentally—through the policies and firm action of the proletarian state and through education, ideological struggle and transformation, and the mobilization of the masses of women, and men—the conditions will be brought into being in which rape will soon become a rare occurrence and ultimately will be eliminated altogether.

Methods of really eliminating spousal abuse will now be possible: relying on political struggle and education that brings this problem into the light of day, while also mobilizing the intervention of the community with the backing of the proletarian state. Women will be able to carry out their daily lives free from sexual harassment, and to walk the streets at night without fear.

The demeaning of women in popular culture and advertising—which treat

women as commodities and use sexual imagery to sell things and ideas—will be banned. Pornography, prostitution, and sexual molestation of children will be forcibly abolished and their reemergence not tolerated. Former prostitutes and others victimized by this degradation will be given productive work and freed from the immediate source of their oppression, while education will be carried out broadly in society to expose capitalism as the source of this degradation of women and to counter the tendency to blame or look down on the victims.

Key to achieving these transformations is relying on and unleashing the conscious dynamic role of the masses, women and men, in challenging male supremacist institutions and practices. This will require mass movements to create new solutions and new socialist relations. Women, and men, will be mobilized to raise criticism of and struggle against ideas, policies and actions that keep women in an inferior status.

As a general principle, it will be necessary—and possible in a way that it is not in capitalist society—to sort things out and deal differently with different types of social problems. This will involve making distinctions between persistent and/or pathological criminal behavior, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, backward ideology and practices that represent contradictions among the people. The first type of problem will be dealt with by more coercive means, and the second will be dealt with mainly through struggle, criticism and transformation.

Women will play leading roles in every sphere of society, from the revolutionary army of the proletariat to the Party and government. In all those spheres where women have previously been excluded and their role and abilities denigrated—from combat and sports to the most complicated of intellectual pursuits—the proletariat will settle once and for all that women are the equals of men and hold up half the sky.

The Family under Socialism

The family will be recognized for what is: not something holy or sacred to be preserved for all time. The family, like the state, is an institution that came into

being as a product of human social development and it will someday go out of existence, through future leaps in social development. On the other hand, under socialism, the family is an institution that generally corresponds to the level of society. This is because for some time to come there will still be remnants of capitalism, including the need for obtaining many necessities and some social services through the family. For this reason the family will still play an important role in socialist society, including in raising children. But the family will increasingly become a secondary form—even more so than under capitalism—for the rearing and upbringing of children.

Childcare will be provided, connected to either neighborhood or work, so that caring for and socializing children becomes a task of the whole society, in an environment where their health, well-being, and ability to reach their potential are ensured.

For the proletariat, people are the most precious resource and children are the future. In the new society, both the joy and the responsibility for raising the future generations will not just be the province of the mother, nor even just the parents. Society as a whole will be concerned with this. New and pathbreaking collective forms will be created to allow for and give expression to this—including for people who cannot, or decide not to, have children—so that everyone can have the chance to participate and be closely connected to what is new and arising.

While parents will still have significant responsibility for their children, this does not mean they are “theirs,” and struggle will be carried out to prevent parents from imposing old values and non-revolutionary thinking on their children. Young women will not have to have babies to get some measure of respect or love. People will be encouraged not to have children too young—so that they, and in particular women, are not burdened with the responsibility of child-rearing before they have had a chance to give full play to the energy of their youth and to play an active and vital role in the revolution.

The family under socialism will be radically transformed. The things people seek in their family relations—like security, safety and love—but which are often denied and even mocked by the brutal

reality of the family under capitalism, will increasingly characterize relations between people in society as a whole. The traditional division of labor in the family will, step by step, be transformed. Taking these measures to break down the traditional division of labor are essential to ensure that women can focus their energy and attention on participation in the broader transformation of society.

Women will no longer be stifled by the narrow confines of household work. Not only will men be struggled with to equally share the burden of this, but the proletariat will, relatively quickly, be able to involve people in various societal solutions—like collective laundries, kitchens, and different kinds of facilities that can provide healthy and affordable prepared meals.

Different kinds of collective living arrangements for people who have been homeless, who are single, widowed, or orphaned, and among families who want to share responsibilities and resources will be established in the context of new collective forms being developed in neighborhoods through struggle and experiment. The elderly and disabled will be looked upon as a valuable resource in society and will not be shut away or left with only family to depend on for care.

Intimate and Sexual Relations

Upon coming to power and throughout the revolutionary process, the proletariat will promote a morality and create the conditions for personal, family, and sexual relations based on mutual love, respect, and equality. No longer will women be objects of sexual conquest, or be prizes or trophies put on display; no longer will women be held to a hypocritical double standard; no longer will sexuality and human emotion be treated as commodities to be bought and sold.

The right to divorce will be upheld to strengthen the free and voluntary character of marriage. Under socialism people will increasingly cast off the burden of traditional property relations that oppress women and that frustrate and distort the most intimate relations between human beings. Women and men will be increasingly enabled to forge rela-

tionships based on mutual love, warmth, and closeness—in sexual relations but also as comrades and friends.

Sexual and intimate relations between men and women in bourgeois society are largely reflective of and dominated by the ideology of male supremacy and “male right”; they exist within and are influenced by the overall framework of social relations in which the oppression of women is an integral and fundamental part. All this is something that the proletariat will be mobilizing the masses to radically transform in the process of uprooting the oppression of women and all oppression and exploitation. In the realm of intimate relations, socialist society will encourage people to strive for standards that are consistent with and contribute to uprooting the oppression of women.

Homosexuality

Under socialism people will not be stigmatized because they are homosexuals or because of their sexual orientation. Discrimination will not be tolerated, and the repression and violence against homosexuals that has been so prevalent in capitalist society will be firmly opposed and dealt with.

At the same time, it is important to grasp that same sex relations do not escape and do not exist outside of the prevailing family and sexual relations and the corresponding ideology of male supremacy that oppress women in this society. In many ways the outlook that characterizes male gay culture in bourgeois society is not a departure from—and in fact there are elements in which it is a concentration of—male right. Lesbianism is in many ways a response to the oppression of women in class society, but in and of itself it is not a fundamental solution to this oppression.

The outlook that one partner in an intimate relationship must be devalued, dominated, abused, or owned is a reflection of the oppression of women in society; and forms of male right, in both heterosexual and homosexual relationships, will be targets of criticism and transformation.

New Standards

In the sphere of intimate and sexual relations, as in all relations between human beings, the proletariat will strive to implement and further develop a new proletarian morality: a morality based on the struggle to put an end to the oppression of women, and based on ending all oppression and exploitation.

The morality of the new society will not tolerate misogyny (hatred of women), and misandry (hatred of men) will also be struggled against.

The old traditional gender roles, which have the weight of thousands of years of tradition behind them and which are based on an oppressive division of labor between men and women, will be broken down and transformed. People will no longer have to put up with the ridiculous and unscientific notions that women who are aggressive, independent, outspoken, or athletic are “too masculine”; or that men who aspire to be creative, sensitive, or nurturing are “effeminate.”

These qualities in human beings will be appreciated and fostered among people of both sexes, and children growing up will not have to feel that they don't fit into gender definitions that are already obsolete and objectively a hindrance to the development of humanity to a whole new

stage in history. The mission of the socialist revolution is to create an entirely different kind of society and morality so that someday people can look back and wonder how such things as these “traditional gender roles” ever existed.

* * * * *

With the unfolding of the socialist revolution and the advance to communism, worldwide, people will be genuinely freed, for the first time in thousands of years, from the subjugation of half of humanity—which has stamped and corrupted social and sexual relations ever since the rise of private property and, along with it, the subordination of women to men.

“In many ways, and particularly for men, the woman question and whether you seek to completely abolish or to preserve the existing property and social relations and corresponding ideology that enslave women (or maybe ‘just a little bit’ of them) is a touchstone question among the oppressed themselves. It is a dividing line between fighting to end all oppression and exploitation—and the very division of society into classes—and seeking in the final analysis to get your part in this.”

Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP, USA

Art, Science, Education, Sports, and the Challenge of Creating A Whole New Superstructure in Socialist Society

INTRODUCTION

In capitalist society, the institutions of knowledge, entertainment, and the ideological life of the society—the mass media, schools, laboratories and centers for science, art, education, and sports—are dominated, shaped and twisted to meet the needs of capital and the bourgeois class.

Specialists, artists, and intellectuals—even those who come from the working class and oppressed peoples—are walled off from the masses in many ways, and the system prevents them from serving the people. Elitism and fear of the masses are perpetuated by the system. Greed, prejudice, and superstition infuse the culture. Artists, scientists, and educators who resist are hounded and marginalized. Every scientific advance, everything of beauty—even knowledge itself—is turned into a commodity, and into capital.

The proletarian revolution will liberate and transform all these institutions so that they no longer serve a system of exploitation, inequality, and oppression and, instead, will put them into the hands of the revolutionary masses and their leadership.

The historical experience of the proletariat in power has shown that it is a complex challenge to revolutionize all these spheres, to overcome the domination of the bourgeoisie and unleash the creativity of the masses of people and bring forward something radically new. In carrying out all-around dictatorship over the bourgeoisie, the challenge is to really turn things upside down and do away with oppression without stifling the wrangling over ideas and theories.

The proletarian revolution needs an atmosphere of vigorous and lively struggle, critical thinking, unconventional ideas, people challenging authority, the conflict of different views, and the sights of society raised to cardinal questions. It needs an atmosphere where creativity

and experimentation will no longer be motivated by personal gain but for the benefit of society.

The proletarian revolution needs an informed, creative, and revolutionary people, who know about the world and are trained in the outlook of the proletariat—whose historic mission is to liberate all humanity.

Breaking Down the Division of Labor

Our vision is to get to the point where everyone in society is productive and creative in dealing both with ideas and with material things and where neither material things nor ideas are any longer commodities or capital. With the seizure of power we can begin on this path, but getting there will be a process full of twists and turns—involving waves of cultural revolutions and waves of revolution all around the world. And historical experience teaches us that at key turning points this will be a life-and-death struggle for the proletariat to prevent the restoration of bourgeois rule.

A crucial part of revolutionizing society—in the socialist transition to communism—is to break down the oppressive division of labor between those who work with their heads and those who work with their hands. Our method is to work at this from two sides:

From one side, this means leading and assisting the specialists and intellectuals to put their training at the service of the proletariat and to combine this with a critical spirit. It means bringing forward artists, scientists, educators, and other specialists who not only serve socialist construction and scientific experiment but also serve the class struggle, including by raising important and often pressing questions that would otherwise not be raised.

Working at it from the other side, the objective of the proletarian revolution and its new state is to enable the masses to master the different spheres of society, to have a deep appreciation for the contradictions and problems involved—to be “red and expert” and to lead in revolutionizing all these spheres on that basis. In different fields, policies will be developed to combine the work of specialists with the masses—so that non-professionals can lead professionals and specialists can revolutionize their practice in the process of working with the masses.

The principles that people should be “both red and expert” and that the non-professional should lead the professional are crucial for the development of socialist society and the advance to communism. These principles embody a very important understanding:

Each sphere and discipline in the arts, sciences, etc., has its own particular features and concerns, and thus it is necessary for people to apply themselves to and continually learn more about the particular characteristics, contradictions, and laws involved. But at a deeper level, there is a unifying outlook and methodology that can and should be applied to these various fields and disciplines. As Mao Tsetung explained, Marxism does not replace but does embrace all these spheres.

These principles also give expression to the fact that all these realms can and must be the concern of, and be taken up by, not just a few people specializing in them but by the broad masses of people and ultimately by society as a whole. This is essential so that inequalities in society can be overcome and work in all these spheres can be marked by and benefit from the broadest, most diverse and lively engagement and wrangling, and at the same time can serve the people and the cause of emancipating humanity and continually enhancing our ability to know and change the world.

The Artistic and Intellectual Fields

Our proletarian ideology leads us to appreciate the importance of science and other intellectual and artistic work that more directly serves the ongoing struggle of the proletariat, on the one hand; and,

on the other hand, to appreciate scientific inquiry and intellectual engagement and artistic experimentation that is not tied in such a direct way—and certainly not in a pragmatic, “instrumentalist” way—to the policy and more immediate aims of the proletarian party at any given time.

We stress the importance of a fundamentally collective framework and approach to intellectual and artistic work, which also allows for and encourages the initiative of individuals, within the overall collective framework and spirit. Mass movements to study and apply dialectical materialism in all fields will take place in an atmosphere of debate over different views and schools of thought.

