

RED HORIZON



Issue 1
August 2022



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FOUNDING STATEMENT

BY: RED HORIZON EDITORIAL BOARD

Red Horizon is a Marxist student journal dedicated to the introduction, discussion, and application of Marxist politics, philosophy, and political economy among university students and the broader masses. The contemporary world is mired in crises—war, poverty, inequality, and climate change are just a few of the many problems we face. In this situation, it's easy to feel angry, frustrated, and pessimistic. As Marxist students, we believe that the root cause of the world's multitude of problems lies in the fundamentally exploitative and unjust socioeconomic system of capitalism, and that the application of Marxism is crucial in guiding the struggle against capitalism, towards social revolution—the overthrow of the capitalist class and their system.

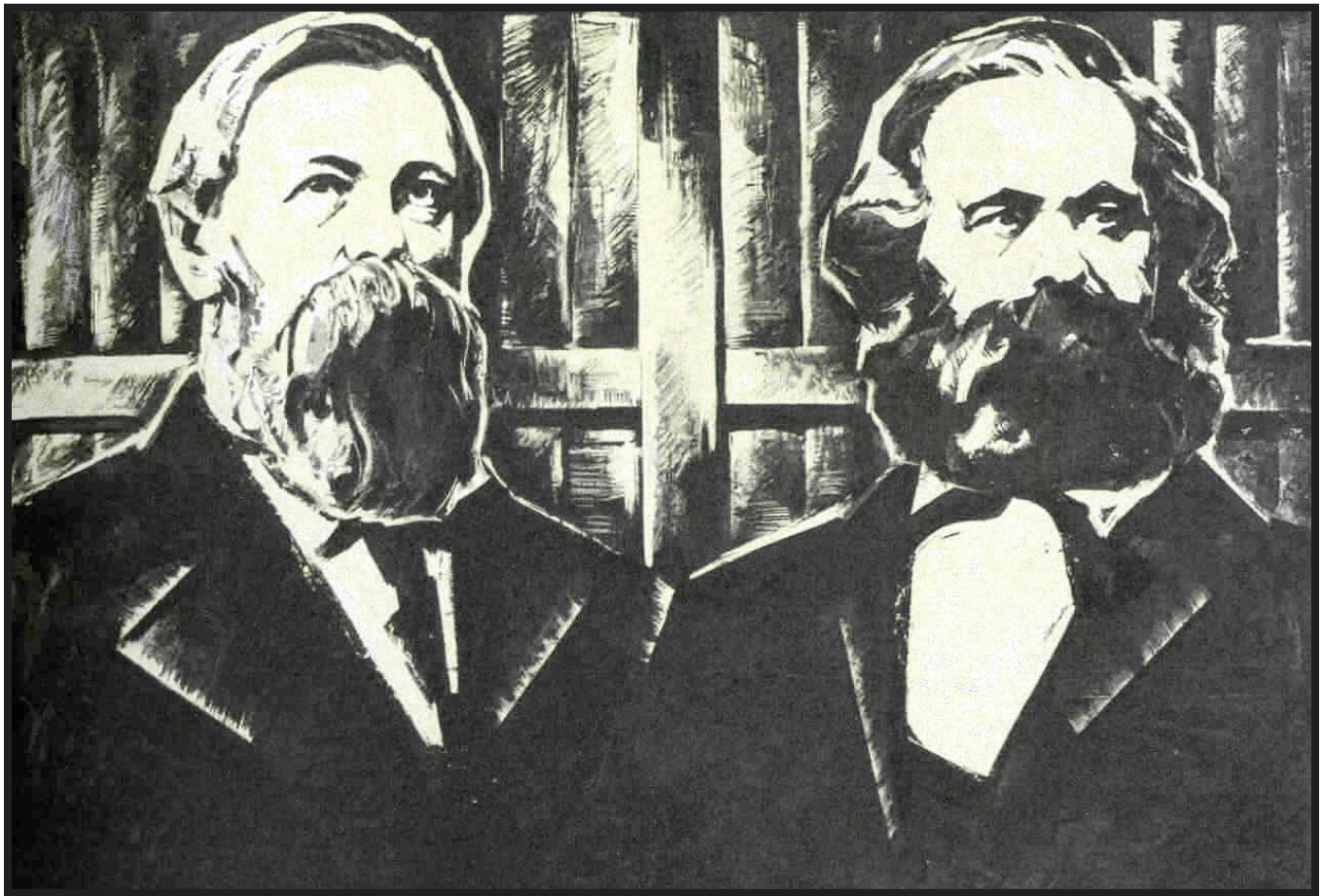
As students, we are faced with all sorts of social pressures pushing us to just get good grades, get a good career, to “make it” and use our knowledge to serve the present social order, or perhaps to compromise by working at a non-profit that supposedly helps things but really is part of the problem. We are told that “there is no alternative” to suffering under this system, and for many it appears that way as the whole world is under the boot of capitalism and imperialism. But while the situation right now may seem bleak, the future is bright. As revolutionaries, we know that where there is oppression, there is

resistance, and where there is resistance, there is hope for change. But for change to happen, we have to fight for it. Revolutionary students must use our knowledge to serve the people and to promote revolution. Instead of confining ourselves to the supposedly comfortable halls of academia and maneuvering to secure a bourgeois career in this rotten system, we must join in the struggles of the masses, actively participate in the class struggle, and help guide it towards its final aim of socialist revolution and communism.

With *Red Horizon*, we aim to promote discussion and debate of revolutionary Marxism to raise political consciousness and show a way out of the present mess the capitalist class has got us into. We are not a journal for academic or purely intellectual reflection. This journal was created to aid the revolution, based on the view that without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement, and that theory must serve to advance practice. Therefore, we encourage not only theoretical study, criticism, and debate, but also the practical application of revolutionary politics and Marxism. We hope *Red Horizon* will serve as an important, if modest, step towards rekindling engagement with revolutionary Marxism among students in this country, and in doing so help to revive the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the capitalist class in this country.

WHAT IS MARXISM?

BY: SIRAJ



Introduction

Every day people of the world face hunger, violence, homelessness, unemployment, and an uncountable number of other injustices. In this sea of oppression there are those of us who are sailing the waters, looking for a way ashore. We dream of a land free of exploitation—where people are equal and working together instead of clawing at each other’s throats, fighting to get a piece of the scraps thrown out by the ruling classes. To make this dream tangible, we must ground ourselves in the real world and gain a scientific understanding of society. There are fundamental questions to ask in this regard: how do we make sense of the world, what are the primary forces driving our society, and what is the way out

of this system? The answers to these questions will slowly illuminate the essence of Marxism; its three component parts—philosophy, political economy, and scientific socialism—and how these work together to understand and change the world.

How Do We Make Sense of the World?

Since the dawn of human civilization, we have tried to make sense of the order in our lives and the universe. There have been many contending forces, in particular religion, in this battle for establishing truth. However, religious doctrines fall flat in face of the true nature of the universe, relying as they do upon the idea of deities and concepts like “God’s

will” to explain away various complexities of nature and society. The natural sciences have sought to explain the physical world in terms of its own interconnected complexities, and this is the basic approach that must be taken with regards to human society as well. We should seek to uncover the laws of motion that shape the development of our social reality and act to transform it. However, to accomplish this we must break from the thinking that undergirds religious dogma and adopt the philosophical framework underlying the scientific method.

This philosophical framework is known as *materialism*, and has been responsible for clarifying the dynamics of natural phenomena for centuries. Materialist philosophy has advanced according to new scientific knowledge, and based on this knowledge and the larger conclusions that can be drawn from it, allows us to deepen our understanding of the world. For example, a scientific understanding of evolution helped to dispel spiritualist and religious notions about God creating man “in His image” and showed the material basis for the development of varied forms of life across Earth.

Materialism posits that there is an objective reality, and all complex forms are the result of the movement of one and the same thing, namely matter. It does away with any idea of a “higher plane of being” whether that be “the kingdom of God” or the Platonic “Heaven of ideas.” Although materialist thinking is informed by the sciences, its development was a result of a fierce struggle against the school of philosophy known as *idealism*. Idealism holds that all physical/material things are the result of some ideas, deity, or spiritual realm. Some articulations argue that “it’s all in your head” and there is no way to prove that objective reality exists—while others argue that God or some other force created the physical world. In the end, it all amounts

to the argument that the real world is ultimately an illusion, a view with definite reactionary political implications which has often been used to justify the oppressive status-quo of various class societies throughout human history.¹ As a result of this struggle between idealism and materialism, the progress of developing a scientific philosophical outlook has not been a linear process.

The development of a philosophical outlook capable of truly understanding society is a result of class struggle. The exploiting classes throughout the history of human societies have struggled to suppress an objective understanding of reality, although not necessarily explicitly. They have a real interest in obscuring the oppressive nature of the societies they rule. This is often done through their ideologies which are constructed to preserve their class position. For example, in our modern day the U.S. capitalist class uses liberal ideology as justification for their rule. For the liberal, concepts such as private property rights are an unflinching necessity for society, appealing to individualism and vague notions of “human rights” to justify it. Likewise, in Medieval Europe, Christianity was used to justify the rule of the kings and nobles, by claiming that they had a “divine right” to rule over the peasantry, merchants, and working class.