The proletariat in power will need a broad united front of scientists, artists, educators, and intellectuals in all fields. For a period of time, the proletariat will be faced with the necessity to rely on many professionals and specialists trained in the old society. We will have to take into account that some of these specialists earned large incomes in the old society, and the proletariat may have to pay non-Party people in these positions quite a bit more than production workers, while we work to train new revolutionary intellectuals and restrict these differences.

MASS MEDIA

Upon coming to power, the proletariat will immediately take control of the mass media—take it out of the hands of the big corporations and the bourgeois state and put it to the service of the world revolution. The reactionary trash on the TV and radio, in the newspapers, etc., will be swept away. In its place will be news, political debate, educational programs, and entertainment that will enable the masses of people to know and change the world.

The major news and information media will be under the direction of the proletarian state and the leadership of the Party. The goal is for the proletariat to master the media—to create public opinion for continuing the revolution, in the context of lively debate over the crucial questions of society and the world revolution. In this spirit, some funds will be allocated for independent publications and media access.

The masses will have unprecedented

access to print, broadcast, and electronic media such as the internet. Publishing facilities will be available to the masses on many levels. And special efforts will be made for the proletarians and formerly oppressed nationalities to have access and training in media technologies. International news will be widely available, and there will be an atmosphere of debate over political and international affairs, including the publication of dissenting views.

Counter-revolutionary attempts to overthrow the proletariat will be suppressed; but the main policy of the proletariat in the media will not be censorship but the promotion of debate, criticism, and struggle over the direction of society. Criteria will be developed to assist the masses to evaluate different views and positions (see the appendix “Proletarian Dictatorship, Democracy and the Rights of the People”).

Experimentation and development of new technology will be encouraged in tempo with the technical capacity of society and the priorities of the world revolution.

ART AND CULTURE

Literature and art, theater, music, and movies play a powerful role in shaping public opinion and promoting one kind of outlook and values or another. Anyone who has ever been moved to tears or anger or laughter, had their hopes and sights raised, or been provoked to action by a concert or movie, knows this is true. But what is not obvious is that, in class society, all culture serves the interests of one class or another.

Revolutionary art plays a crucial role leading up to the seizure of power. And once the proletariat seizes power, the creation of a whole new culture is needed to transform all of society. Our goal is a qualitatively new culture that is guided by the outlook of the proletariat and expresses its interests in overthrowing everything reactionary and revolutionizing all of society.

This is not a simple question or a problem easily solved: Art is a distinct mode of communication and experience—one way that people understand the world. Art is drawn from life but is “higher than life.”

Art can tap deep feelings and aspirations, unleashing the imagination and giving people a deeper understanding of reality and how to change it.

Art plays an important role in people’s lives, connected with our “need to be amazed.” And producing cultural works not only with revolutionary content but also a high level of artistic and technical quality requires people with training and skills.

The masses in the U.S. are accustomed to a large quantity and variety of art. And the masses would not support the proletarian state for long if it failed to meet this need.

With the seizure of power the proletariat will lead in revolutionizing culture—encouraging and supporting diverse works that assist the masses to revolutionize society and the whole world. This revolutionary art will unleash the imagination of the people—free from superstition.

Our aim is to promote a vigorous process of creating and popularizing revolutionary culture and criticizing the old oppressive culture, and to encourage a wrangling atmosphere of different trends, schools of thought, and experimentation.

The proletarian state will encourage innovation and variety in forms and styles of art. The people need works with themes that are directly related to the ongoing revolutionary struggles in society and the world, as well as works that are indirectly related but shed light on different contradictions and aspects of life. The proletariat will lead the artists and masses to develop collective forms for the creation of art, while allowing for and encouraging individual initiative within this collective framework.

Historical experience has shown that the creation of proletarian art involves much conscious struggle over political content and artistic form; and laboratories will be established for the creation of model works—as pacesetters in the arts.

In preparing for revolution, and during the revolutionary war, the proletariat will seek to unite as broadly as possible with professional cultural workers—to develop a vigorous culture of resistance to the old order and to create and popularize revolutionary works of art. And the Party will unite the masses to defend these artists against the attempts of the bourgeoisie to crush them.

Artists and the Masses

With the victory of the revolution, the proletariat will unite as broadly as possible with people in the artistic fields to create a new revolutionary culture for socialist society.

At the same time, we will support, bring forward, and rely on masses of workers and their firm allies in creating and popularizing revolutionary culture—and professional artists will be encouraged to draw from forms and works created by the masses. The revolutionary culture of the youth will be encouraged as a vibrant, transforming force in socialist society.

Works of art and the means to create them will be widely available to the masses as never before. Cultural productions by professional artists will be staged throughout the country, including in workplaces and workers' neighborhoods for free or a minimal price of admission.

Part-time cultural groups will be organized in workplaces, neighborhoods, farms and rural areas, and in the armed forces, to popularize works produced by professional artists and to unleash and give direction to the creativity of workers and other basic masses in producing revolutionary culture. Emphasis will be given to learning from the innovations of the proletarian youth in the arts and providing arts training to the youth.

The proletariat will foster a “wrangling” atmosphere with regard to works of art. Our aim is to assist the masses in doing away with all the oppressive ideas and ways of thinking, and in developing a new liberating culture that points to a future without class distinctions. The artists and masses will take part in criticizing reactionary works: struggling against racism, national chauvinism, male supremacy, capitalist ideology, and unscientific thinking. And there will be mass dialogue, debate, and criticism concerning the content of revolutionary works and how to develop standards and criteria.

In all this the proletariat will adopt methods and policies that take into account the complexity and levels of meaning and interpretation of works of art. And there will be an atmosphere of experiment and openness to new ideas and trends and learning from different schools of thought. Emphasis will be on

creating and popularizing new revolutionary works, but our policy will be to learn from, study and preserve important works of the past—especially works that opposed the old order.

With regard to works of art that reflect discontent with and opposition to the proletarian state, the orientation will not be to suppress them but to develop mass criticism of them. In the policies of the proletarian state there will even be a place for publishing and displaying some reactionary works of high artistic quality to assist the masses in raising their class consciousness, sharpening their ability to distinguish what serves the interests of the masses from what serves their oppressors, and developing their mastery of the whole arena of art and literature. Some reactionary works will have to be suppressed but, again, the basic approach will not be to suppress but to develop mass criticism and debate.

In the arena of culture, the walls separating professional artists and the working masses will be broken down and professional artists will be encouraged and assisted in linking themselves with the masses of working people—to learn from their experiences and ideas in creating cultural works and to assist the masses themselves in creating art.

As part of helping professional artists serve the people through their work, the proletariat will assist them to know the people, to combat elitism, and transform their world outlook. This will include artists taking part in manual labor together with the masses and taking part in political and ideological movements and struggles to continue the revolution.

Through the development of new socialist policies full-time artists will come to know the masses, and worker/artists from the masses will be trained in the skills necessary to produce high quality works of art.

The masses of working people will be supported and led by the Party and the cultural institutions to criticize—and in an overall sense to supervise—the work of professional artists, as well as the cultural works created by the masses themselves. And through this process the masses will learn to lead in and revolutionize the sphere of art and culture.

Equality Between National Cultures

A key question for the socialist revolution is to establish equality between different national cultures. Without this it will be impossible to achieve overall equality between different nationalities or to unite the proletariat, together with its allies, in accordance with their revolutionary interests.

As part of the overall struggle for equality of languages and national cultures, cultural works produced in one language will be translated into other languages. And the orientation will be for performers to learn several different languages and to put on performances and create works in these various languages. The masses of different nationalities will be encouraged to learn from each other in terms of styles and forms of artistic creation.

In culture and language, the policy of autonomy will mean that styles and forms of expression, as well as language, common to people of a particular nationality will be given priority in publications, in the creation of cultural works, etc., in those geographic areas where autonomy is applied. And these will be popularized throughout society as well.

Cultural institutes, such as theaters and museums, which give expression to the artistic and cultural forms of the formerly oppressed nationalities will be developed and supported. And here too dialogue and debate will be promoted concerning the content of the works of art. Traditional forms among the various peoples will be respected and developed and at the same time will be increasingly infused with revolutionary content.

A powerful culture of the multinational proletariat will be encouraged in different national forms. This proletarian culture will be rich in diversity while expressing a unified revolutionary outlook, inspiring the masses of all nationalities to fight for their common interests in revolutionizing society and contributing to the advance of world revolution.

Revolutionary art from around the world will be vigorously promoted.

SPORTS

The proletariat, as it takes control of

society, will transform and revolutionize sports. Sports will no longer be under the control of capitalists, twisted to serve private profit; no longer an arena where capitalistic role models, male domination, and reactionary patriotism are fostered; no longer held out as a cruel and unattainable dream of “making it” for millions who are locked in poverty and oppression. Instead sports will be developed as an area where the masses of people can unite, strengthen their health, have fun, and do amazing feats as part of advancing humanity as a whole.

As in the arts, our goal in sports is a mass flowering with high quality performances for the inspiration and entertainment of the people—without the barriers and elitism of the old society. Sports will be broadly organized among the masses. There will be equality for women in training, facilities, exhibition, and professional sports.

Facilities will be built and located throughout the areas where the masses live and work. This will begin with the upgrading and new construction of facilities in the areas which under capitalism are most broken down and with the fewest and worst playgrounds, recreation centers, and so on. Emphasis will be placed on amateur sports and unleashing the creativity of the masses.

Cooperation and the learning of skills and innovations from each other will be emphasized. Competition will still have a place, but it will be secondary and will be taken up in a spirit of friendship not antagonism. In international exchanges, as well as sports activities within the socialist state, we will foster the daring to challenge convention and break new ground, and the unity and solidarity between the masses of people.

Recognizing the role of sports as entertainment for the masses, national sports teams and full-time athletes will be sponsored and subsidized by the state. But the whole professional mentality—where highly skilled athletes who are engaged in sports as a more or less full-time pursuit have special status—will be struggled against.

As with the policy regarding professional artists, our aim will be to narrow, step by step, the differences between full-time athletic performers and the masses of people—involving the professionals in

productive labor and political and ideological struggle together with the masses—while at the same time meeting the desire of the masses for exciting high-level sports exhibitions and competitions.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Scientific research and experimentation can play a powerful role in revolutionizing production and society as a whole and in understanding the world. But under capitalism, science remains chained to the demands of a reactionary and outmoded system. Large branches of scientific research are completely tied to the imperialist military. Scientific researchers are prevented from contributing to the solution of many key problems facing humanity, while massive funds are wasted on projects that only serve to increase private profits and reinforce relations of exploitation and oppression.

Private ownership and secrecy imposed by capitalist corporations and states on scientific discoveries stifle collaboration among researchers, hold back innovation, and prevent use of countless new discoveries for the benefit of the people throughout the world. Potentially valuable inventions and discoveries are used to create products and processes that are harmful to the masses of people—intensifying the pace of work, spreading poisons, and further impoverishing workers and small farmers around the world. And scientists themselves are insulated from the impact their work is having on the masses of people.

Proletarian revolution will place science in the service of the broad masses of people. It will radically transform the priorities of scientific research and unleash science to make new breakthroughs in areas extremely important to the future of humanity—such as uncovering new techniques for environmentally sustainable development, renewable energy sources, and the reduction of pollution in production and transportation.

Medical research will be freed from the straightjacket of pharmaceutical profits and the demands of capitalism as a whole, and priorities will be radically reshaped to focus on health problems facing the people of the world.

Human exploration of outer space will

no longer be tied to imperialist war preparations.

Much of scientific research under socialism will be focused on solving specific and urgent problems in production and medicine. But, at the same time, scientific research that is not tied directly to specific problems—as well as theoretical and mathematical forms of scientific exploration—will receive funding and attention in recognition of the important role they play in uncovering the laws of nature.

All the different forms and branches of science will be carried out in an overall framework of serving the needs of the masses, transforming society and breaking down the distinction between mental and manual work. Scientists will be encouraged to develop new collective forms of collaboration—both for the development of new insights into nature and for lively debate over scientific verdicts.

The policy of the proletariat in power will be to encourage a critical spirit and climate of open debate—while struggling for scientists and technical personnel to grasp and apply dialectical materialism, to transform their world outlook, and to take part together with the masses in political and ideological movements.

There will be an “open door” policy—where scientific research, experimentation, development, and theoretical work are carried out in close connection with the masses, in a variety of innovative ways. This open door policy will enable the masses to contribute their experience and insights to the process of scientific exploration related to production, health, and other fields and at the same time to take up and learn many different aspects of science. Research conducted by teams of scientists will be linked to broad mass movements for investigation and experimentation among the working people, and step by step new worker/scientists will be trained in all fields of scientific research and development.

Political leadership by the proletariat and its Party in scientific work will be based on the principles of “red and expert” and the non-professional leading the professional, and other policies regarding intellectuals and intellectual work generally that were discussed earlier. (See, in particular, “Introduction” to this appendix.)

New forums and collaborations will be developed within the institutions of scientific research, to enable the masses of people to be more fully engaged in this sphere and to directly participate in the struggles over the key questions that arise. This will include issues of research priorities, scientific verdicts, applications and implications of scientific discoveries, and the controversies over how to train and organize scientific researchers to better serve the people.

One of the key policies with regard to science will be to broadly popularize the insights, methods and controversies of natural science among the people—to increase their ability to understand and evaluate the issues within the scientific sphere. Such popularization will also be an important way for scientists to contribute to the broader class struggle by promoting a materialist-scientific outlook throughout society and by undermining the influence of anti-scientific theories such as those promoting “genetic determinism” and notions of “racial superiority,” “creationism,” and religious superstition generally.

EDUCATION

Education under capitalism is a system of savage inequalities—a system that reproduces inequality. Children in poor communities go to inferior schools with overcrowded classrooms, poorly paid teachers, and lack of materials. For many kids, schools are little more than prisons where the only aim is to maintain control, and students are subjected to armed police, metal detectors, searches, and abuse. The learning process is molded by tests that discriminate against the poor and the oppressed nationalities. In the affluent schools, education is marked by the pursuit of grades and rewards, self-seeking competition, and elitism.

“English Only” policies, and the cutting of affirmative action and programs for African-American and Chicano studies, reinforce national oppression. The spread of religion, fundamentalist morality, and irrational doctrine is increasingly part of the school atmosphere. The increasing promotion of reactionary family values along with unscientific genetic theories regarding differences between men and

women—and, to say the least, no serious commitment to equality and emancipation for women—combine to produce hostile and oppressive relations between boys and girls from an early age.

Education under capitalism is not about training new generations in critical thinking. And it is not about training people to know and change the world, to do away with injustice, ignorance, and poverty. Capitalist education is education in capitalism and its outlook—and the idea that these principles and the society they serve cannot be surpassed.

Such an educational process turns history and reality upside down, portraying the history of humanity as a history of “great men,” where geniuses, monarchs, presidents—exploiters and oppressors—are heroes and “role models.” It justifies the most unspeakable acts of imperialist war and plunder. It blots out the class content of all important events and actions in history and the world today. People are trained in all kinds of unscientific thinking about the world and all kinds of nonsense and poison about American society as a model of “freedom and democracy.”

Completely revolutionizing education in theory and practice is a crucial question for the proletariat.

Upon seizing power, the proletariat will immediately take up the need to overcome illiteracy and the lack of even basic education among broad masses in this country. The educational system will be changed at its foundation and the scientific, revolutionary outlook and method of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM) will be applied to guide education in every aspect.

We will eliminate the tracking system—where elite students, mainly from the privileged classes, are selected and groomed for positions of leadership and authority, while the broad ranks of the proletariat and oppressed nationalities are “tracked” into lower tier jobs or left to find some desperate hustle. This is a system which makes a principle out of the division between mental and manual labor and serves to perpetuate this division of labor and class divisions generally.

The educational policies and practices of the new socialist society will play an important part in overcoming these divisions.

Students will be led to develop knowl-

edge—to be creative and innovative—in all fields from technical and scientific to artistic and cultural. Education will challenge the students to develop critical thinking and will promote, and train the masses in, a scientific outlook, most fundamentally the scientific world outlook and method of dialectical materialism.

From the start, the educational system of the proletarian state will combine rather than separate mental and manual labor, preparing the new generation to carry out and integrate the two. Education will be carried out in close connection with the work and activities of the masses as a whole—in workplaces, neighborhoods, farms, and rural areas—so that students and teachers and other leaders in educational institutions gain a real and overall understanding of how society runs and how the proletariat and formerly oppressed masses are transforming society.

Self-seeking competition will no longer be a guiding principle of education—the standard will be for knowledge and initiative to strengthen the common good.

The whole idea of blind obedience to authority will be criticized. Teachers and others responsible for giving leadership in education will be leaders but not people “whose word is law.” The socialist educational system will work to break down the divisions between professional educators and students—and the masses of people in general.

Educational policy will aim to bring up successors to the proletarian revolution. The students will be educated in the principles and spirit of MLM—including its scientific, critical struggle for the truth, its challenging of tradition and the force of habit and its daring to rebel against reactionary authority, even those claiming the mantle of Marxism itself. Students, teachers, and administrators will be led to take part, together with the masses, in the ideological battle between Marxism and bourgeois reactionary philosophy in various forms throughout society.

The new educational system will expose, criticize, and repudiate all the lies and distortions of the bourgeoisie, especially its propaganda and miseducation that promote white supremacy and male supremacy and chauvinist hostility toward the rest of the international proletariat and the oppressed peoples and nations of the world.

Proletarian internationalism will be a major focus of education, giving people a profound understanding of the reality that the proletariat and masses of people worldwide have a common interest and objective in overthrowing imperialism and uprooting all exploitation and oppression.

Students will be educated in the real history of the oppressed peoples and nations inside and outside the country, and the oppression of women in class society, so that they will gain a deep understanding of the concrete effects of national oppression, the oppression of women, and similar crimes of capitalism—and whose interests are served by this inequality and the ideologies of racism and chauvinism.

Representatives of the masses, including workers and oppressed peoples from other countries, will be invited into the classrooms to give the students a living understanding of these questions, and the students will go out among the workers, formerly oppressed nationalities, women and other masses and hold discussions and struggle with them on these decisive questions.

At the same time as the socialist educational system enables and challenges students to develop critical and creative thinking, and to become expert in various fields, it will work to break down the separation between the broad masses as a whole and the students, especially those full-time students who are enrolled in universities and similar institutions of advanced learning and specialization.

One important role of these institutions will be to train intellectuals and experts in various fields from among the ranks of the masses. This will be part of a process of breaking the domination over these spheres by intellectuals trained—not only technically but ideologically—in the old society. But from the very beginning, and increasingly, the socialist educational system will take concrete steps to combat the tendency for such students to be fashioned into an “elite” standing above and lording it over the masses.

As soon as possible, in tempo with the consolidation of power by the proletariat and its first major victories in establishing control over and undertaking the socialist transformation of the economy, the policy will be adopted of sending all high school graduates to work in the rural

areas, in factories and other workplaces, or in some cases into the revolutionary armed forces. Some will stay and work among the masses; others will, after a time, go on to other work or to colleges and universities.

Students who attend colleges and universities will be chosen from among the masses—including older people as well as youth. The criteria for admission to colleges will be based first and above all on demonstrated devotion to the revolutionary cause of the international proletariat, broadness of mind and a critical and revolutionary spirit—as determined through discussion among the masses under the leadership of the Party.

At the same time as students, including those in universities, are brought into closer connection with the masses, colleges will be increasingly established and will function in close connection with the workplaces and neighborhoods, with special attention to the rural areas. Some part-time colleges will be directly connected with workplaces. Specialists in art, science, education, foreign affairs and so on will take part in the higher education of workers.

This kind of education will enable the workers to master different fields on a deep level and will develop worker/intellectuals who can play a leading role in society in all spheres. And, at the same time, it will be another important step in breaking down the ivory tower atmos-

phere of colleges and in overcoming inequalities in society as a whole.

Representatives of the masses will be organized to take part, together with teachers, educational personnel, and representatives of the students, in leading the schools and struggling to see that these principles and methods of the socialist educational system are upheld and actually implemented.

Overall, the struggle to revolutionize the educational system will be a crucial battleground in the new socialist society, exactly because education plays such a critical role in serving and perpetuating one kind of system or another.

As in other areas of the superstructure, the proletariat will have to wage a protracted and intense fight against the forces of reaction, tradition, and habit. It must do this if it is to establish and develop an educational system that furthers socialist transformation and the transition to communism and trains, in theory and practice, successive generations of class-conscious activists in the great movement of the international proletariat. Thus, while the students will be led to master all fields, from technical and scientific to artistic and cultural, a continual battle must be waged for this to be under the guidance of Marxism and in the interests of the proletariat. Therefore their principal subject will be the class struggle—proletarian revolution.

The New Socialist Economy

Part 1: Grasp Revolution, Promote Production

Introduction

Economics is the foundation of society—all human societies must produce to meet their material needs. And to truly liberate people, you need a liberating economics.

Humanity has reached the point where it need no longer be ruled by the blind, elemental tyranny of economic forces. For the first time in human history, the producers on whose backs society has been built can begin to take hold of the economic system and society as a whole.

With power in their hands, the former “have-nots” can master and apply the principles that will enable them to run an economy that serves the people, promotes new values and attitudes, and contributes to the emancipation of humanity. This is what Maoist economics is all about.

The bourgeoisie has every reason to slander such an economics, to pronounce *its* verdict that socialist economics has failed and can only fail.

After all, these are “world class” exploiters and oppressors who control the major means of production of society, who dominate global institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund that have destroyed the lives of literally hundreds of millions of people over the last half century. Theirs is an economic and class system that measures progress by the “removal of barriers” to sweatshops...that sees the growing gap between haves and have-nots as an essential yardstick of “economic freedom” ...that figures out ways to buy and sell “pollution rights.” The very notion of a liberating economics is completely opposed to everything they stand for.

But how would an economy run by and in the interests of the laboring people actually function? What are some of its key contradictions and what is its potential? How would such an economy deal with such questions as workplace management, international economic relations, and preserving the environment? How would work get organized so it is not alienating and mind-numbing?

The revolutionary proletariat has definite answers.

I. Liberating the Productive Forces and Establishing Socialist Ownership

Basic Principles

The seizure of power by the proletariat ushers in a new stage in human history—socialism, the transition to classless, communist society. The extreme and life-draining abuse people suffer under capitalism will be gone, and the fetters that capitalism puts on human possibility can now be removed.

With the proletariat in power and socialist state ownership by the whole people established, the new socialist economy will:

- Put revolutionary politics in command.

The *purpose* of socialist production is to serve the revolutionary transformation of society and of the world as a whole. The proletariat in power must utilize the productive forces first and above all to advance the world revolution toward the aim of overcoming all exploitative and unequal relations in the world.

The *means* for achieving maximum results in economic construction that serves this purpose of revolutionary transformation is to mobilize the masses under the guidance of a communist ideological and political line.

- Meet the pressing needs of the people and solve problems by relying on the people.
- Wage struggle to create the conditions that promote the increasing collective participation of the masses in the running of the economy and their increasing collective mastery over economic processes.
- Develop new relations of production marked by a new social “motivation” and morality: people working in cooperation with one another and for the common good, and “working for the world revolution.”
- Expand social production in a planned

way that serves the all-around material, social, and intellectual/cultural development of the people.

- Aim to create a common (mutually shared) abundance—a social wealth that enables people to satisfy their basic material requirements of life and that is consciously created to be more and more shared by the masses of people as a whole.

The Proletariat Takes Control of the Organization of Production

As soon as it has won victory in the revolutionary war, and even as it wins control of key areas, the proletariat will immediately take charge of the organization of production.

Under the overall leadership of the Party, the proletariat will take into its hands and safeguard vital production facilities and prevent their sabotage by class enemies. This is critical because the capitalists, even as they are defeated in battle, will attempt to wreck the remaining factories, railroads, storage depots, etc., to try to strangle the new revolutionary state in its cradle.

As the defeat of the imperialists and their faithful representatives is sealed and their last desperate efforts to hold onto power are crushed, the proletarian state will take control of the key levers and lifelines of the economy—all the major industrial facilities, all banking and finance, the key transport links, and the communications nerve centers.

The factories and other means of production of the monopolies and large-scale capital generally will be expropriated: seized for public use, without compensation to the former owners. With regard to small plants, the new state—depending on the circumstances, including the overall situation internationally—may proceed more slowly with expropriation and pay compensation to the former owners.

The act of seizing and socializing the major means of production is a historic step, a turning point marking the “beginning of the end” of all systems and relations of exploitation. State ownership converts the means of production from the private property of a small exploiting minority to property under the collective

control of society.

Other radical, liberating changes will begin right away. The “right” to exploit people’s labor will be formally abolished. All consumer debt, mortgages, and farmer and small business debt will be canceled.