These ruling ideologies (developed by the ruling classes!) are deeply rooted in the idealism that Marxism struggles against, as a materialist understanding of society is an essential tool in the struggle to overthrow the exploitative order. At each step of the way in the history of class society, the class struggling for revolution would develop materialism to a higher level, but as they became the new exploiting class, these classes developed new forms of idealism to justify their own rule.² From these struggles, the working class has developed the modern under-

1 Unfortunately, many in U.S. leftist academic and campus circles have fallen into the trap of believing that it is oppressive to argue that there is an objective reality; this is a result of the overall growth of capitalist ruling class ideology on campuses and beyond in the past few decades. This is a trend which can be reversed and overcome, but only through revolutionary struggle to expose the reactionary character of these post-modern views and how they serve the capitalist class.

2 When the capitalist class was rising in struggle against feudal lords and the aristocracy, they developed materialism in periods such as The Enlightenment. Many important scientific discoveries and political advancements were made such as Locke’s natural rights, critique of the divine right of kings, advocacy of empirical and scientific thinking, etc.

standing of materialism with foundational work done by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, to assist in its historic task of overthrowing exploitation for good. This is because, unlike the capitalist class—which played a revolutionary role in overthrowing the feudal monarchies, but itself then became the dominant oppressive class in society—the proletariat has no class interest in oppression and exploitation.

Although Marx and Engels were the staunchest defenders of the materialist outlook, they did not hesitate to criticize where their materialist predecessors went wrong. They charged one such pioneer of materialism, Ludwig Feuerbach, with being mechanical; they noted that his mechanical views were a barrier to gaining a deeper understanding of natural processes (and by extension, social processes). Mechanical materialism treated the world as an old-fashioned clock, with simple repeating mechanics—“*it did not stress the thought process in the development of knowledge, but regarded thought merely as the object of action, as the mirror that reflects nature.*”³ In other words, mechanical materialists do not emphasize the importance of the conscious ability to engage with and transform reality. Mechanical materialism developed in large part under the influence of Newtonian Mechanics in Physics, which had tremendous success in explaining all sorts of phenomenon.

However, this scientific theory was limited in certain respects, and the materialist philosophy based on it likewise suffered from various blindspots. In particular, mechanical materialism limits us from understanding the complex interdependent relations inherent in the process of development of any thing. For example, when speaking of a simple collision it is easy to say that “pool ball A hit pool ball B and caused it move at velocity X.” However, when studying more complex dynamics, it is not possible to isolate single mechanistic causes. Instead, the reason for any one thing happening has to be under-

stood as the result of a complex series of processes. This became evident scientifically for example, with the development of biology, where many different organ systems relate in an extremely complex fashion in a single organism. Likewise, in society, events like mass movements and revolutions cannot be explained by one single cause or a mechanistic chain of simple causal events.

Given these complexities, there was a need to develop a more clear and comprehensive materialist philosophy. To do so, Marx and Engels engaged with the dialectical idealist philosophy of G.W.F. Hegel. Despite the idealist formulation of Hegel’s philosophy, his dialectical method (of analyzing the complex interrelations of things and their mutual dependence and influence in processes of development) had real materialist elements. Marx and Engels stripped the idealism from the core of Hegel’s dialectics, “flipping it on its head”, bringing materialism to the forefront. The incorporation of dialectics into materialism represented a huge step forward in its ability to understand complex processes (like revolutions) in dynamic development.

Applying this dialectical materialism to the study of human society has been essential to overcoming various absurd notions of history (whether they be views that historical developments are just chaotic or due to the “great man theory”). In their place, it has put forward what Lenin called “*a strikingly integral and harmonious scientific theory, which shows how, in consequence of the growth of productive forces, out of one system of social life another and higher system develops—how capitalism, for instance, grows out of feudalism.*”⁴ It showed us a common thread running through different societies—namely class society, its different economic stages, the overcoming of previous economic systems, and how these are bound by historical circumstances. From ancient slave society, to feudalism, and to modern capitalism; all of these systems are tied to class struggle and developed out

In contrast, today a flurry of idealist methods are used to defend capitalism now that the capitalists are the ruling class, e.g. religion, neoliberal economic theory, etc.

3 *Dialectical Materialism*, Mao Zedong – https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-6/mswv6_30.htm

4 *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism*, V.I. Lenin – <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1913/mar/x01.htm>

of class struggle. For example, the capitalists struggled against feudal lords and nobles to make a capitalist economy possible through the course of many revolutions. The present capitalist society in turn will be overcome by the fierce class struggle of the working class against the capitalist class. Thus the materialism of Marx and Engels sets the whetting stone upon which we sharpen our toolset, and this requires us to concretely analyze the society we live in to find a way forward out of this oppressive system.

What Are the Primary Forces Driving Our Society?

Ever a consistent materialist, Marx recognized that capitalist society would need to be analyzed from that same angle to discover the underlying laws that dictate its motion and development. He turned to political economy, and developed a richer understanding of it through critical engagement with the works of Adam Smith and David Ricardo as well as others.

In his magnum opus, *Capital*, Marx started from the basic unit of capitalist society—the commodity—and revealed that relations between people lie embedded within commodities. He exposed the form in which exploitation takes place in capitalist society, namely wage-labor; how only a portion of the worker’s labor time is paid as wages, while the rest is spent making profit for the capitalist. In other words, workers are paid only the bare minimum they need to survive and reproduce themselves daily (or sometimes a bit more or a bit less), and all of the social surplus they produce is taken by the capitalists in the form of profit. An essential feature of human productive activity is that it produces social surplus; we make more than the immediate bare minimum needed to survive. But under capitalism, wage-labor

is the particular manner in which the capitalists take the vast majority of this surplus for themselves and their private enrichment. Marx also showed how the expansion of capitalism inevitably leads to the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few. He shows how the massive growth of capital comes at the expense of the working class—how the greater the wealth produced in capitalist society the greater the immiseration of the proletariat—and he showed how capitalism will continually and inevitably face economic crisis after crisis due to the underlying limitations of this system.⁵

This analysis was, and remains, dangerous to the capitalist class, as it lays bare the exploitation of the working class as the foundation of the capitalist system, which had previously been hidden behind the curtain of “market forces.” This has been met with the greatest malice from the capitalist class and its ideologues, as it reveals the basic facts governing the exploitative system.

In the early 20th century Vladimir Lenin expanded Marx’s analysis of capitalism, showing that a new stage of capitalism had come into being. Lenin characterized this stage as capitalist-imperialism, where capitalism has developed to extensive degrees—encompassing the entire world. Where monopolies/oligopolies exert high levels of dominance, where the export of goods and materials has been replaced more and more by the export of investment capital (and thus developing extensive commodity production in colonies and poor countries for the profit of the imperialist countries), where finance capital has taken the front seat (fusing together the previous relatively independent sectors of banking and industry), where trusts and cartels (and more recently, multinational corporations) form across nations, and where imperialist countries have divided the world into their spheres of influence, and engage in wars of aggression at critical junctures.⁶ This has been proven true by the experience of the major and minor wars of the 20th and 21st

5 For more on the recurring cycles of economic crisis under capitalism see: https://massline.org/Dictionary/OverproductionCrises.htm#overproduction_crises

6 It is worth noting that some of the particular characteristics of imperialism have also changed in our day too, though the reactionary essence remains the same. There is a need for Marxists to provide further study and analysis of recent developments. For more see: <http://www.massline.org/PolitEcon/ScottH/LeninOnImperialism.pdf>

century⁷, and will continue to be vindicated until socialist revolutions topple the imperialist powers and smash the might of the capitalist class.

The analysis of the capitalist system with its universal characteristics, and particular dynamics in each country, has been crucial to gain an understanding of how to overcome it. If we don't even truly understand what it is we want to change, it is utterly impossible to bring about anything different. Given that we develop clarity on the particulars of our country in relation to the global picture and the capitalist system, what then is to be done?

What Is the Way Out of This System?

With capitalism's emergence, the masses have noticed its grotesque symptoms—endemic unemployment, horrible living conditions for workers, death from overwork, child labor, environmental pollution, etc. These symptoms of oppression have bred heroic resistance, but no spontaneous movement has ever been able to fundamentally change the system. In addition to the resistance, a series of utopian socialist ideas emerged that sought to build an ideal society based on rather vague and abstract principles. Although their endeavor was noble, their ideas were not grounded in a scientific analysis of reality and were (and continue to be) a dead end for the working class.

In contrast, Marx and Engels' scientific writings on socialism have taught the working class that capitalism as a system is a historical phase in the development of human society. Its existence is not eternal, and it is the historic mission of the working class to retire the exploitative order into the museums of history. Based on the study of capitalism and concrete experience in the class struggle to overthrow the system, Marx and Engels derived three basic principles governing socialism: (1) political power will be held solely by the working class and its repre-

sentatives, (2) economic transformations will be based on the principle of “to each according to their work” and (3) socialism is a dynamic and transitional era ushering in classless society where banners fly the slogan “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.”

The first principle is derived from the lessons provided by the history of exploiting classes seizing state power through the course of their revolutions (e.g. capitalists during the French Revolution) and using it to rule over the oppressed classes—the working class would need to seize state power for itself to build a new system to abolish class society. This became clear after the Paris Commune of 1871, when the French working class in Paris smashed the existing state machinery and started building a working class state. This was a necessary first step to facilitate the economic transformations of the second principle and maintain the transitional goal of the third principle as it ensured that the working class was dictating its force over the exploiting classes to usher in an era free of exploitation.