The new state will stabilize prices. As quickly as possible, a new currency—without the images of old slaveowners and war criminals—will be introduced. These and other measures will enable the proletarian state to gain firm control of finance, which is essential to developing the economy along socialist lines.

The proletarian state will move quickly to bring the various spheres of trade into its orbit as well. State ownership of the major industrial means of production will put exchanges of goods and materials between the state-owned factories directly under the control of the state. “Black markets” will be combated and price standards will be set and enforced. The proletarian state must continually increase its direct role in the exchange of products.

With state ownership established through these measures, the basis is laid to carry out economic planning—to consciously regulate and guide social production to serve the masses and revolution.

These sweeping and radical changes in the nature of the economy will be met with resistance of various kinds. The old ruling class and its agents will continue to make trouble. At the same time, the traditions and habits of “doing things the old way” will exert strong ideological influence over significant sections of people, creating problems and obstacles.

The Party must sort out actual sabotage and other counter-revolutionary acts from difficulties and differences among the people. This will require deep-going investigation that draws on the experience of the masses; and the Party must lead the masses to grasp the essence of and deal with these two different types of contradictions.

The way all work is organized will change right away. In the factories, the proletariat will supervise management and technical personnel; and such personnel will increasingly take part in productive labor alongside production workers. The basic principle of relying on and unleashing proletarians as the core force to lead in carrying out transformations in

all sectors of the economy will be applied. For example, farmworkers will be relied on to achieve socialized state ownership of agriculture, while giving leadership to the productive activity of remaining farm owner-operators.

As for small shopkeepers, artisans, and other self-employed working people, they will be offered the hand of unity and their economic activity will be integrated into the overall functioning of the economy. Cooperative forms of ownership and collective labor will gradually replace old ways of organizing their production. As the socialist economy develops, they will become salaried workers employed by the socialist state.

Meeting Pressing Social Needs, Mobilizing People to Rebuild and to Create a New Economy

The masses will be unleashed to rebuild the economy and to solve all problems that come up. Mobilizing the masses will make seemingly impossible “miracles” happen under socialism.

The absurd contradiction represented by the ever visible sight of masses of unemployed people hanging out on the streets of their broken-down neighborhoods—this too will be ended with the seizure of power by the proletariat. Instead of being held apart by the law of profits, the formerly unemployed will be put together with the materials needed and be set to work on these neighborhoods. All of their creativity and knowledge will be valued and unleashed.

Many workers skilled in construction, for example—who, as it is now, largely work on glass-and-steel office towers, when they are allowed to work at all—will be immediately shifted into rehabbing and construction of housing for the masses.

Middle-strata people have specialized knowledge and skills that are hard to replace, and which the new economy will need in order to function. Former managers and technical personnel and small plant owners who are willing to aid socialist reconstruction will be utilized in an ongoing way to contribute their skills to production, including actually working

right alongside the other workers.

The high degree of parasitism of U.S. imperialism is a particular problem facing the proletariat in carrying out the socialist transformation and development of the economy. There are many—indeed millions of people—whose functions will be unnecessary under socialism and contrary to its development: bureaucrats in corporate and government structures; advertising, marketing, banking, and insurance personnel; business, legal, and political consultants, etc.

With the exception of conscious counter-revolutionaries, the proletariat will, to the degree possible, utilize the skills and abilities of these people in technical, managerial, educational, and other needed functions (like media). But these middle-strata forces will not be allowed to lord it over the masses or to command production, scientific research, the media, etc. They will be working under policies set by the proletarian state and the masses will be mobilized to politically supervise them. Many among them will have to be retrained and will take on whole new tasks in the new society.

Raising the Bottom Up

The new proletarian state must take special measures for “raising the bottom up.” After the devastation and dislocation of civil war, first priority will be given to rebuilding and improving the ghettos and barrios and other areas where capitalism forced oppressed peoples to live.

The priorities in distribution of needed social goods and services will be guided by the principle of overcoming historic inequalities—for example, decisions about what sections of people and what areas of the country will be first to get new health care centers, state-run stores, public transit, and decent housing and schools. And, over the long term, the socialist state will give preference to the less developed and backward areas in coordination with and on the basis of the overall development of society.

The whole society, people from every strata, will be mobilized to overcome these inequalities left over from the old society. For instance, doctors will staff new clinics in areas which had no health care for decades. And some former profes-

sionals will get the new training they need to take literacy, education, and cultural programs to devastated urban or rural areas.

Meeting the Right to Housing

One of the most pressing questions the proletariat will face as it takes control of society will be providing housing for the masses that is fit for the shelter and comfort of human beings. Segregation will be smashed. The financial policies previously employed by the banks and insurance companies, which feed and profit off segregation, will have been ended, along with their control of financial resources.

Both the principle of mobilizing the masses and the principle of “raising the bottom up” will be used to solve the housing crisis.

One of the proletariat’s first steps will be to take over the remaining mansions of the capitalists, as well as their fancy hotels, convention centers, and even office buildings—much of which are unused—and move in masses who are literally homeless. Some of these structures will be permanently transformed into housing for the masses, while as rapidly as possible new housing is also built.

Apartment buildings and complexes owned by large capital and slumlords will be taken over quickly and without compensation by the revolutionary state. In these situations, as well as in the emergency housing described above, the masses will be mobilized to protect and manage them.

Small landlords who own only one or a few units will be allowed to continue collecting rents for a period of time. But small landlords will have no power to evict, and the rents will be set by the state. If there are problems, representatives of the Party, state, and the masses will work together with tenants and landlords to resolve them. As soon as possible, as more housing is built, and as the socialist economy as a whole develops, the state will gradually buy out these small landlords and convert these units into state-owned property.

People in the working class and its allies in the middle class will have the right to live in the homes they currently

occupy, and all their debts and mortgages will be canceled. For those who own more than one home, the policy towards small landlords will apply to those properties that the owners do not occupy.

Health Care for the People

The proletariat, as it wins power, will also take over the large hospitals and similar institutions. It will apply the same basic policies there as in the factories and other workplaces.

The workers in these hospitals will be the base of proletarian power there, exercising control and supervision over their functioning and management. People in other strata—nurses and even many doctors—can make important contributions to the proletariat’s struggle for power and will be allies of the workers in controlling these institutions and actually making them serve the needs of the masses.

Universal health care will be established. Health services will be provided for free or at very low cost, and the goal will be to make all health care free. Abortion will be available on demand and without apology, regardless of the length of pregnancy. The criminal situation where health care is dominated by the dictates of capital and profit and is beyond the reach of many people will be over.

Mass mobilizations and mass education will be organized to deal with major health problems like infant mortality or the addictions perpetrated by imperialism.

The focus of health care will be on preventive and primary health care needs, although resources will also be allocated for other aspects of medical care and research, etc. Socialist society will approach health care in an all-around way: examining and solving “outside” issues like neighborhood pollution/contamination, nutrition, and health issues connected with work.

Old ideas of medical experts acting like “gods” with unquestioned authority will be overthrown and new relationships between experts, on the one hand, and non-experts and patients, on the other, will be forged.

As socialist ownership advances and the gains in the economy are consolidated, in addition to large-scale health

facilities, a decentralized system of clinics and small hospitals will be built—with priority given to those places with no health care access, in workplaces as well as neighborhoods.

II. Reconfiguring a Formerly Imperialist Economy

Imperialism is based on global relations of exploitation and great-power domination. These relations lead to widening inequality, growing hunger and poverty, distortion of the national economies of the oppressed nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and vast environmental degradation. The U.S. accounts for 5 percent of the world's population but consumes 25 percent of the world's mineral, metal, and other material resources, and 30 percent of the world's energy resources.

A genuine socialist economy cannot be built in a country like the U.S. without shattering its former international economic relations. Nor can it be built without bending every effort to promote and support the struggle to remake the world as a whole through revolution.

The proletariat in power will face a great challenge. It must create a new economy that does not rest on exploitation. It must ensure that this economy does not become dependent on foreign trade and, as a result, become entangled in the economic and financial arrangements of what remains of the imperialist world economy. And just as importantly, it must ensure that the economy it builds does not reproduce relations of international domination.

What are some of the key principles that will guide this process?

First, the socialist state will exercise firm control over all channels of foreign trade. Upon coming to power, the proletariat will liquidate all international holdings and investments. The socialist economy will not export capital. It will not engage in foreign investment: it will not build factories or make loans for profit. The new state will immediately cut links and ties with imperialist economic institutions like the World Bank and World Trade Organization (WTO) and will

expose their crimes and wage struggle against such institutions.

Self-Reliance

Second, in developing the economy, the socialist society will rely principally on its own material resources and capabilities—first and foremost, the collective understanding and conscious activism of the masses.

The structure of production and the resource base of the economy will no longer depend on labor and materials from other countries, much less exploitation, domination, and gunboat extortion. To take two examples: parts and components will no longer be contracted out to manufacturing firms in the *maquiladora* and export-processing zones of Mexico and East Asia; and the economy will no longer rely on huge inflows of oil from abroad.

Will this give full throttle to extravagant use of domestic resources in order to maintain the patterns of production and consumption that prevailed in the old economy?

No, it means that, from the very beginning, the shift towards self-reliance will require resource conservation and the radical overhauling of production practices. Steps will be taken immediately to move away from a wasteful and environmentally destructive oil-based economy.

Self-reliance also requires the restructuring of the old industrial economy and the step-by-step creation of a different kind of industrial economy: one that will meet production and consumption needs more efficiently and one that will produce a different mix of output (not more automobiles, but safe and efficient mass transit).

These changes will affect consumption standards of the new society. People's most basic needs will be met, and the new economy will strive to produce a rational variety of consumer goods. But the "convenience" of having Indonesian workers cater to athletic clothing needs, or peasants in other parts of the world cater to upscale coffee sensibilities, will be no more. The new economy will rupture with relations that produce privileges on the one side and immiseration on the other.

This orientation must become a con-

scious one throughout society. It will require mass education. At the same time, people's social needs will change with the transformation of social life. There will not be the obsession with consumption, the need to define oneself on the basis of what and how much one consumes.

International Economic Relations

Proletarian internationalism comes first in all economic relations.

With the other socialist states that exist or come into being, trade will be carried out under the principles of equality and proletarian internationalism, to aid the construction of socialism in these countries and the world revolution.

Trade policies will also have to be developed toward imperialist and other reactionary states. But the new state will not put economic agreements and exchanges with other countries above its responsibility to support revolutionary movements in these countries. In some cases, in order to support the class struggle in these countries and internationally, the socialist state will refuse to carry out trade with them, or refuse to trade in some items.

The new socialist economy will end all imperialist relations with other countries, especially those previously dominated and oppressed by U.S. imperialism. The debts owed by Third World countries to the banking institutions and government agencies of the old economy will be canceled. All unequal trade treaties will be repudiated.

At the same time, the new state will meet its obligations. For instance, it will provide technical and financial assistance for helping to clean up and reverse environmental damage. It will also continue to deliver spare parts, equipment, and so forth to countries which the U.S. imperialists had made dependent on them but which may still require external supplies.

This will have to be done in accordance with the overall international situation and the conditions that the socialist state itself faces at a given time—including whether the new state is forced to defend itself against actual military attack from remaining imperialist and reactionary states and how far it has progressed in

meeting the most basic and urgent needs of the masses in the country. Furthermore, in dealing with matters of supplies and assistance to countries that U.S. imperialism formerly dominated, the socialist state must also factor in the nature of these countries, the class struggle within them, and their role internationally.

As for so-called “intellectual property rights.” The class-conscious proletariat stands opposed to them and the new socialist state will tear up all such property rights carried over from the old society.

The fruits of imperialism's lopsided research and development apparatus, which drains scientific talent from around the world, especially the poor nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, will be made available to the people of the world. Scientific knowledge will be shared, and no longer will medicines and so forth be “protected” by patent and royalty, and priced to be out of reach to those who so desperately need them.

Class Struggle in Command

The socialist state will enter into trade relations with other countries. But such trade, both on the export and import side, must be secondary to self-reliant growth. Overdependence on trade will undermine the foundations of a balanced and integrated economy. It will also unleash and strengthen old and new bourgeois class forces in socialist society. Such forces will push for policies to maximize commercial gain in international economic relations. They will seek class allies internationally. And they will “make the case” to sections of people that there are great material “benefits” to be had from international engagement.

All this opens the door to emergent neo-colonial relations (and the restoration of capitalism) and will be a focus of class struggle under socialism.