The second principle ensures that the working people receive in proportion to how much they put into society. It bases itself on the study of capitalism, specifically the overcoming of economic shackles forced by the social nature of production and private nature of appropriation (as discussed in the previous section about capitalists appropriating surplus value for themselves). Surplus appropriation will no longer be private (i.e. it will not flow into the pockets of the rich), rather it will be social and conducted in a planned manner. This surplus can then be distributed to overcome social problems such as unemployment, poor living conditions, low quality education, environmental pollution, inflation, etc.

As socialism is a dynamic and transitional stage between class society and classless society, it will have characteristics of both. For example, although the means of production will be socially owned and managed, social classes and economic differences between individuals will exist to varying degrees.

7 Check out our article in *Red Horizon* Issue 1 on the Ukraine War for an analysis of the latest imperialist proxy war between NATO and Russia for control of Ukraine.

There will be great struggles in the overcoming of various forms of inequalities, social contradictions (e.g. patriarchal, national, racial oppressions), divisions of labor, backwards workplace dynamics, etc. The bottom line though is this transition is proceeding towards the elimination of class society in all aspects of life—both socially and economically.

Such is the summation of Marx and Engels' initial exposition of the principles of scientific socialism. It is based on their concrete experience in the class struggles of their time—analyzing the successes and shortcomings and establishing knowledge on a new basis to proceed from. Although the pair would not live to see another revolution in their lifetimes, their theoretical contributions would prove to be invaluable for the international proletariat, and the Russian working class would enrich their contributions in the years to come.

Through the course of the Russian Revolution, Marxism was raised to greater heights. Lenin and other leaders of the working class defended the foundations laid down by Marx and Engels, and brought them to the masses of Russia. Working off those foundations, Lenin further developed the concept of the working class party, underscoring the need for an organized group of professional revolutionaries who take a firm proletarian stand and maintain a mass outlook. This was a necessity for the fierce class struggles raging across the world to guard against the capitulation to simple trade-union politics (which aim to reduce working class struggles to making minor gains instead of extending them to include the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist class), state suppression, and opportunists taking control due to a lack of strong working class leadership. Victory was possible through careful and persistent work of revolutionaries struggling in unity, and this was proven in October of 1917—the masses of Russia, led by the working class, had seized state power. The scientific socialist principles established by Marx and Engels were once again enriched in the class struggle and further developed. The red banner raised by the Russian working class spread like a prairie fire, inspiring and arming revolutionaries worldwide with the theory of Marxism.

Among those, would be the Chinese working class and peasantry who would raise the red flag over a land once plagued by imperialist oppression and colonial plunder.

The historical experience of the Chinese Revolution further enriched Marxism. We saw the introduction of a completely new revolutionary strategy in oppressed countries (where the vast majority of people were peasants living in the countryside), shifting focus to the rural peasantry guided by the theory of the proletariat. Mao Zedong and leaders of the working class and peasantry were able to wage a successful war of national liberation (freeing China from imperialist domination) and segue into socialist construction, developing what is known as the *New Democratic Revolution* in the process. This was a bourgeois-democratic revolution of a new character—to overthrow semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism (neocolonialism today) by uniting a broad strata of progressive classes, led by the proletariat. The New Democratic transformations carried out were led by the working class, enabling socialist forms of production and politics to take shape (e.g. collective farms, state owned industry, promotion of democratic rights such as freedom of speech, protest, press, etc.) in a country that had not developed advanced forms of capitalism. This would facilitate the transition into socialist construction quickly after the working class and peasantry seized state power. Each step along the way they strengthened the Marxist principle of truly relying on the masses, becoming one with the people, and unleashing their creative initiative to shape society.

Socialist construction in China and Russia provided us with important lessons, in particular on the question of how to remain on the road to communism. The working class of China recognized that the Russian revolution was undoubtedly defeated from within by the late 1950s. This defeat was not the result of Russian capitalists from before the revolution biding their time waiting for a perfect moment to strike. Nor was it caused by an external entity snatching power by force (e.g. foreign invasion). As mentioned previously, in socialism, there are inequalities inherited from capitalist society that will

take many decades to iron away such as pay differentials between varying forms of labor, educational and cultural opportunities in the countryside versus the cities, leadership privileges, etc. These inequalities foster individualism, careerism and other forms of bourgeois ideology which serve as fertile soil for the growth of a new exploiting class.⁸ This is what happened in the Soviet Union over the years as an elite social strata developed in the seats of power, although not without opposition from leaders of the working class. This new capitalist class started dismantling the socialist economic transformations after seizing power from within in 1956 and introduced capitalism,⁹ but continued to fly the red banner of communism. Naturally, the question of preventing the same fate in China came to the fore after this coup.

Mao and leaders of the working class, recognizing there was a “red” bourgeoisie emerging in their ranks, attempted to counter it through the *Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution* (GPCR). This revolutionary movement sought to transform the ideological and cultural sphere of society by calling on the masses to expose and criticize bourgeois ideology and its resulting policy. The call was based on the evaluation that struggle within the party was not enough and that the masses would have to carry on the class struggle throughout society. The initial call to transform the literature and arts turned into a major revolutionary upsurge that would overthrow capitalist-roaders (those taking China off the road to communism, towards capitalism) who gained considerable influence, both within the Communist Party and the government. This was an important step towards strengthening the genuine political

rule of the proletariat—to ensure, at least for a time, that the strata of the emerging bourgeoisie would not consolidate their rule and overthrow socialism from within.

The GPCR saw a mass mobilization of tens of millions of people on an incredible scale—from youth to seniors, from peasants to workers, everyone felt the great energy to study, debate and discuss the problems facing society, beyond just the threat of capitalist restoration. The masses of China were truly participating in democracy and consciously deciding the direction of their country—in production and in politics. The reverberations of this not only threw the capitalist-roaders within China off their course, but also shook the whole world. Many revolutionary movements were inspired by the Chinese people rising up, including the Black Panther Party here in the U.S. that took up important ideas from the GPCR, such as serving the people and engaging in revolutionary struggle, and put them into practice.

Despite its great successes in fending off the initial assault on socialism by the emerging “red” bourgeoisie, the GPCR was defeated in 1976 when the capitalist roaders in China launched a coup after Mao’s death. There were many complex internal and external factors involved within the process of defeat, such as the incomplete development of new revolutionary leadership, the inability of those on the left to subject rightist military officials to criticisms, student Red Guard groups overzealously targeting all intellectuals, difficulty winning over wavering middle-of-the-road forces in society and the Party, forcible state suppression following the over-

8 While the victory of the new capitalist class that develops in socialist society—and in particular right in the communist party itself—is not inevitable, the rise of these bourgeois forces cannot be prevented, only limited to various degrees. The working class and its party are not omnipotent forces, capable of instantly remaking society after a revolution. The new socialist society is stamped with the birthmark from the old capitalist society. And so, a series of long struggles have to take place to overcome not only inequalities but also the various new capitalist forces that such inequalities give rise to.

9 This included the sharpening divide between management and workers, party cadre and the masses (further isolating leadership from the people), promoting production based on the profit-producing model, increasing material incentive structures and privileges, etc. As a capitalist power, the Soviet Union was engaging in the typical antics of imperialist countries such as bullying around weaker nations, exerting economic control over them, even invading nations in the great competition to divide up the world. For a comprehensive analysis of this check out *Red Papers #7* by the Revolutionary Union: <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/periodicals/red-papers/red-papers-7/index.htm>

throw of socialist leadership, etc. However, a common thread running among these is the problem of class struggle and its persistence within socialism. As the class struggle rages on in many spheres, within the party and without, the capitalist-roaders will make advances and will face defeats depending on the strength of the socialist masses and their leadership. In China, the capitalist-roaders were able to consolidate their victories, but this provided us with many lessons. Among the important lessons we have gained from the GPCR to strengthen the revolutionary masses are: to be steadfast in struggle, to unite the broad masses of people and unleash their initiatives, to oppose the new bourgeoisie under socialism which develops right within the communist party itself, and to steer unflinchingly towards the communist road—against the constant assault from capitalism—through the proletarian transformation of all sections of society.

Through the history of the working class movement to establish and maintain socialism, we have gained an uncountable number of lessons. This progression in our understanding and drive to build a society beyond capitalism has been a result of the creative application of Marxist fundamentals by the working class internationally. The theories have been shaped in the furnace of class struggle, and are not a result of an academic theorizing on a university campus. Each step of the way, we have adhered to scientific methodology and upheld the principles we've learned from, keeping in mind the key link for socialism—class struggle.

Conclusion

In short, Marxism is the science of revolution as established by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and enriched through the history of class struggle internationally with major contributions from the likes of Vladimir Lenin and Mao Zedong. The method of Marxism is scientific because it attempts to explain the world in terms of its inner-workings, without relying on superstition or religious dogmas. And as a science, it continues to develop in light of new changes and circumstances of our exploitative world.

Where there is oppression, there is resistance. But if we don't have a sense of where we're navigating towards, our resistance to the cruel order is like desperately treading water in the sea, struggling to stay afloat but getting nowhere. We need to understand where we are, how the world around us truly works—casting aside the illusions placed by the ruling class. We need to dare to act, and to sum up the knowledge we've gained through the history of our resistance. We need to dare to struggle endlessly—towards the land of justice. Marxism is our tool for navigating the deep seas, to bring aboard the masses of people, and sail ashore together.

“Marxism comprises many principles, but in the final analysis they can all be brought back to a single sentence: it is right to rebel against reactionaries.”
—Mao Zedong



MARXISM TODAY

BY: RUTH DAVIS & PULI THEVAN



Filipino comrades celebrating the 50th anniversary of the CPP in 2018.

Today there are no socialist countries in the world (although a few pretend to be), and the U.S. ruling class treats Marxism as if it were dead. Despite this decades long period of reaction globally, there are still revolutionary movements in the world that are active and quite strong. The international communist movement develops unevenly; while there are setbacks in some locations (such as the U.S. right now where things are at a low ebb) significant advances are being made in other countries. The party or parties most advanced in their theory and practice can and should serve as inspiration for people's struggles around the world. The Communist parties in India and the Philippines are two of the most advanced today; they both are organizing among millions of people and are bringi-

ng revolutionary Marxism to life.

Unfortunately in the U.S., most people on the "left" adopt (consciously or unconsciously) a chauvinist attitude and don't think in any real sense about movements in other countries, except for in vague and contrived analogies to U.S. politics (e.g., "this politician is the Bernie Sanders of France!" etc.). The U.S. left is held back by rampant eclecticism and identity politics, which deny and distort the basic lessons of Marxism. Many supposedly Marxist groups tend to push electoral politics and see the working class as being just another identity group. In these circles, Marxism is commonly seen as an academic curiosity, a theory to advance one's career or social standing, rather than as the tool

for revolutionary change that it is.

However, it is not so difficult to get out of this quagmire. Learning from the powerful movements in India and the Philippines is one key way we can do so, as their strength and theoretical clarity can help to illuminate a way out of many of the impasses we face in the U.S. Supporting the revolutionary movements in other countries is an essential part of working-class internationalism. As Lenin put it, *“There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism, and that is—working whole-heartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle in one’s own country, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy, and material aid) this struggle, this, and only this, line, in every country without exception. Everything else is deception.”* In order to provide real support (and not vacuous social media activism) to the revolutionary movements in other countries, we must take the time to understand and learn from them.

The Communist Movement in the Philippines

The current Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) was established in 1968, when it broke from the old Communist Party. By that time, the Old Party had merged with the reformist Socialist Party in the Philippines and undergone a series of changes that liquidated the struggle into the electoral arena and pushed for adventurist actions, both of which undermined the revolutionary movement. Often in order to start out on a genuinely revolutionary path, it is necessary to break from organizations that have committed to reformism and adopted a conciliatory attitude towards the ruling class. Those who hold out hope of changing DSA from the inside (or other similar organizations)

have not taken stock of this important lesson.

Soon after the establishment of the new Party, it underwent a period of debate, theoretical study, and ideological consolidation, which helped create unity through struggle and clarify what it meant to set out a new path. Some party members carried baggage from the old Party, but despite various challenges many Party members left relatively comfortable careers so they could go among the masses in new ways and build up the revolutionary movement. In particular the Party learned from the lessons of the Chinese and Russian revolutions, as well as the then ongoing Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, and sought to apply them to their own particular context. After this period of internal struggle and ideological consolidation, the CPP carried out a systematic plan to go among the people, in particular to the countryside—from its foundation, the Party saw the central importance of joining in the people’s daily struggles and becoming one with them. By joining the peasants and other rural poor in their fight against various forms of oppression, the CPP was able to spark new forms of resistance and develop them into a larger revolutionary movement.

The Philippines is a predominantly rural country, with the majority of the population living as peasants in a semi-feudal social structure. This means they have acute struggles against the landlord class which works hand-in-glove with the local capitalist elite, as well as the big multi-national corporations which loot the country. Although the Philippines officially gained independence back in 1946, much of the economic structures today are continuations of the order under colonial rule. Millions of peasant families are impoverished by exploitative feudal rent demands, low farm wages, land-use conversion and land-grabbing, neocolonial policies that allow cheap imports from

countries like the U.S. to undermine local agriculture, and violent military operations.

The particular social and economic conditions of the Philippines have allowed the CPP to start building, to some extent, the new society for which they are fighting in liberated areas. The Party has worked to establish a base among the peasantry and indigenous people throughout the countryside, and it is building up a People's Democratic Government that enacts independent laws and practices to serve the interests of the people and encourages them to join the struggle. Within the liberated areas under the People's Democratic Government, revolutionary peasant associations have launched campaigns for agrarian reform, working to sweep away the longstanding social and economic relations of exploitation and oppression. They have reduced agricultural land rent, raised farm workers' wages, raised the compensation peas-

ants receive for their agricultural products, increased production levels (thus allowing the people to improve their standard of living), and encouraged cooperation among the peasants themselves. All of this has led to significant increases in the productivity and income of countless peasant families.

The base areas which the Party has established in the rural parts of the country serve as the beginning of a People's Democratic Government which will eventually topple and replace the present rotten and corrupt Filipino government. This new form of people's power is the collective expression of thousands of organs of political power—founded on the strength of mass organizations and with the Party's revolutionary leadership—throughout the country. As people learn about Marxism and how they can practice it in their struggles, the revolutionary spirit and consciousness of the masses rises.



People are increasingly seeing the correctness of the Party's basic political line for revolution and the need for their active participation to bring it about.

The CPP draws upon the lessons of the great revolutionary struggles of the 19th and 20th centuries to guide the movement in the Philippines. The CPP argues that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM) is the highest stage of Marxism at present, and they seek to incorporate the lessons of the class struggle summed up by these key leaders of the international communist movement—as well as others—into their struggle in the Philippines. In this context, theory is not blind dogma to be recited or regurgitated in a classroom or online social media flame wars. Instead, it is a living weapon with which to guide mass struggles and further develop the revolutionary movement. As Lenin put it, *“without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement.”*

The Philippines is not only a semi-feudal country with big rural landlords but also a country oppressed by capitalist-imperialism. Multinational corporations from wealthy countries like the U.S., China, and Japan loot the Philippines in various ways to make huge profits. At present, the Philippines is caught in the crosshairs of the competition between the two biggest imperialist bullies, the U.S. and China; as these countries compete for influence, power, and control in the Philippines, the Filipino people are subjected to even greater oppression. These imperialist powers use their

global influence and force to ensure that the Philippines economically develops in a way to suit their interests and not those of the country's people. Through imperialist control of international institutions, raw materials, intellectual property, advanced technologies, supply chains, and more, the Philippines has been made dependent on foreign multinational corporations and institutions like the International Monetary Fund—a form of neocolonial domination which keeps the people in chains and prevents the country from achieving real independence. The feudal class supports imperialist plunder and overall suppression of the masses, often getting lucrative deals from foreign corporations to plunder the resources of the country and link their semi-feudal and semi-colonial plantations up with international markets. These forces of



Active areas of the New People's Army, the military wing of the CPP.

reaction are also a target of the revolution. Struggles against them include protests and blockades of multinational corporations' efforts to extract minerals from indigenous lands, and strike and union movements in the factories run by companies like Toyota.

In a vain attempt to stop the rapid growth of the revolutionary movement, the U.S. imperialists and the ruling classes of big landlords and big bourgeois compradors—an extremely counterrevolutionary section of the Filipino capitalist class whose survival and growth depends upon imperialism and who serve as appendages of the foreign bourgeoisie—have resorted to state terrorism and outright tyranny to protect the status quo. However, their brutal attacks on the people, including regular aerial bombardment of the peasants with all sorts of U.S. made arms, have not been able to stop the growth of the revolution. On the contrary, they starkly reveal the reactionary and anti-people nature of the state. This is an important lesson for Marxists in America: while it can seem daunting to face a powerful enemy like the U.S. state, a Party with a correct line and strong links to the masses can turn every outrage, injustice, and attack on the people into an exposure of the need for revolution.

The Party is working to unite all sections of society that are opposed to rule by foreign imperialists and their domestic reactionary allies. The CPP has united a series of different groups, many of which are not Communist, like Catholic priests and small business owners; they are joined together by their shared interest in seeing the Philippines liberated from foreign domination and the rule of domestic reactionaries. The Party is raising their determination and militance in their anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, and anti-fascist struggles.

In working with progressive young people from middle-class college educated backgrounds, the Party emphasizes the need for them to go among the people, join in struggles, and transform their own class outlook. Many students and intellectuals go down to the countryside to join the movement; others get working class jobs in factories and other workplaces to organize and build up the revolutionary movement in urban areas. These people give up their lives of relative comfort in an oppressive system to join the masses and work for revolution. This has been a tremendous aid to the revolutionary struggle, as instead of getting jobs at big corporations, leaving the country to seek wealth in the U.S. or elsewhere, or working at some creepy “poverty pimp” non-profit, young progressives see the basis to join the masses in their daily struggles and bring the knowledge they have learned in universities to the aid of the revolutionary movement.

The CPP promotes this approach, drawing on Mao's view on the need for young people to go among the masses. As he put it: *“How should we judge whether a youth is a revolutionary? How can we tell? There can only be one criterion, namely, whether or not he is willing to integrate himself with the broad masses of workers and peasants and does so in practice. If he is willing to do so and actually does so, he is a revolutionary; otherwise he is a nonrevolutionary or a counter-revolutionary. If today he integrates himself with the masses of workers and peasants, then today he is a revolutionary; if tomorrow he ceases to do so or turns round to oppress the common people, then he becomes a nonrevolutionary or a counter-revolutionary.”*

Young people in the U.S. who are interested in Marxism would do well to think about this important quote, learn from the revolution in the Philippines, cast aside careerist ambitions, and join the people in their struggles.