The socialist state stands for trade relations based on mutual benefit and equality. But non-socialist countries, especially the remaining imperialists, will not adhere to this policy simply because the socialist state proclaims it. They will seek to carry out trade on unequal terms and as a means for gaining leverage.

The socialist state will have to wage struggle to force the imperialist and reac-

tionary states to conduct trade on different terms. At the same time, the new state may also find itself in a situation of having to break imperialist embargoes and blockades that cause damage to certain sectors of the socialist economy. Only to the degree that the socialist state is promoting and supporting revolutionary struggle throughout the world will it be able to achieve these ends.

There will be much destruction and displacement involved in the revolutionary war to overthrow U.S. imperialism. Still, the proletariat will “inherit” vast and highly developed technology and productive forces that are, to a significant degree, the fruit of exploitation and plunder carried out over decades and centuries of imperialist domination and colonial conquest throughout the world.

The proletariat in power must utilize these productive forces first and above all to advance the world revolution toward the aim of overcoming all exploitative and unequal relations in the world, including the “great divide” between the imperialist and colonial (or neocolonial) countries.

III. Forging New Socialist Relations of Production

Under socialism, labor power will no longer be a commodity bought and sold. The hideous theft of life that is “work” under capitalism will be gone, along with the denial of work to whole sections of people.

The producers will no longer be enslaved to, and working to expand, economic and social forces alien to and dominating them. The conscious activism of the masses will be the driving force in a dynamic economy in the service of liberating humanity. The proletariat will lead in mastering technology rather than being mastered by it. No one will lose a job because of technological improvements. Technology will ease the burden of toil.

A key task of socialist society will be to break down the division between mental and manual labor, between those who work with their minds and those who work with their backs.

Work will be reorganized to promote de-

specialization: no longer will someone have to spend a lifetime simply performing the same task. Workers will have one post at any given time but will develop many different skills, rotating to different jobs and learning to master all phases of the production process—as well as technical and managerial work, research, planning, etc.

All managers will take part in productive labor, and “management” will not be the sacred ground of a handful of people. Managers will continue to be necessary. But, fundamentally, managing social production will be the collective responsibility of the masses. And, increasingly, people as a whole will rotate between management and productive labor.

For the economy to achieve planned and balanced growth, workplaces will be given the responsibility to produce particular items or services. But this will not be made an absolute. Within the framework of the overall plan, different units of production must also develop the capacity to produce subsidiary products along with their main products, and this must be integrated into the overall functioning and development of the economy.

Delegations of workers from different factories and workplaces will regularly be organized. They will have discussions with each other, exchange experience about production, discuss the quality of and problems with the products and services exchanged between them and throughout society, and share social and political experience. As the proletariat seizes power in other parts of the world, these exchanges will be organized between workers of different socialist countries.

In these as well as other ways, the workers in various spheres of the economy will become more conscious of the process of production and exchange in socialist society as a whole. And the masses of workers will be able to strengthen their conscious mastery over production and all of society.

The proletariat in power will vigorously promote the outlook of people working cooperatively and for the common good and using initiative and creativity to advance the public interest.

Workers will no longer be locked in a competition for starvation wages, trying to beat each other out for jobs or housing.

The cutthroat “me-first, I gotta take care of myself,” “look after my own” outlook of capitalist competition will be attacked and on the defensive. “Serve the people” will be the measuring stick by which people in their millions will judge their actions. This outlook will be reinforced by the real way the relations of production are changing: the socialist economy will be serving the people, not a handful of exploiters!

Workplaces as Schools of Class Struggle

The factories, fields, and other places where people work will be “schools of class struggle.” They will be political and cultural centers in which the battle to transform society and the world will have a sharp, crucial focus.

No longer will workplaces be merely “production” units. Political mobilization is the lifeblood of economic work under socialism. Critical questions—from international affairs to educational policy to the struggle for the emancipation of women—will be debated. Through political and ideological activities and cultural events in the work centers and in society as a whole, issues will get brought to the light of day and struggled out openly. In these ways, the masses will be learning to distinguish between the socialist road and the capitalist road.

Wage Inequality and Restricting Bourgeois Right

The socialist wage principle is “from each according to their ability, to each according to their work.” This is a great leap over capitalism.

Exploitation of labor will be eliminated. The “reward system” of capitalism—those who toil the least gain the most—will be shattered. But even the principle of pay according to work contains inequalities. Different jobs require different levels of skill. And even when different workers receive the same pay there is inequality, since people have different needs, different size families, and so forth. The division of labor, too, most especially between mental and manual labor, contains elements of privilege.

The principle of payment according to work performed is an example of what is called “bourgeois right.” Bourgeois right refers to economic and social relations which uphold formal equality but which actually contain elements of inequality and seeds of capitalist commodity and social relations. These relations are concentrated in laws and policies in the socialist society. They are described as “bourgeois right” because they reflect the continuing influence of the bourgeois organization of society. This will be a sharp and complex focus of class struggle in socialist society.

Wages and salaries cannot be immediately equalized under socialism. Why?

To begin with, sections of people—for instance, various professionals whose understanding and skills are needed by society—would, if wages were equalized immediately, turn against the revolution. Doctors, architects, physicists, planners, etc., have gone through training and schooling that takes time, work, and struggle. To tell these people right off that all that is irrelevant and now things will be totally and absolutely equalized—that will not be accepted by large numbers of them. Many would resist these measures, refuse to carry out assignments, and cause trouble.

This has to be seriously taken into account by the proletariat in power. It is not the case that the masses of people will immediately be able to do all these things—again, it takes training and education.

Further, it is actually the case that the requirements of these positions and functions—that is, what is involved in acquiring the necessary training and education—represents an additional amount of labor beyond what is required to be able to do more unskilled work. For example, to become a doctor requires years of education and training, and this will still be the case in socialist society, even with its radical transformation of education.

In socialist society the proletariat, through its state, is actually responsible for the planning, allocation, and use of different kinds of labor. If it simply ignores the actual amount of labor that has to be expended for different things, including the development of certain skills, etc., this will lead to irrational planning and the serious disruption of the

socialist economy.

So wrong policies that aim to eliminate inequalities all at once would mean that needed functions—medical, educational, scientific—will not get performed and that the socialist economy and society will actually be harmed. The revolution will lose support—not only among the more skilled strata, but among the masses more broadly. And the bourgeoisie will have more favorable ground to rally sections of professionals, and even sections of the basic masses, to its side!

Even within the working class, there are the advanced, intermediate, and backward. Not everyone will immediately have communist values. Here too it will still be necessary to recognize and reward differences in skill and ability—more highly skilled workers will receive higher pay.

But bourgeois right must be restricted. In the case of wages and salaries, that means several things.

First, efforts must be made to limit wage and salary gaps. The wide, obscene, and socially irrational differences of the sort that U.S. capitalism basks in will be eliminated (doctors will receive higher incomes, but will not be driving expensive sports cars). The more long-term and overall policy of the socialist state will be to narrow wage and salary differences in a step-by-step way. Specific practices that accentuate differences, like systems of bonuses, etc., in workplaces, must also be restricted.

Second, more of life's needs must be met outside the "cash nexus," that is, by means other than exchange through money. Things like health care, child care, cultural activities, and some consumer goods will increasingly be provided at low or no expense. They will be provided through more collective means: in workplaces, neighborhoods, farms, etc. In this way, certain services and products will begin to lose much of their character as commodities. People's incomes—their payment for work performed—will have less and less to do with the satisfaction of their requirements of life.

Third, there must be vigorous struggle throughout society against the ideology of "bourgeois right." The outlook of "I did this, and therefore I deserve that," ideas of fame and gain, of self-enrichment, and so forth must be attacked and the outlook

of "serve the people" promoted. Those with more advanced understanding and experience from among different sections of the people will be brought forward to set examples for others—for instance, people who take on special duties without pay, or youth who go into areas to assist the revolution with no promise of material reward.

Bourgeois forces, old and new, will be fighting to expand "bourgeois right." They will advocate policies to widen salary differences (in the name of "motivating" people to produce more); to expand the sphere of private consumption (in the name of "raising living standards"); and on the ideological front they will pronounce the verdict that the outlook of self-gain has "positive qualities."

Such is the ground of class struggle over "bourgeois right."

IV. Toward a Communist Future Without Commodities or Money

Socialism is a mode of production that is moving in the direction of communism. But the achievement of communism will require huge leaps: in the material development of society and in the social outlook, social values, and "social psychology" of people. And because communism can only take form as a global community of freely associating human beings, this must be achieved on a world level.

The guiding principle of the future communist society will be "from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs."

In communist society, people will no longer be required to work in order to meet their immediate needs and to assure their individual existence. That will be assured by society. People will still work, but no longer under compulsion of threat to their survival, or through inducements to self-gain and status. People will be motivated to work because they want to contribute to society all they can...according to their abilities.

In communist society, people will receive back from society according to their needs. But these will not be the crass "needs" promoted by bourgeois society ("who has the most toys at the end of

the day wins”). Nor will needs be “ful-filled” by acquiring private wealth that becomes a means to exploit others.

In communist society, people’s needs will be bound up with their all-around development as freely associating members of a social community, and with what enables that community to continually and consciously advance.

In such a society, there will be no need for money—it will be a relic of the past. Why? Because the products of human labor will no longer take the form of commodities—things produced for exchange, bought and sold, and transferred between different owners (or agents of production) as property.

The law of value, according to which the value of things produced is equivalent to the socially necessary labor time required to produce them, regulates commodity exchange. In communist society, this law will no longer exist.

Under communism, all products will come into being as the common material wealth of all of society. All products will be distributed according to rules established on a social level. All this will be “second nature” to people.

Communist society will still have to take account of the amount of social labor required to maintain society and to allow for its all-around development. But economic calculation—the calculation of the material-technical requirements of society, the measurement and allocation of social labor, and so on—will no longer involve accounting in value and monetary terms. The production and exchange of goods and services will be articulated without commodity relations, that is, without buyer, seller, contract relations, etc.

Communism requires that the productive forces have developed to a degree that a common material abundance is possible. But this can only happen on the basis of, and it must proceed together with, far-reaching transformations in the *relations of production*: leading in the direction of society as a whole taking possession of the productive forces; leading to more cooperative and interlinked ways in which people work; and leading to the more equitable distribution of social wealth.

There must be radical transformations in *social relations*: in how people relate to each other throughout society. And the

oppressive division of labor—especially that between mental and manual labor—will have to be overcome.

Socialist and Communist Society

Socialism is a transitional society carrying with it the “birthmarks” of—inequalities left over from—capitalist society. For some time, products will still retain certain commodity aspects. The socialist economy will also need to make use of the law of value.

These phenomena are a big part of the reason there is always the danger under socialism that capitalism will be restored. And they exist within the framework of socialist state ownership. So a decisive question under socialism is the actual *content* of state ownership: are the lines and policies in command unleashing the masses and advancing society towards the abolition of classes, or are the lines in command dragging society back towards capitalism? What is involved is a complex process of class struggle and social transformation that reflects the material reality of socialism as a transitional society. (See appendix “The Party Under Socialism, and the Transition to Communism.”)

Under socialism, it will still be necessary to undertake cost-accounting, as expressed in value/money terms, in order to estimate production costs and to measure, compare, and promote efficiency. Exchanges between state enterprises will involve some forms of contracts. A substantial portion of consumer goods will still, for some time, be supplied through consumer markets; and although these markets will be regulated by the state, consumption will still involve individuals purchasing goods.

The socialist economy must foster collective control and understanding by the producers. But to get beyond and do away with the commodity and money form will require a whole new level of integration of economic activity—fewer “walls” between enterprises and sectors, and qualitatively greater interaction between people in different spheres of the economy. It will require that people have a more direct and all-sided grasp of economic processes, of the interrelationships and requirements of social production. When society

reaches this material and ideological level, new forms of economic-social calculation and exchange will emerge that do not contain the seeds of commodity relations and class division.

For all the reasons described, the socialist economy cannot simply declare “the end of money.” Moreover, the socialist economy is not an isolated entity. It will be “surrounded” by money.

Capitalist countries and some form of the capitalist world market are likely to exist for a considerable time. As discussed, the socialist economy will engage in a limited amount of foreign trade, and money will be required to settle international trade accounts. In addition, the very existence of a world market will exert pressures on the socialist economy to develop in certain ways and will call forth class forces who seek to adapt to the goals and means of the bourgeois world economy.

Also, “black markets” will invariably arise within socialist society, especially in the early phases of socialist development. And with this will come hoarding of money and “underground” money dealings.