CPI (Maoist) cadre attending a conference.

The Communist Movement in India

Like their Filipino comrades, Indian revolutionaries have also been waging a long and intense struggle. The Communist Party of India (Maoist) (CPI (Maoist)) comes from a legacy inspired by the Naxalbari uprising of 1967, a Communist-led revolt in the Naxalbari village against the feudal landlords that sparked similar uprisings all across India. The Naxalbari rebels also opposed the revisionist Communist parties (those who revised Marxism to justify capitulating to the ruling classes and giving up on the revolution) that existed at the time. These parties had taken up the parliamentary path and to this day work with the oppressors (feudal landlords, big domestic capitalists, and imperialists) against the Indian people.

Since the time of Naxalbari, the Indian Maoists have gone amongst oppressed sections of the

masses to organize, such as the working class, the peasants, and the Adivasis (term for Indian tribal groups). One longstanding stronghold is the Dandakaranya forests in central India, which spans a number of states. Like the Filipino Party, the Indian Maoists initially won the trust of the people by leading struggles on some of their most immediate and pressing problems: the land question, seizing/redistributing land from landlords, and opposing the Indian government's Forestry Department (which is something of a frontline oppressor of the indigenous people in the country).

Land is an important problem for most Indians because, much like the Philippines, the majority of the country lives as peasants under an agrarian semi-feudal economy. Most peasants are landless, and land is largely concentrated in the hands of the landlords—a problem compounded by the mass land seizures by multi-national corporations and efforts to destroy the environment for natural resources. The semi-feudal so-

cial relations in India are terrible for the Indian people but are supported by the compradors and imperialists since the landlords work with them to facilitate the plunder of the country. In this sense, the struggle to redistribute land to the peasantry and fight against displacement is not only anti-feudal but also anti-imperialist, as the Party is often fighting against some of the biggest corporations in the world working to loot and plunder the country.

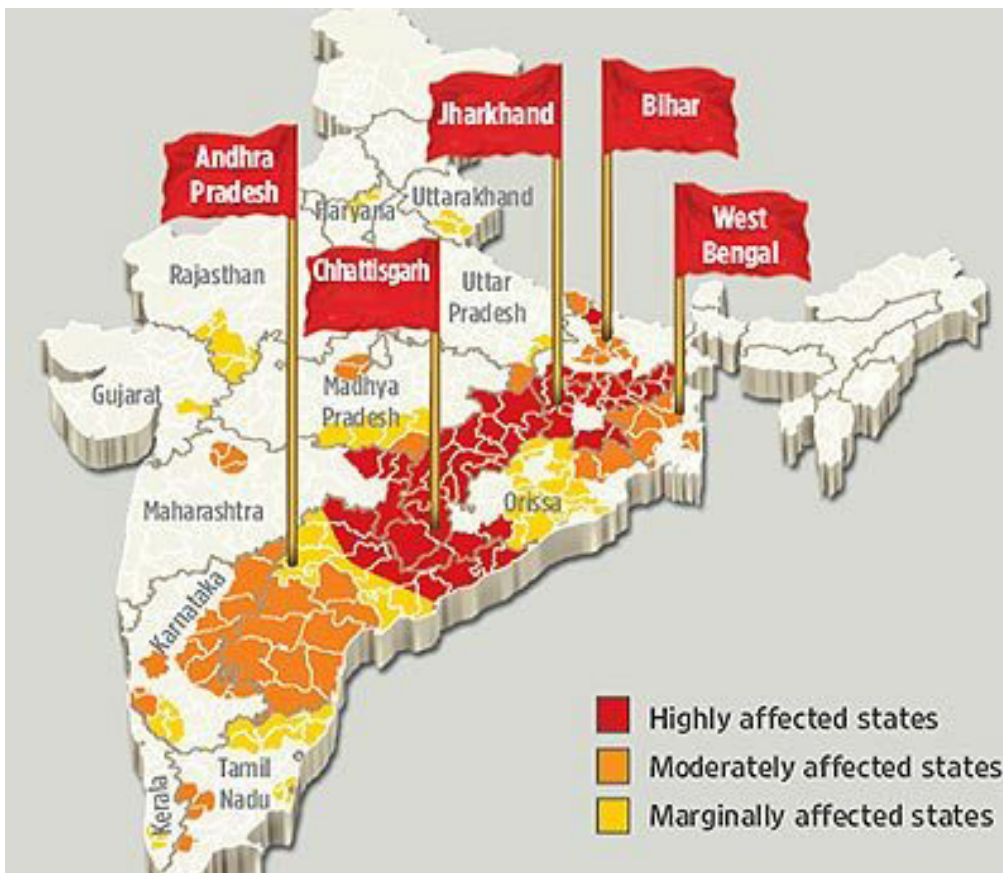
In each and every campaign—whether it be about redistributing land, demanding higher prices for the forest produce that Adivasis gather and sell to merchants, or stopping the harassment of Adivasi women by the Forestry Department officials—they link the short-term interests of the masses (e.g. to get land, to end sexual harassment, etc.) with the larger social system in India and the longer-term need for revolution to establish a new society—which ultimately eliminates the basis for such oppression.

This is related to an insight of Lenin’s: *The mass of the working people will never agree to conceive of a general ‘progress’ of the country without economic demands, without an immediate and direct improvement in their condition. The masses are drawn into the movement, participate vigorously in it, value it highly and display heroism, self-sacrifice, perseverance and devotion to the great cause only if it makes for improving the economic condition of those who work. Nor can it be otherwise, for the living conditions of the workers in “ordinary” times are incredibly hard. As it strives to improve its living conditions, the working class also progresses morally, intellectually and politically, becomes more capable of achieving its great emancipatory aims.*

This is a central lesson for Marxists in the U.S. to learn. Generally many struggles in this country either advance only economic demands (e.g. the recent “fight for \$15”), or narrowly sloganeer around the need for revolution or the need to “abolish the police” in a manner divorced from the daily economic struggles of the

masses. In the former case, advancing solely narrow economic demands allows for easy co-optation by the ruling class, which has various unions, politicians, and non-profits at its disposal to funnel mass outrage into one dead end or another. In the latter case, such slogans find minimal resonance with the masses, as the “leftists” advancing them have little sense of how to show the link between the immediate struggles of the people and larger revolutionary goals.

Districts “affected” by the Indian Maoists according to the Indian state circa 2013.



Over the past 50+ years, CPI (Maoist) has developed from a relatively small group to a huge force, leading a mass movement of tens of millions of people. As they have grown, they have faced intense state repression every step of the way. Today, the Party is effectively in a civil war with the Indian government. In a vain attempt to curtail the growth of the movement, the Indian Government (in close consultation with the U.S. military) has launched a number of different offensives against the revolutionary movement. A few years ago, then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared the Maoists to be “the greatest internal threat to security.” In promoting this label, he was alluding to former FBI-director J. Edgar Hoover’s infamous declaration that the Black Panther Party was the greatest internal security threat to the U.S. This military counter-revolutionary campaign has intensified over recent years and the government has committed new outrages, including drones strikes (using U.S. made drones) on its own population, setting up concentration camps for indigenous people, as well as the deployment of over 500,000 troops to the jungles. However, despite these challenges, the Maoists are making steady advances on the long and difficult road to revolution.

One major reason for the Party’s advancements is the Janatana Sarkar, or Revolutionary People’s Government, which the Maoists began to build in Maoist guerilla areas in Dandakaranya in the 1990s. This is the Indian counterpart to the Filipino People’s Democratic Governments. The Janatana Sarkar contains democratic bodies that have played a crucial role in mobilizing people for the revolution. The democratic bodies of the Janatana Sarkar are fundamentally different from the “democracy” of the U.S. or India. The U.S. prides itself for being a democracy with rights that many people in the world do not have. In reality the U.S. state is a well developed machine used to oppress the people

—many times for acting on the very rights they are supposed to have. And while it’s true that we have a few rights (e.g. free speech, right to assemble, etc.) these are limited in many respects (and constantly under threat), and we do not have the right or ability within the capitalist system to make decisions about which class runs society or about upending the oppressive social relations which keep the vast majority in chains. In reality, the bourgeoisie runs a class dictatorship in the U.S., where revolutionaries who challenge the fundamental nature of the system (e.g. private property, white supremacy, wage-slavery, etc.) are brutally repressed. The presence of some democratic rights does not change this, although the people are generally better off with these rights than without them.

The Janatana Sarkar, in contrast, is striving to make the masses into the real masters of society. It is a vehicle for the revolutionary transformation of the country, and this is only possible with the participation of the broad masses. For example, in every village there is an education department of the Janatana Sarkar, headed by some people of the village. In this department they discuss, debate and share feedback on the Party’s policies on education, and they work to apply these policies to their local context.

Through this approach, the Adivasis in Dandakaranya have created writing systems for their languages (which were previously only spoken), developed literacy on a mass level, and provided education about politics, science, history, and more. The success of the Janatana Sarkar in the field of education is one of numerous similar stories, as the revolutionary movement mobilizes the masses to directly tackle the problems they face. This has been possible only through the Party developing a correct line, working tirelessly to serve the people, and mobilizing the masses to take up the struggle as their own.



The masses honoring the life of a fallen comrade in front of a martyr's column, a memorial made for those who give their life to the Indian revolution.