So even if money were formally abol-

ished, these kinds of objective factors would “drive money back into” the economy.

This is not to say that money and the law of value are simply accepted, lived with, or given free rein in the socialist economy. The goal is to do away with them. Socialist society must strenuously restrict their scope of operation and influence. And the proletariat must wage struggle against the ideas and attitudes which they generate and reinforce.

The law of value will play a role in the socialist economy, but it will not be in command. This means that production decisions are not made according to what yields profits. Efficiency is not measured narrowly in terms of immediate returns or labor productivity in the enterprise. And “success” in economic work involves broad social and political criteria.

Socialist production is consciously planned production based on meeting the needs of the masses, promoting the all-around development of the economy and society, and advancing the world revolution. This system of production must ultimately be transformed into a communist system of production without commodities and money.

The New Socialist Economy

Part 2: Agriculture, City and Countryside, Ecology, and Planning

Introduction

Maoism approaches economic development as an interdependent whole. It strives for integrated and egalitarian development. It takes account of the immediate and pressing needs of society and of the long-term goals and long-term effects of economic-social development.

Capitalism mobilizes human and material resources according to the dictates of profit and evaluates economic performance within that narrow framework. Socialism, by contrast, insists on a kind of “social balance sheet.” For instance, agricultural land-use has health and environmental repercussions; what is called the “built environment”—of residential dwellings, public buildings and spaces, and transport systems—reflects society’s values and shapes the experience of daily life. These sorts of issues are part of the framework of economic calculation and planning under socialism.

In carrying out socialist construction in the former United States, the proletarian state will pay attention to certain key economic-social interrelationships and transformations, among which are:

- the interconnections between agriculture and industry and the alliances that the proletariat forges with farmers;
- the nature of and balance between urban and rural development;
- the relationship between economic development and the preservation of ecological systems.

These are complex and crucial concerns, requiring that priorities be set and planning be carried out. Indeed, there is no rational, informed, and functional way of guiding development and meeting these concerns unless a system of planning is put in place—for socialist society as a whole and, ultimately and most profoundly, on a global communist level. Socialist planning combines society-wide coordination with local adaptation, local initiative, and local experimentation. It relies on the masses of people.

I. Transforming Agriculture

The agricultural population in the U.S., including both farmworkers and farm owners, is small (in absolute numbers and relative to the rest of the U.S. population). But so long as the contradiction between industry and agriculture remains—so long as these are qualitatively different and separate sectors of the economy—agriculture will be the foundation of the economy.

Agricultural production is extremely important to the functioning of U.S. society and will be a crucial question for the proletarian revolution, both in winning power and in carrying out socialist transformation.

Upon coming to power, the proletariat will promote the development of a rational agriculture that provides ample, healthful, and secure food supplies; that encourages environmentally and biologically sound farming practices; and that provides security of livelihood for those engaged in agricultural production.

In reorganizing agriculture, the proletariat’s policies will emphasize achieving state ownership as quickly and broadly as possible, relying first and foremost on the farmworkers in the rural areas.

Through its state, the proletariat will nationalize the great farm input and output monopolies (agribusiness) which today exert such dominance over means of production, distribution of farm products, and research and development. It will reorganize them according to the above principles and place them at the service of the masses in the whole country.

In expropriating the banks and other financial institutions, the proletariat will also cancel the mortgage and debt burden that weighs so heavily on the large majority of farmers.

Private ownership of parcels of land, and of the means of production needed to farm the land, is an obstacle to utilizing land and developing agriculture in a way

that benefits society as a whole. A key means through which the proletariat in power will transform this situation and create the basis for the rational and all-sided development of agriculture is *nationalization of land*: making land the property of society through state ownership.

Nationalization of land stands at the center of the proletariat's strategy for uniting with its allies among the farmers and developing agriculture along socialist lines.

Immediately with the seizure of power, those large landowners who do not farm their own property and big farmers who are mainly dependent on hired labor will be expropriated without compensation. Their lands, as well as equipment, buildings, and other capital assets, will be turned over to the farmworkers and semi-proletarian small farmers (those who farm and also work for wages) through the establishment of state farms. Or, where this is not yet possible, land will be allotted to farmers to work.

As for the great majority of owner-operators who do not exploit labor to any significant degree. Whether their holdings are small, medium, or even fairly large, the first step will be to allot them shares of nationalized land to farm—provided they do not actively oppose the revolution. This policy would apply, for instance, to many corn and wheat farmers.

These actions, together with the proletariat's firm consolidation of power and its first major steps in transforming industry along socialist lines, will clear the way for the rapid and balanced development of socialized agriculture.

On the basis of the initial nationalization of the land, the proletariat, relying first and foremost on the agricultural workers and secondly on the masses of (mainly) non-exploiting farmers, will be able to achieve increased production on expropriated and state-owned land.

It will also be able to bring about in a fairly short period the socialized ownership and use of farm equipment, buildings, etc., and of agricultural production in general. Again, this will be achieved mainly through the establishment of nationalized state farms (of varying sizes, depending on particular conditions).

If the proletariat is going to succeed in carrying out these policies with its farmer

allies, it cannot rely on political compulsion. Instead, it must win these farmers to see that such socialization is the only way forward, the only way to move beyond the conditions characteristic of capitalism that dictate that they will be squeezed, ruined, or crushed.

On the other hand, the proletariat cannot conciliate with the petty proprietor aspects of these farmers' outlook and inclinations. This would only weaken, not strengthen, this alliance, and would only send the farmers, as well as other middle forces, scurrying to the enemy camp.

In those sectors of farming where individual ownership has its strongest base, such as grain, and where the conditions will not generally be favorable for the immediate development of state-owned agriculture, the proletariat will use its control of the input and output sectors to influence and lead the farmers in the direction of socialist cooperation and socialist ownership.

These changes will be taking place in the context of society aiming to overcome the division between agriculture and industry, and the division between urban and rural areas. As a first step towards breaking down these divisions, the proletarian state will further develop industry, transport, and communications in the rural areas. It will also allocate resources to overcome social, educational, and other inequalities between rural and urban areas.

Through the kinds of measures described, it will become clear to many farmers that a guaranteed wage for farming paid by the state is a far more effective source of security than the government "support" programs that could never meet their needs under capitalism.

But again, in agriculture the proletariat will rely mainly on the great numbers of farmworkers. They will be immediately employed. And they will be the main force in consolidating proletarian rule in the rural areas and carrying forward its policies for the socialist transformation of agriculture.

The miserable conditions in which farmworkers are forced to live will be immediately abolished. Special priority will be given to constructing decent housing and other facilities for farmworkers, providing them with basic necessities, including health care. The socialist state

will put a stop to the use of hazardous farm chemicals that endanger farmworkers' health, as well as that of the larger population.

In carrying out its agricultural and nationalization policies, the proletariat must also pay special attention to land issues bound up with the historic oppression of Black, Chicano, and Native American peoples and to the special needs of farmers of the oppressed nationalities (see appendix "Uprooting National Oppression and White Supremacy").

II. Transforming the Cities and Breaking Down the Division Between Urban and Rural Areas

As mentioned, a key task of socialism is to break down the historic division between the urban and rural areas, in a step-by-step way over time. Decentralization will be a working principle.

Socialist cities will not be centers of bloated administration and consumption and a lifestyle fed by imperialist plunder and requiring huge service and "servant" classes. The rural areas will not be isolated from the rest of society and held in a state of economic and social backwardness.

The revolution will create new links between town and country, between agriculture and industry, and between the working people in both spheres.

Maoist Urban Planning: Creating New Types of Cities and Urban-Suburban Development

The size of cities will be consciously restricted. Cities will also be restructured to produce for more of their own needs and requirements, including efforts to develop local urban food production.

As the cities are rebuilt, new construction and economic-social planning will integrate work, residence, and community. For example, small-scale factories will be sited in neighborhoods, and neighborhoods will engage in various productive activities. Things like theaters and com-

munity gardens will be located where people live and work.

People will gain an overall awareness of the urban habitat and will be consciously shaping patterns of development. The socialist city will thrive on a new kind of "social space"—a joining of economic, social, and cultural activities where people live—to create a "social solidarity" where before there was disconnectedness.

The characteristic mode of suburban development will be halted and reversed. No longer will suburbs be bastions of segregation and privilege. The extreme isolation from the cities and rural areas of "bedroom" communities structured around individual home and car ownership will end. Urban/suburban sprawl, with its highways, strip malls, and overuse of land, will be countered through the measures of integrating work, living, and community.

Socialist Construction and the Rural Areas

The proletariat will end the extreme poverty and isolation of whole rural areas of the country, like south Texas, Appalachia, and the Mississippi Delta. People and material resources will be sent to such areas in order to develop industry, agriculture, transport, and communications, as well as educational, health, and recreational facilities, etc.

These measures will help both to reduce gaps in development and to draw the people who live there more fully into the activities of society overall. Youth will be unleashed to play a leading role to create new communities and mobilized to help transform existing ones.

The socialization of agriculture and the fact that there are large numbers of agricultural and non-agricultural workers in the rural areas will provide an important base and force for all-around transformation in these areas.

Smaller cities and towns, including those which have withered with the uncontrolled growth of the energy-intensive interstate highway system, will be developed as means of spreading productive forces throughout society. This will also be a big step toward overcoming the city/countryside division and will be important for the balanced development and use of land throughout the socialist

country.

A general goal of the new society will be for people to live in closer proximity to agricultural land and in closer connection with agricultural production.

The socialist principle of “exchange of experience”—with masses from different economic and social sectors and regions sharing knowledge and learning from the practice and struggle of others—will be of great importance in overcoming the gap between urban and rural areas, industry and agriculture.

III. “Socialist Sustainable Development” and Ecology

Proletarian revolution in the U.S. will be a giant leap in changing the realities of the global environment. Imperialism has produced a wasteful and destructive pattern of economic activity and industrial development. Its profit-above-all-else, blind expansionary nature, its turning of more and more of nature into a commodity, its wars and weapons of mass destruction—all this is strangling the fundamental ecosystems of the planet.

The proletariat seeks to achieve conscious social control of production. This requires that the well-being of the natural environment—the renewal of ecosystems and the ability of ecosystems to assimilate waste from human productive activity—be maintained. Natural resources will be used to further social development but will not be a means to accumulate private wealth.

In rebuilding and restructuring the economy along radically different lines, the new proletarian state will move immediately to counter environmental damage caused by centuries of capitalist development. The cleanup of toxic waste dumps will be urgently undertaken. Measures to deal with air, water, and soil pollution, and the complex problem of nuclear waste, will be incorporated into short- and longer-term economic plans.

In connection with other transformations in society, step-by-step efforts will be undertaken to develop technology, industrial/agricultural systems, and infrastructure that are *economically productive, ecologically rational, and socially just*.

Transportation will be moved away from automobile/highway centered transport. The senseless burning up of oil to have people commute to work hours away must end. Safe and fuel-efficient transportation and mass transit will be given priority in all new development, restructuring, and research.

The socialist economy will combine large-scale with diversified small-scale production. Recycling and multi-use of materials and products (rather than items just serving one purpose and one round of production), waste management, and conservation of resources will be fundamental economic practices at all levels of the economy and society. Such a system of production would no longer be focused on long-distance supplies and deliveries but rather on interchanges within local and regional economies.

A goal of the new economy will be to move away from reliance on non-renewable and polluting fossil fuel technology, and to develop alternative, ecologically sound technologies, like geothermal, solar, and wind power.

The masses must be mobilized to solve ecological problems. Direct knowledge gained through particular experience will be combined with broad scientific knowledge.

Through mass education and campaigns, culture, and in other spheres of society, the socialist state will promote the outlook that humanity is the caretaker of the planet for present and future generations. Socialist society aims to interact with nature in a planned and rational way. People will gain a deepening and expanding understanding and appreciation of the richness of the natural world.

These are some key principles of “socialist sustainable development.”

IV. The Crucial Weapon of Planning

The proletariat will institute planning for the economy as a whole. This will be done on the foundation of state ownership of the major means of production in industry, the nationalization of the land, and important victories won in achieving state ownership in agriculture.

Socialist planning will take into

account such critical relations as those involving: the various sectors of industry and agriculture; the various levels of socialization of ownership that have been achieved at any given time, along with the remaining small-scale private ownership in production and trade; the various regions of the country and their particular developmental needs and gaps; town and country; technology, the environment, and health; and the needs of the world revolution.

One of the most important tasks of socialist planning is to guide the deployment and allocation of the workforce in various areas of the country and spheres of the economy.