Conclusion

The Filipino and Indian movements are an inspiration for the international Communist movement. Despite the setbacks internationally in the past half-century (for example with the restoration of capitalism in China following the coup in 1976), these Parties have held high the banner of revolution. It is incredibly important for Marxists in the U.S. to learn from these movements and understand how to apply the lessons from their successes and failures to our own situation here. While the U.S. (as a highly developed capitalist-imperialist country with the vast majority of the population residing in urban and suburban areas) is in some ways quite different from these countries, there are many general lessons we can learn from a close study of their movements. In particular, they show that it is important for those from a student background to cast aside illusions and dreams of a “successful career” within an oppressive system, and to instead go organize among the people so as to advance the revolution. Furthermore, there is a real need for people in the U.S. in particular (given this country’s imperialist pl-

under of both India and the Philippines) to stand with these movements—studying the movements closely, but also holding solidarity events, protests, and campaigns.

Most people in the U.S. are unaware that these revolutionary movements exist, so it is our duty to bring them in front of people’s eyes. International support has historically played an important role for the revolutionary movements (such as international support for the National Liberation Front during the Vietnam War). What’s more, history has shown that a successful revolution in one country provides immense impetus for the movements in other countries. For example, the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia helped to spark upsurges around the world, including through helping the founding of the Communist Party USA. Likewise, the Chinese Revolution (itself hugely influenced by the October Revolution) inspired revolutionaries from the Black Panther Party to liberation movements in Palestine and across Asia and Africa. Comrades in the U.S. today should take the time to learn more about these movements; doing so is an important step toward breaking with internalized ideas of American exceptionalism.

THE UKRAINE WAR

BY: KHALIL

The Role of U.S. Imperialism in Ukraine

The Russian invasion of Ukraine continues to make headlines and shows no sign of ending soon. The narrative of this war promoted by the ruling class—the capitalists—and their media outlets has largely absolved U.S. imperialism of any wrongdoing, portraying the war as simply one of “Ukrainians fighting for democracy” against a supposedly deranged Vladimir Putin, and thus U.S./NATO’s role is framed as a protector of democracy. Massive military aid packages to Ukraine have been approved with wide bipartisan consensus, propping up the domestic war industry. All of this and more is justified under the guise of “supporting Ukraine,” a supposedly humanitarian effort, with those who dissent or object subject to McCarthyist accusations of treason.

The truth is that the U.S. ruling class doesn’t care one bit about “supporting” the people of Ukraine, or protecting “democracy.” This war is rooted in the imperialist rivalry between the U.S., EU, and Russia. The U.S./NATO’s plan is to use the Ukraine war as a way to weaken Russia and maintain U.S. dominance of the world capitalist system. This is shown in the statements of people such as Hillary Clinton and Lloyd Austin, who have admitted that their aim is to wage a war against Russia using the Ukrainians as a proxy force,^{1 2} sacrificing them as a pawn in a global chess game between the big bullies of the world. It is not just Ukrainians

who will pay the price of this inter-imperialist conflict. For example, the rise of grain prices and drop in Ukrainian exports threaten food-importing countries such as Egypt (which imports 80% of its wheat from Russia and Ukraine) with famine.³



1 <https://www.alternet.org/2022/04/russia-proxy-war/>

2 <https://www.msn.com/en-us/tv/news/the-views-ana-navarro-calls-for-doj-to-investigate-russian-propagandists-tucker-carlson-and-tulsi-gabbard/ar-AAV2F1L>

3 <https://www.middleeastobserver.org/2022/03/31/egypts-food-crisis-pushes-the-country-to-the-edge-gpf/>

Meanwhile, mobilization against this war in the U.S. has been largely nonexistent. What little of this movement that does exist has unfortunately largely hitched its wagon to the Democratic Party, and is stuck spinning the hamster wheel of electoral politics. The majority of politicians of both capitalist parties have dutifully voted for every new aid package and made no effort to bring an end to this horrific war. Near the beginning of the war, some sections of the population were even in favor of further military action, with one poll finding 35% of people supported military action even if it risked nuclear conflict.⁴ While this belligerence has now largely given way to apathy among the general population, as the U.S. gets further involved in the war, such sentiments may rise up again. Some may not want further war, but think the U.S. should “do more to support Ukraine”—but in practice this has meant more weapons shipments and more military support, not support for a negotiations or bringing a quick end to the war.

While Russia’s invasion is an act of imperialist aggression, to lend support to the U.S. and NATO in opposition to it means supporting U.S. imperialism to fight Russian imperialism. But the interests of the people and the working class around the world doesn’t reside with either bloc. The actions of the U.S. and European ruling classes show their interests are only in “supporting” the further subjugation of Ukraine under a Western boot instead of a Russian one. What this situation desperately demands is not to side with one or the other “lesser evil” imperialist power, but to instead expose the real interests of all the imperialist gangsters and murderers, with particular focus on “our” imperialist ruling class who commit their crimes “in our name.” We must study history and the current situation, to build up a movement against U.S.

imperialism and strengthen revolutionary forces which can put an end to the capitalist-imperialist system, the subjugation and oppression of nations, and the imperialist “game” for the redivision of the world; in which Ukraine and other countries are just pawns to be sacrificed.

Background

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989-1991, the U.S. sought to expand its influence in the region by bringing newly independent countries into NATO, and has doubled its membership in the decades since. This was in flagrant violation of the promise made by then Secretary of State James Baker to Soviet leader Gorbachev in 1990 that “there would be no extension of NATO’s jurisdiction for forces of NATO one inch to the east.” NATO expansion has steadily marched eastward since then, moving military equipment into countries nearby or bordering Russia (such as Poland, Latvia, and Estonia). As far back as 2008, NATO expressed interest in incorporating Ukraine. As NATO’s borders (and U.S. military forces) have drawn ever closer to Russia’s, the fierce rivalry between the two powers has only sharpened.

Russia is especially concerned at the prospect of Ukraine joining NATO, as this would put U.S. and European military forces directly on the 1,700-mile-long border with Russia. For comparison, imagine if Mexico joined a military alliance with Russia, and Russian troops were stationed near cities like Tijuana or Ciudad Juárez. Unsurprisingly, keeping Ukraine neutral was a major demand of Russia in the months prior to the invasion.

Tied up with this military conflict is economic competition. Ukraine and Russia have extensive

⁴ <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2022/03/15/public-expresses-mixed-views-of-u-s-response-to-russias-invasion-of-ukraine/>

economic ties. Of particular importance are the gas and oil pipelines which extend from Russia, through Ukraine, and into Central Europe. These pipelines supply the central and eastern European markets with Russian oil and gas, and have helped Russia to corner a significant chunk of the market there. These pipelines play a huge

role in the Ukrainian economy, and tie them in various ways to Russia. However, the EU and U.S. have also worked in various ways to strengthen their own ties to Ukraine and keep it out of Russia's sphere of influence. For example, the EU signed an agreement with Ukraine in 2014 which, among other things, mandated

neoliberal economic reforms, made it easier for Ukrainian workers to emigrate and be used as cheap labor by European capitalists, and gave the European Investment Bank greater control over Ukraine's economy.

As a reflection of this economic and military tug-of-war, the politics of Ukraine have been characterized by power changing hands between various pro-'West' and pro-Russian lackeys, each backed by their respective power. The events of 2014—in which the pro-Russian government was ousted and replaced with a pro-EU one—are a case study in this interimperialist competition.

A look at the spread of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) after the demise of the USSR in 1989.

■ NATO country members in 1989 ■ Former USSR ■ USSR's partners in the Warsaw Pact



■ Current NATO members (2015) ■ Russia ■ Russian partners in the Collective Security Treaty Organization



Sources: NATO; Reuters

G. Cabrera, 12/02/2015

REUTERS



Euromaidan protesters in Kiev.

Euromaidan, Planting Seeds for Greater Conflict

Ukraine, like many countries in the early 2010s, was suffering through a major economic crisis and its economy was in shambles by 2013. In February 2014, the Ukrainian currency lost almost 20% of its value. The crisis had many causes—including massive government corruption and huge debts owed to foreign creditors such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Russian gas company Gazprom.⁵

In the midst of all this, the President at the time, Viktor Yanukovich, pursued closer ties with Russia. In 2010, the same year he was elected, he signed a new gas pricing deal with Russia in exchange for granting the Russian Navy a lease to use a Crimean port on the Black Sea. In addition, he decided not to sign the aforementioned EU-Ukraine deal (although this was brought back and signed after his ousting).

In late 2013, large protests known as the Euromaidan movement began forming in Kiev. They were in part sparked by the scrapping of the EU deal but were fueled by deeper mass anger at corruption, oligarchical rule, and the dire economic situation. In that situation, many people believed that joining the EU and aligning with the U.S. would bring them out of economic catastrophe and help to eliminate ubiquitous corruption. The U.S. elite, who saw an opportunity in this brewing crisis, began to work behind the scenes to channel this discontent towards their own interests of regime change.