Under capitalism, the basic decisions as to where and how people work appear to be the result of individual choice. But in fact it is the workings of the market and the dynamics of capitalist accumulation that fundamentally govern these decisions: industries grow or contract; regions are built up or abandoned; the economy expands or enters into crisis. This anarchic drive of competing capitalists shapes employment demands and job opportunities.

At the same time, different sections of people have more or less access to the schooling which provides skills and “accreditation” that the market might reward, while millions of the poor and oppressed have creative energies that a profit-driven economy has absolutely no use for. Large sections of the population suffer from unemployment and underemployment. And everyone faces the prospect of losing a job.

Under socialism, the work people do will be based on the overall needs of the proletariat in carrying forward the socialist revolution, socialist economic construction, and the world revolution. The Party will mobilize its own members, and other class conscious people who volunteer, to be the leading force in going where work is most difficult. And in general, through the schools, factories, neighborhood committees, etc., and under the centralized leadership of the Party and the state, the people as a whole will be mobilized to meet the requirements of the plan in various areas and economic spheres.

Does this essentially boil down to people being simply “assigned” and “ordered”

to particular jobs? No, but jobs will have to be allocated.

In dealing with issues of work and jobs, the socialist economy must rely first and foremost on the conscious activism of people. The aims and objectives of economic development, the needs and priorities that the socialist plan is speaking to—these things must be broadly discussed and debated throughout society as part of its implementation. And the formulation of the plan itself must be the product of mass discussion and struggle over the direction of society.

In other words, people will be taking on work assignments with an understanding of what this is part of and contributing to. The plan coordinates the allocation of social labor, but an atmosphere is being created and social movements and social debates are taking place...such that people are more and more consciously and voluntarily responding to the needs of society. Of course, people’s commitment to the larger interests of society will be uneven—and that is one important reason why there will and must be struggle over these questions.

Socialist planning must promote balanced and integrated growth that increases the masses’ collective mastery over the economy and that narrows social, economic, and regional inequalities—unlike the lopsided and distorted development of capitalism.

Planning will combine centralized leadership and direction with local initiative and administration. Socialist planning must give full play to local capabilities, creativity, and experimentation.

Planning is a crucial weapon of the proletariat in exercising and strengthening its control over the economy and carrying out further socialist transformation. But planning itself is neither equivalent to socialism nor guarantees it. And planning cannot simply be left to planners—full-time intellectual workers and officials—if it is to be *socialist* planning.

In carrying out socialist planning, the state, with the Party playing the leading role, must investigate and draw on the experience and ideas of the masses. And the masses themselves must be organized to sum up this experience and make suggestions with regard to planning, not only on the basic level, but for the country as a whole. Then this must be systematized

and synthesized, and an overall plan for the economy developed centrally, which in turn must be taken up, discussed, and carried out by the masses.

Socialist society is in motion. It is dynamic and marked by far-ranging transformations. A socialist plan is not a straitjacket, but a means to consciously steer economic development.

Nothing in life proceeds in a straight line. Many new things will arise, and experiences will be gained in the course of carrying out a plan, especially a longer-term one, such as one covering five years. In addition, big and unexpected changes can take place—not only natural disasters and so forth, but also changes in political conditions, in the class struggle, domestically and internationally.

For all these reasons, the experience in carrying out the plan must be repeatedly summed up. And the plan must be flexible, to allow for adjustments in response to new conditions.

Planning, like all other aspects of transforming and developing the economy and all other spheres of society along socialist lines, is a process of struggle: against bourgeois- bureaucratic methods and those who would practice them. Socialist planning can only be carried out in the interests of the proletariat by involving and fundamentally relying on the masses with the guidance of a scientific, Marxist-Leninist-Maoist line and method.

In planning, as in everything else, revolutionary politics must be in command.

Proletarian Morality—A Radical Rupture With Tradition’s Chains

Morality is a set of principles for how “the right” and “the good” are viewed and how individuals or groups should conduct themselves. It is part of the world outlook—the ideology—of people. In a society divided into classes, every ideology, every way of thinking, represents one class viewpoint or another. In class society all morals and ethics are the expression of the ideology of one class or another.

Both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat have their own moral principles, which are fundamentally opposed to each other, just as their class outlooks as a whole and their fundamental class interests are antagonistically in conflict. And the struggle over morals—over what is moral and immoral, over which principles of conduct should be the guiding principles—is an important part of the ideological struggle, and the overall class struggle, in society.

Almost everyone who has attended elementary school in the United States has been told the story of George Washington cutting down the family cherry tree and then “owning up to it.” The point is to instill in young children the notion that “the father of our country” could not tell a lie. But how many school children have been told the story of George Washington the slaveowner—who once traded a slave for a barrel of molasses?

This is an expression of the morality of the ruling class of this country—where the men who founded their position and wealth on slavery are upheld as virtuous examples to follow. Even though literal slavery has been abolished in this country and the dominant property relations in the U.S. today are *capitalist* property relations, the ruling class continues to uphold slaveowners like George Washington as models. Why? Because the historical accumulation of wealth and power by this ruling class is *inseparable* from slavery; because the oppression of Black people remains a foundation stone of the capitalist system in the U.S.; and because there is an unbroken line of oppression from the founding of this country to its role today as the greatest exploiter and plunderer in the world.

Proletarian revolution and the transi-

tion to a communist society require not just a radical rupture with traditional property relations—with all relations of exploitation and oppression—but also with traditional ideas. And, as in every other sphere, the proletariat’s view is radically different from and opposed to the capitalist ideal of morality.

Capitalist Morality and Individualism

Capitalist morality is a morality that corresponds to the basic character of capitalist society. On one level, capitalism is a society in which everything of value is a commodity to be bought and sold, and in which individuals confront each other not so much as people but as owners (or non-owners) of things.

In accordance with this, capitalism promotes the values of bourgeois individualism. A “moral” person in capitalist society is someone who “takes responsibility” for their own fate. To put it more bluntly, everybody is expected to “look out for number one.” It is said that people should try to avoid harming others when pursuing their own personal interests and ends, and even that they should “give back” sometimes, such as by donating to charity. But everyone also knows and acknowledges that in capitalist society the first thing that people are expected to ask is: “What’s in it for me?”

Capitalist society portrays morality as timeless ideals that have existed in all human societies throughout history and that rise above classes. But in fact it propagates the morality of a particular class of exploiters—the bourgeoisie—which came into existence in relatively recent times, historically speaking (only several hundred years ago), and is headed for extinction as a class. The bourgeoisie treats the individualism it promotes as part of the unchangeable essence of human beings—“people will always be selfish,” they tell us, or even “you can change the system, but you can’t change the people.”

But where do the values of people actually come from? People are born into a

world that has certain social relations and certain institutions. When they go to school in bourgeois society, are they trained to work with others to find the solutions to problems, or are they instead rewarded for competing with their classmates and fighting for the highest grades? Do they learn how people in different periods of history have held different values and treated each other in different ways, or are they taught instead that today's values are eternal, or the highest that society can reach for, and rooted in "human nature"? When they play sports and games, are they taught that the joy exists in working with teammates and even learning from rivals to overcome obstacles and scale new heights—or are they taught that "winning is everything"?

All this is training for the world into which the great majority of people must fit themselves. They will be forced to compete with others even to get a job, to find housing, and so on. If a family member should become sick or disabled, they will be forced to struggle on their own to figure out how to deal with it. This society, this heartless system where people must claw and scratch to survive—and not some mythical unchanging "human nature"—is what gives rise to a mentality in which people see each other as enemies, or as objects to be used or avoided.

But this morality and this bourgeois individualism is not only a product of how people are raised and how they must fit themselves into the world. On a very basic level, it corresponds to the capitalist relations of production—where capitalists can thrive only by more deeply exploiting the proletarians and by cutting the throats of their competitors. The schools and churches that train people in individualism, the social relations that reinforce them, all flow from and serve the underlying economic structure and class relations of capitalism.

This bourgeois individualism, the principle that every individual has to look out for himself or herself above and in opposition to everyone else, is promoted as the "bottom line" of survival in this society. And it is put forward as the essence of the capitalist notion of freedom. The *Declaration of Independence* asserts as a "self-evident truth" that the individual's freedom to pursue their own happiness is an "inalienable right."

But the reality is that individuals are only free to act within the confines of the social conditions and relations in which they find themselves. And in class society, these are most essentially class relations. To cite one example, any proletarian knows that you are free to travel into the neighborhoods of the rich and powerful only if you are there to service them and their property. A Sunday drive there is more likely than not to result in being pulled over by the police. And, for many, an encounter with the police holds the ever-present danger of being harassed, terrorized, brutalized, or even executed on the spot.

Capitalist Morality Is a Morality of Exploitation

Bourgeois theorists claim that the pursuit of self-interest drives social progress and is a great moral good. But in reality, this means pursuit of accumulation of wealth through the exploitation of others.

Capitalism is not just a society in which commodity production and exchange is the generalized form in which goods and services are produced and exchanged (rather than most things being directly consumed by those who produce them). It is not just a society that encourages the dog-eat-dog contest between individuals (individual commodity owners). In its most essential nature, capitalism is a system in which labor power itself—the ability to work—has become a commodity, and the use of this commodity is the basis and "dirty little secret" of capitalist production and profit.

In accordance with this, capitalist morality is, above all, the morality of exploitation. In particular, it is a relation of exploitation in which the exploited class, the proletarians, are nominally free, are not owned outright, but are in fact forced to sell their ability to work, day after day. They are forced to allow the control over their physical capabilities, their skills and exertions to pass into the hands of an alien power over them, whose only interest is in driving them to produce as much wealth as possible. Of the wealth they produce, the proletarians get back only the amount necessary to keep them alive, capable of working, and trapped in this exploited condition. And if they cannot produce enough profit, regardless of how hard they work,

they will be cut loose and forced to seek out another capitalist to exploit them.

They are enslaved not by an individual owner but by the capitalist class as a whole. This is the form of enslavement that corresponds to and serves the capitalist mode of production and the capitalist ruling class—it is *wage* slavery.

Of course, the “right” to accumulate vast wealth is exercised—and can be exercised—only by a small part of society, since some can do this only if many, many more are exploited by them and are maintained in an impoverished and powerless position. Thus, the widely proclaimed “rights of the individual” in bourgeois society fundamentally come down to the “right” of the few to accumulate wealth by exploiting others, and the “right” of the “others” to be exploited in this way! And today, when capitalism has fully developed into a worldwide system of exploitation—imperialism—it is literally billions of people, from small children to the aged, whose ruthless exploitation and oppression is the source of the imperialists’ vast wealth and power.

You can get a fundamental view of a social system and the class that rules it by what is put forward as the standard and model to be upheld and admired.

In this society, the ruling class worships money and the relentless drive to acquire more and more material wealth at the cost of tremendous human suffering. Their pessimistic view of human nature insists on selfishness as the “bottom line” of all human motivation. At the same time, this is a situation where everything, including people and ideas, are reduced to commodities and capital, and where people have to live with all the decadence and degradation this spews forth.

As a result, many people feel an emptiness and a longing for something loftier. And, in order to misdirect and make use of this, the ruling class promotes traditional religious values, which themselves reflect and reinforce long-standing relations of oppression and exploitation, including patriarchy and the oppression of women, as well as wage slavery (and outright slavery), and the domination of one group in society, and one nation, over others.

The promotion of Christianity and its Bible has been a major part of the traditional “moral code” of Western society, from the time Christianity was adopted as

the official religion of the Roman Empire down to today. And it has always been a rationale and justification for the most horrendous oppression. As Napoleon, a representative of the French bourgeoisie, so openly declared: “Society is impossible without inequality; inequality [is] intolerable without a code of morality; and a code of morality is unacceptable without religion.” The fundamentalist Christian “family values” that have become mainstream reference points for the ruling class of the U.S. call for blind obedience to reactionary authority, the traditional domination of women by men and of children by their fathers, and the faithful servitude of the poor to the rich.

These two different sides of the same coin—crass materialism and bourgeois decadence on one side, and the puritanical traditional morality so prevalent in the United States on the other—are the hypocritical morals the masses are expected to make sense of and live by.

Proletarian Morality

In direct opposition to all this, proletarian morality is based on the understanding that humanity has reached the point where inequality is no longer necessary or tolerable and that it is impossible for humanity to advance further without abolishing all social inequality, all relations of exploitation and oppression. The accomplishment of this historic goal requires a radically new code of morality—proletarian morality.