The U.S. gave its support to the demonstrations, especially far-right and fascist elements (such as Svoboda, Right Sector, and others) to push the Euromaidan protests in an anti-government direction. U.S. and EU officials, as well as big imperialist NGOs like Open Society Foundation,⁶ aimed to reshape Ukraine's political and economic life to serve their interests. U.S. state offi-

⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26767864>

⁶ See these memos from 2016 which show contacts between billionaire George Soros' office and the State Department, showing Soros' lobbying for more U.S. pressure to further "liberalize" Ukraine's economy: <https://www.scribd.com/document/421081036/SorosNulandUkraineVisaMemosJune2016> ; <https://thehill.com/opinion/white-house/456619-george-soross-secret-2016-access-to-state-exposes-big-money-hypocrisy-of-democrats/>

cials discussed plans for a coup, including which figure would make the best U.S. puppet, in a leaked phone call.⁷ In February, protesters seized government buildings forcing Yanukovych to flee to Russia. The Ukrainian parliament deposed Yanukovych and a pro-NATO, pro-EU oligarch, Petro Poroshenko (who had been recommended by U.S. officials in the leaked call), quickly became Ukraine's new ruler.

This change in government didn't solve any of the basic issues facing the people. In fact, these only continued to worsen, as the new oligarchs led by Poroshenko acted in much the same way as the oligarchs led by Yanukovych, just facing West instead of East. Government corruption went unchecked, and new assaults on the working people were unleashed.

Soon after assuming power, Poroshenko agreed to a massive \$17 billion bailout by the IMF, and bailout deals with Russia were canned. To repay these debts, the IMF demanded that Ukraine freeze wages, raise taxes, and fire 10% of government workers. They even raised the price of oil and gas, shoving the burden of the crisis on the working people. The new oligarchs handed Ukraine and its wealth to the IMF vultures on a silver platter, and literally left the masses shivering in the cold. To shove this austerity down people's throats and secure their rule, the Poroshenko and Zelenskyy governments have intensified political repression, attacked trade unions, and banned opposition parties. In addition to harsh austerity, anti-Russian policies of the pro-West government have also fueled the backlash. The new Ukrainian government took measures to ban or restrict the use of Russian language in education and other areas of daily life, even

though Ukraine has a significant Russian minority, and many Ukrainians speak Russian as their native language.⁸

Russia, seeing Ukraine slipping through its fingers, annexed the Crimean Peninsula, and began sponsoring anti-Euromaidan groups. These and other maneuvers allowed Russia to keep its own foothold in the country, including through also backing pro-Russian separatists in the Donbass region. This led to eight years of skirmishes and battles along the border in the Donbass region. The "low-intensity" war in Donbass has killed over 14,000 Ukrainians prior to Russia's full-scale invasion.⁹ The U.S. and NATO likewise began sending billions of dollars' worth of military aid to Ukraine, and for 8 years tensions continued to simmer as most of Ukraine grew closer to the 'West' while the parts Russia annexed deepened ties with the Russian Federation.

Current War

In mid-2021 a major military build-up on the Ukrainian borders was begun by both Russia and NATO. There were no serious negotiations between Russia and the U.S./NATO to resolve the disputes and stave off the looming war. Instead, the U.S. ruling class was salivating over the prospect of provoking Russia into an invasion and bleeding them dry in an Afghanistan-esque quagmire. Then, in early 2022 Russia declared its support for independence of the "People's Republics" in Donbass. Soon after, it launched its war of aggression, first by making a move towards Kiev while also pushing out in

7 <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26079957>

8 For example, see the attempts to overturn a law which gave official language recognition to certain areas of Ukraine <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/2412584-constitutional-court-declares-unconstitutional-language-law-of-kivalovkolesnichenko.html>. As well as the 2022 Language Law passed in January:

9 https://ukraine.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/Conflict-related_civilian_casualties_as_of_31_December_2021_%28rev_27_January_2022%29_corr_EN_0.pdf



the Donbass, and later moving to consolidate territorial gains in the East and South.

Since then, the U.S. ruling class has drastically increased its military presence in Ukraine. Biden promised to keep the military aid flowing “without interruption”, and the total package is now nearly \$60 billion, which was more than the yearly expenditure in the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan, and close to Russia’s entire military budget. Meanwhile, the U.S. provides training, logistics, and intelligence to Ukrainian troops, reportedly helping them target Russian battle-ships, track troop movements, and kill Russian generals. The U.S. is doing everything but pulling the trigger.

Much of this aid is ending up in the hands of explicitly fascist, neo-Nazi forces which form the backbone of the Ukrainian military. Despite a U.S. law in 2018 which attempted to block mi-

litary aid going to the neo-Nazi Azov Battalion, they and similar forces receive large amounts of U.S. weapons and were supported long before the current war. These groups have a record of carrying out atrocities and venerating Nazi collaborators such as the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (which carried out mass murder of Jews and Poles during World War II). Many white supremacists (such as the perpetrators of the recent massacre in Buffalo and the Christchurch massacre), and other groups, cite Azov Battalion as ideological inspiration. Even worse, these groups were given official recognition by the post-2014 Ukrainian government, their leaders labeled “national heroes” and their former fighters allowed to access veteran benefits.

But while the Azov Battalion and other fascist groups are an important part of the forces on the ground, the U.S.’s effort is not reducible to

support for these groups. The decades long NATO expansionism, weapons shipments, and other attempts to break Ukraine away from the Russian sphere of influence on the part of the U.S. and its allies (in particular by supporting the 2014 coup) are part of a strategy by the U.S. imperialists to weaken and isolate Russia, including through sanctions.

On the one hand, the U.S. political and military establishment wants to drag on this war as long as possible, to bog Russia down and force it to waste time, money, and manpower in a drawn-out occupation which the U.S. can fight as another proxy war—bringing windfall profits to war profiteers in the meantime. On the other hand, the intensifying military support, involvement, and increasing provocations indicate a reckless drive among the U.S. imperialists to not only prolong the war, but potentially to bring the U.S. into direct conflict with Russia.

The U.S. has so far largely turned its nose up at negotiations. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken has not even talked to Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov since before the invasion (and have only talked once since the invasion over an unresolved prisoner exchange). Despite attempts by Zelenskyy to have peace talks with Russia, the talks so far have been deadlocked and the U.S. has shown no interest in helping reach any negotiated settlement. Instead, U.S./NATO recently held massive “war games” in Estonia, whose border is only 100 miles from St. Petersburg. Over 15,000 troops gathered to simulate a war between Russia and NATO. Inside the U.S., politicians and propagandists continue to beat the war-drum by making outlandish statements, such as calling for Putin’s assassina-

tion, calling for deployment of U.S. troops to Ukraine, or calling for the invasion to be met with the “strongest possible military response.”¹⁰ Should the situation further escalate, a direct war between the U.S. and Russia becomes more likely. This would be a Third World War between the two most heavily armed nuclear states in the world and, in all likelihood, would go nuclear. High-ranking figures from the U.S. and Russia have engaged in increasingly belligerent rhetoric, with some Russian officials explicitly threatening the deployment of nuclear weapons in the face of increasing NATO involvement in the war.¹¹ With such an ultra-hawkish atmosphere in both countries, there is an urgent need for popular opposition to the war to safeguard the interests of humanity from the reckless brinkmanship of the imperialists.

Conclusion

The war in Ukraine has once again laid bare the nature of the imperialist system, where whole countries are torn apart in the global turf war between “Great Powers.” The horrific and deadly logic of this system—which in recent history devastated countries like Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, Mali, and many others—is today on display in Ukraine. In order to garner support for the war, the U.S. bourgeoisie, in control of the internet and mass media, has broadly promoted anti-Russian sentiment and censorship of any basic criticism, shutting down social-media accounts, slandering anti-war sentiment as traitorous or “pro-Putin”, and even advocating for criminal investigations for those who question U.S. foreign policy,

10 <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/02/world/europe/pelosi-ukraine-russia-sanctions.html>

11 For example, threatening the deployment of nuclear weapons if Finland and Sweden join NATO <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russia-warns-baltic-nuclear-deployment-if-nato-admits-sweden-finland-2022-04-14/>; as well as comments by a member of Russia’s parliament that it would only take 4 missiles to destroy both coasts of the U.S. <https://nypost.com/2022/05/31/russian-alexei-zhuravlev-threatens-us-destruction-with-missiles/>

even among the ruling circles.¹²

Despite the difficulties and onslaughts of pro-imperialist propaganda, the current situation offers new openings to advance revolutionary politics. There is a need to expose the maneuvers of the U.S. imperialists, their games of military brinkmanship, and the growing danger of a world war, to show to people the reactionary and destructive interests of the ruling class and the government, the rottenness of the imperialist system, and the need to organize for revolution.

Even the so-called “progressive” politicians such as AOC, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley, and Rashida Tlaib have exposed themselves as careerists and lackeys of U.S. monopoly capitalists as they all toe the line, voting in favor of the military aid packages to Ukraine. This has long been the practice of these charlatans, who rotate who votes for unpopular, reactionary measures (e.g., funding the Zionist regime of Israel, voting down proposals to raise the minimum wage, giving an extra \$2bn to fund Capitol Hill police, etc.) in order to protect their future political careers and preserve their images as beacons of progressive change when in fact they are nothing more than an essential cog in the Democratic Party machine.

Mass mobilizations and protest movements have time and time again been co-opted by the system. However, there remains sections among the masses—including students, peace activists, libertarians, genuine progressives, and others—who are fed up with the militaristic drive towards greater war, who are not cheering for the war machine; and who can be united with in various ways to build up renewed popular opposition to U.S. imperialism in Ukraine and elsewhere.