This morality gives expression to and reflects the revolutionary outlook and interests of the proletariat and its mission of overthrowing the capitalist-imperialist system, suppressing the bourgeoisie and the forces of counter-revolution in order to prevent the restoration of capitalism, and carrying forward the thoroughgoing transformation of society to achieve a communist world where there will no longer be any class distinctions nor any need for political domination and suppression of one part of society, or the world, by another.

Proletarian morality reflects the fact that this world-historic revolution must be the conscious, voluntary act of the masses of people themselves. And the communist society it will bring into being is one where, as Mao Tsetung put it, all human-

ity will voluntarily and consciously change itself and the world.

The accusation is often made that communist morality insists that “the end justifies the means.” By this is meant the idea that anything is justified so long as it contributes to the seizure of power and the continuing domination of society by the proletariat—or by its party, ruling over the masses, as the bourgeoisie presents it. But this is the exact opposite of the truth.

Communist morality, the morality of the revolutionary proletariat, actually insists that whatever means are used, at every point in the struggle, must be determined by and must be consistent with the ends—with the goal of abolishing all exploitation and all oppressive social relations.

In fact, it is the bourgeoisie that puts forward the perverse notion that anything that serves its interests in exploiting and plundering the masses of people and the oppressed nations of the world is justified, that whatever it can get away with in the service of these reactionary ends is “good” and “moral”—that “might makes right.” Who has not heard the ruling class of the U.S.—and their counterparts and rivals in other countries—put forward exactly this kind of logic to justify, and even to celebrate, their endless crimes against humanity?

Not only is there a profound difference between the morality of the proletariat and that of the bourgeoisie, but this reflects two fundamentally different visions of how the world can and should be. On the one hand, in one kind of world—the present “real world” of capitalist-imperialist rule—there is mass starvation and misery and only a relative handful who accumulate vast amounts of wealth. On the other hand, in the world the revolutionary proletariat is struggling to bring into being, the “right” of people to be millionaires and billionaires is abolished, but there is an abundance of material wealth, and of culture and intellectual life, available to the people as a whole. Which vision of society is better? Which morality?

Morality in Socialist Society

Once the proletariat has seized power, it will promote and popularize its revolutionary morality as the standard for society as a whole. It will oppose and criticize

ideas that strengthen the old capitalist-style relations, where some people are subjugated by others and where there is inequality and oppression. It will uphold and popularize new relations among the people and ideas and social practices that contribute to revolutionizing society and emancipating the masses of people and ultimately all of humanity.

In opposition to bourgeois individualism and the reactionary theory of human nature that assumes people are inherently selfish, and that selfishness is the highest and really only possible motivation, it will value instead cooperation and serving the people.

In place of slavish obedience to authority, the proletariat will foster creativity and a critical spirit. It will promote a healthy atmosphere of criticism/self-criticism to enable people to learn and to help each other in striving to apply communist values and standards and in contributing to the ongoing struggle to revolutionize society.

In opposition to racist ideology, proletarian morality will imbue people with the spirit of equality among peoples and nations.

In place of male supremacist thinking, the proletarian state will educate people with the understanding that “women hold up half the sky.” It will promote standards and values that correspond and contribute to the unleashing of women to take part fully and equally in every sphere of society and to play a powerful role in overturning every old and oppressive tradition and every relation of subjugation and exploitation.

In opposition to narrow and reactionary notions of “my country first,” the proletarian internationalist spirit of self-sacrificing support for revolutionary struggles throughout the world and building the socialist state as, above all, a base area for the world proletarian revolution will be put forward as the standard to inspire and mobilize people.

Socialist Society, Serving the People, and Advancing to Communism

In socialist society, working cooperatively for the common good and carrying forward the struggle to overcome and uproot all the inequality and differences left from

the old society will be upheld in place of “the individual struggle of each against all” and the “right” of people to accumulate wealth by exploiting others. Instead of “to get rich is glorious,” the moral standard will be “serve the people.” Instead of “USA #1,” the principle promoted will be that of “contributing all we can to the advance of the world revolution and the emancipation of all humanity.”

As the transition to communism is carried forward, as part of the world revolution, increasingly people will not be bound by the limits of the individual struggle for existence. They will not be motivated by the drive to acquire wealth or personal advancement at the expense of others. When communism is reached, the basis will have been created, materially and ideologically, for everyone to consciously and voluntarily subordinate themselves to the higher interests of society as a whole.

There will be freedom for individuals on a whole new level and there will in fact be more of a basis for individuality than there has ever been before—but there will not be *individualism*. In a society in which people realize their interests in common, cooperation will seem as natural as competition seems now. And the creativity, initiative, and potential of all members of society will be unleashed in ways that previously could only be imagined, or not even imagined at all.

With this vision and these principles in mind, the loftiest goal of the proletariat is not the freedom of the individual to rise within the prevailing system, but the masses rising up to overthrow it and to replace it with a society in which people realize their interests in common. The proletarian revolution will free individuals from exploitation and oppression, but the communist view of freedom does not envision a future where each individual pursues their own individual interests divorced from or in antagonism to the rest of society.

The “4 Alls”

Morality for the proletariat is an expression of its historic mission, and the basis for communist morality is contained in what Maoists call “the 4 Alls.” They are drawn from a summary by Marx of what the communist revolution aims for and

leads to: the abolition of all class distinctions; the abolition of all the relations of production on which these class distinctions rest; the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production; and the revolutionizing of all the ideas that result from these social relations.

Only by moving human society beyond the point where it is divided into different classes, with the few monopolizing the wealth and power and the rest slaving for them and being downpressed by them; only by eliminating all forms of inequality and oppression, so that there is no more a situation where men subjugate women or one nation subjugates others; only by advancing human relations to the point where people no longer have a need or interest in exploiting each other and treating each other as property to be used and manipulated; only by bringing into being a world where people relate as freely associating human beings—only in this way can the highest interests of the proletariat be realized.

Personal and Intimate Relationships

Under capitalism, the human capacity for romantic love and sex as an expression of an intimate relationship between people is twisted into a relation between commodities to be bought and sold, and into relations of domination and exploitation. In the dog-eat-dog world of bourgeois sexual relations, the rules of the game are “use or be used.” And given the patriarchal relations in society, it is overwhelmingly women who suffer the consequences.

People’s desires for intimacy and closeness are continually thwarted because in class society marriage and family relations have historically been a matter of property relations. While capitalist society may modify the forms of this, it does not change the essence of it and in fact gives rise to some new and extreme expressions of these oppressive property relations.

People often view romantic relations as the only shelter they have from the hard realities of life in this system. And the culture of capitalism exploits this need by bombarding people with these notions at every turn. From advertising and popular culture to literature and self-help psychol-

ogy, this society makes sure that people are inordinately fixated on sex and romance, and this serves as a means of social control.

Proletarian morality, as applied to intimate and sexual relationships, puts fundamental emphasis on overcoming and uprooting the relations of inequality that oppress women.

The new socialist society will foster personal, family, and sexual relations that are based on mutual love, respect, and equality—and not on dominating, disrespecting or taking advantage of people. Social practices that are harmful and demoralizing to the people—for example, sexually objectifying, exploiting, and demeaning people in popular culture—will be abolished. Hedonistic lifestyles that put individual self-gratification over contributing to society or that uphold “male right” in opposition to the liberation of women, will be the subject of criticism and transformation.

An atmosphere in society will be created where people can speak about such things frankly without the influence of religious Puritanism that keeps people ignorant, or fear of repression. At the same time, people will be free to criticize and change social practices that are oppressive, even if they take place in the “privacy” of the family.

Women, who have historically been victimized by the traditional authority of the man in the family, will have the backing of society to rebel against and change oppressive family and personal relationships. (For further discussion of intimate and sexual relations and how they are linked to the pivotal question of the emancipation of women, see the appendix “The Proletarian Revolution and the Emancipation of Women.”)

Not only are romantic and sexual relations distorted and corrupted in capitalist society, but so too is people’s need for friendship. The endless promotion of competition among individuals and the notion that each person should seek their own “self-fulfillment” above all; the individualizing and isolating influences of the way the functioning of this society structures people’s basic living-family units; the male supremacist relations and conventions and the dominant notions of “gender roles” and of what is appropriate, and inappropriate, conduct among people of

the same, or the opposite, sex; the inequalities between nationalities and the racist notions that accompany this; and the exploitative values of capitalist society in general—all this combines to make it difficult for people to establish, and to maintain, close relationships of friendship.

The proletarian revolution shatters the hold of bourgeois power over society. As the transformation of the basic economic, social, and political relations proceeds, and as the moral standards and ideology of the proletariat exert increasing influence in the new society, the basis will more and more be created for people to enter into relationships of friendship and intimacy as fully equal individuals.

Genuine friendships between women and men will flourish. This will be in contrast to capitalist society, where the influence of patriarchy and “male right,” the objectification of women as sex objects, and in general the preoccupation with sex that is promoted, all create serious obstacles to such friendship. Relationships will not be a place to escape the world, take out your anger, or be a petty oppressor, but a place to find love and warmth and closeness between people, sexual and otherwise.

In socialist society, personal relationships, while valued as such, will also be seen in the larger social context in which they exist and in terms of their effect on the ability of the individuals involved to take part in and change society. Do they contribute to revolutionizing society and serving the people, or do they tend to perpetuate the old traditional property and social relations?

Standards Set by the Vanguard Party

Throughout the socialist transition to communism, members of the vanguard party must act as an advanced detachment of the class, setting the highest standards and models for society generally.

Party members must keep constantly in mind and base themselves wholeheartedly on serving the people. They dedicate their whole lives to the proletarian revolution and the achievement of communism worldwide. They are not motivated by looking out for their own narrow interests or the pursuit of individual glory, comfort, or personal careers. They should be fear-

less in the face of the enemy and be prepared for persecution, imprisonment, and even death in the service of the revolution. Party members have profound hatred for the enemy and great love for the people and the Party.

As Mao Tsetung wrote: communists should have largeness of mind and should be staunch and active, looking upon the interests of the revolution as their very life and subordinating their personal interests to those of the revolution; always and everywhere they should adhere to principle and wage a tireless struggle against all

incorrect ideas and actions, so as to consolidate the collective life of the Party and strengthen the ties between the Party and the masses; they should be more concerned about the Party and the masses than about any individual, and more concerned about others than about themselves.

The following Points of Discipline are a code of conduct for Party members in their revolutionary work and in their daily lives. They are one important expression of proletarian morality.

Points of Discipline for Party Members

1. Don't use drugs or get drunk or function in an altered state of consciousness.
2. Do not steal anything from the masses, not even a needle or a piece of thread; return everything you borrow.
3. Don't raise money for yourself in the name of the Party; turn in all money raised to support the organization.
4. Women are the equals of men in every respect. They should be treated as comrades in the revolutionary struggle, not as property or prizes. Such things as physically or verbally abusing women or treating women (or any human being) as sexual objects are completely opposed to everything we stand for.
5. We are proletarian internationalists. We should promote respect for the cultures and languages of oppressed peoples and equality among all nationalities. Don't insult or ridicule other people's race or nationality, not even in jokes.
6. Don't use your position as a political leader among the masses for personal gain, financially, to take sexual advantage, etc.
7. Don't attempt to get people to support or join the Party by threatening them. Party members must use the method of persuasion and education among the masses.
8. Our methods of struggle must be consistent with our principles and objectives and proceed from an analysis of who are our friends and who are our enemy—for example, don't poster or graffiti the businesses or homes of small property owners without their agreement. Middle-class people are potential allies of the proletariat, and our ability to win large numbers of them to at least "friendly neutrality" is crucial for the success of the revolution. Only the bourgeoisie and die-hard accomplices of the bourgeoisie should be treated as enemies.
9. Don't settle arguments, disputes, or contradictions in the Party or among the masses through fistfights or other violent means. Contradictions among the people should be solved through the methods of discussion and persuasion.
10. Don't remain silent at meetings and then gossip afterwards. Say all you know and say it without holding back anything.
11. Don't let things slide when a person has clearly made an error, for the sake of remaining on friendly terms with that person. Party members must at all times fight for what is correct, wage principled line struggle and not fear criticism and self-criticism.
12. Don't engage in personal attacks, pick fights, curse people or seek revenge because you have been criticized.
13. Don't use leadership positions to suppress criticism or to retaliate; don't use your position of leadership to lord it over others or to act like a "bigshot."
14. Don't discuss inner-Party struggle or business outside the Party.
15. Practice criticism and self-criticism.

Fear Nothing, Be Down for the Whole Thing.