Learning from our past, the masses in the U.S. have a rich history of militant opposition to the wars of the ruling classes. This rich legacy must be learned from in order to oppose the imperialist wars of the present and future. During the First World War, anti-war activists and revolutionaries bravely spoke out, facing the threat of imprisonment, against the efforts of the ruling class to have them fight and die in the European trenches. When the U.S. imperialists waged their genocidal war in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, hundreds of thousands resisted the draft, organized militant demonstrations, and supported the revolutionary struggles for national liberation.

While small in number today, the opposition that does exist, however embryonic, must be seized upon to build up wider resistance and develop revolutionary consciousness. For a new movement to emerge, we must get creative, look for connections outside the typical circles, and not be afraid to speak out and go against the powers that be. Only the people, through organization and mass resistance, can save the people. With a Third World War at our doorstep, the need to unite and forge a strong people’s movement is as urgent as ever.

“Capitalism has grown into a world system of colonial oppression and of the financial strangulation of the overwhelming majority of the population of the world by a handful of ‘advanced’ countries . . . And this ‘booty’ is shared between . . . powerful world plunderers armed to the teeth . . . , who are drawing the whole world into their war over the division of their booty.”
—V.I. Lenin

¹² <https://www.msn.com/en-us/tv/news/the-views-ana-navarro-calls-for-doj-to-investigate-russian-propagandists-tucker-carlson-and-tulsi-gabbard/ar-AAV2F1L>



WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

BY: SEBASTIAN ARROYO



Introduction

With so many political pundits, mass media anchors, and so-called “experts” regurgitating anti-communist propaganda about what socialism is, it can get confusing to really get to the bottom of what socialism actually means. Is it when a government implements some form of social welfare? Or when big businesses are regulated or put under state ownership? At its core, socialism requires the revolutionary overthrow (led by the working class) of the big capitalists and the

government. This overthrow puts the people in a position to build a new society, and to work together to break every chain that binds and oppresses them. Despite distortions (both past and present) of socialism and Marxism, we have a wealth of genuine revolutionary history and theory established and developed by Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, V.I. Lenin, Mao Zedong, and the respective class struggles of their time readily available that can point the way out of this muddle.¹

Social Revolution

In the U.S., the two main opposing classes are the working class and the big capitalists. Although the U.S. government, state, and politicians claim to work in the interest of everyone and promises “freedom” for all, in actuality, they instead serve the interests of the super-rich capitalist class and guarantee freedom for the capitalists to pursue profit and preserve the power of private property. The tools that are used to benefit the capitalists oppress the masses, and history shows that the people can’t use those tools to truly liberate themselves. Instead, the American working class, given its position in society as being a class which has a complete interest in ending capitalism, must unite and lead all progressive classes and forces as allies, while spearheading the revolution for a new society. The working class will have to topple the big capitalists and become the new ruling class which will govern society and defend the interests of the toiling masses instead of the rich few.

¹ Marxism isn’t solely relegated to the confines of the past, but is actually being put into practice to this day. Contemporary attempts at Marxist-Leninist-Maoist revolution are notably being waged and ongoing in Turkey, the Philippines, India, and elsewhere.

It's important to understand that making socialism a reality will require a revolution. In this context, the revolution for socialism will consist of overthrowing the government and its state (courts, armed forces, laws, etc.). Subsequently, the revolution will establish a socialist state, run by and for the masses of people. It would be a mistake to think that the rich and powerful would be willing to give up their power, wealth, and control of society voluntarily. We have seen time and time again how they seek to stomp out any movement by the people that threatens their class position. We need only look back at how the FBI's COINTELPRO program violently repressed not only revolutionaries, like Fred Hampton of the Chicago Black Panther Party or the Revolutionary Union/Revolutionary Communist Party, but also more moderate civil rights and anti-Vietnam War activists. So there is a need to smash their power and overthrow the capitalist class; they can't be voted out of power through elections or asked nicely to leave.

Classes and Class Struggle Still Exist

“Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people, one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.”

[V.I. Lenin, *A Great Beginning*, 1919]

After the revolution, the working class will have gained the upper hand and become dominant in society. As opposed to the workers living un-

der the dictatorship of the capitalist class, the workers will now rule over the capitalists and subject them to what Marx called the dictatorship of the proletariat—allowing society to finally deeply wrestle with various inequalities and facilitate the construction of a new socialist society; in due course, ushering in the dissolution of classes in communist society. The revolution will have smashed the old capitalist state and established a new form of government, which lays the foundation for the further revolutionary transformation of society and also defends against the capitalists' efforts to regroup and reorganize for counter-revolution. Hence the dictatorship of the proletariat (over the capitalists as a class) is also a form of democracy for the masses, in new ways which are impossible under capitalism.

The initial overthrow and defeat of the capitalist class is a major step in clearing the path toward overcoming all inequality, but their defeat doesn't mean that classes, class struggle, and certain class (and other related oppressive) ideas have been eliminated. Nor does it mean that the development of socialism will be smooth sailing. There will still be a capitalist class and a working class competing for power.

Although the old, formerly established capitalists will no longer be riding on the backs of the people and living off of their labor, many of them, along with new and aspiring capitalists, will desire to bring back the old society so that they can rule and live lavishly at the expense of others once again. Some of these die-hards will crop up within the Communist Party itself and promote policies and ideas that are contrary to the revolution and appeal to the middle forces in society to take the country down the path of capitalism. The emergence of these counterrevolutionaries is tied up with the fact that socialism develops from capitalism and, for a time, retains some of its defects. In this case, it is spe-

cifically the aspect that differing circumstances among individuals allows for some to accrue unfair amounts of personal property and the resulting privileges, influence, and advantages that come with it. This “higher status” is the impetus for a new capitalist class to emerge within the Party to revert socialism back to capitalism. In both the USSR and China, there was a capitalist takeover (1956 and 1976, respectively) which immediately began rolling back the gains of the people; all the while falsely claiming to still be “socialist.”

This situation calls for the mobilization of the Communist Party and the broad masses to be vigilant in exposing and opposing these attempts by the new and old capitalists to blunt the sharp edges of revolution. This includes the need for the masses to criticize the Party when it has erred and for the Party to earnestly give thought to those criticisms in order to forge a new path forward. Not only this, but the Party and the masses must work hand-in-hand in differentiating between genuine counterrevolutionaries (and suppressing them), and enlightening those middle forces who have a real interest and support in socialism but may be unclear toward the old and oppressive ideas they hold from capitalism and class society generally (e.g. relying on bureaucratic methods of work which can be redressed through discussion, debate, and going

among the people to investigate what methods are really needed).² These are a few ways how the class struggle continues to play out in socialism.³

The Struggle Against Old Ideas and Inequality

In the U.S., racism, sexism, and other oppressive ideas are propped up and perpetuated by the capitalists and their politicians to their own benefit—in that these ideas keep the people fighting amongst themselves as opposed to against the capitalists. The capitalists preserve a tiered and divided society in order to encourage the masses who are higher up on the totem pole to think that because they’re better off than those below them, life is good in general. In the long run, despite having higher status and benefits, these various sections actually have an interest in ending the current system and fighting alongside those that are in a lower position. This is because in order to create a truly egalitarian, just, and reliable society, all sections of the masses must be placed on equal footing.

Although some sections of the masses do take up oppressive ideas to various degrees, uniting in the revolutionary struggle allows for the overcoming of those ideas to an extent. However,

2 Middle forces which, on one hand may be enthusiastic about socialism and make great contributions, but on the other hand, due to misconceptions or confusions about socialism, have been impelled to take the capitalist road or have done so mistakenly. It is imperative that these middle forces are ideologically struggled with in order to reach political clarity to “cure the disease [and] save the patient”; and to be allied with against those who seek to “revise” the basic principles of Marxism and extinguish revolution.

3 The fight against these forces will be difficult, but not impossible. China’s experience during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) showed that through the initiative of the masses, corrupt government officials can be held accountable and ousted when rightly demanded by the masses. For example, in Shanghai there was a mass movement known as the January Storm (1967) which saw an alliance of 32 rebel organizations, comprised of revolutionary workers and students, take initiative and not only oust the local corrupt Party committee, but also criticize factory managers who implemented policies which stifled the workers’ drive and enthusiasm to build socialism. Compare this to today’s political system and workplaces! It should be noted, however, that although the GPCR pulled back the curtain and revealed how to keep society on the revolutionary road after the overthrow of the capitalists, it is a complex subject with much to learn from which can’t be covered in its entirety in this article.

certain oppressive ideas will still continue on in socialism to various degrees as well; but with the establishment of socialism, the door to eliminating these ideas through rigorous discussion and debate is swung wide open. Breaking the power of the capitalist class, which is the ultimate source of these oppressive ideas, allows the working class and other progressive classes to unite in the struggle to uproot and overcome backwards ideas among the people to an ever greater extent.⁴

Presently, the capitalist class and their politicians do all they can to divert the struggle against various forms of oppression into the dead-ends of electoralism and reformism (e.g. the recent anger over the Roe v. Wade reversal was used by the Biden administration as a fundraising and campaigning device for the Democratic Party), promoting the illusion that overcoming issues like police brutality and abuse of women is possible without also overthrowing the capitalist class and their state. As long as there is a capitalist class that thrives on the division of the masses, they will continue to perpetuate different oppressions; in one form here, and another form there—regardless of how much lip service the capitalists pay to supposedly opposing one form or another of oppression.

The movement for reforms under capitalism may lighten the load in some respects but, again, it is only with the complete smashing of capitalism and the capitalist state that socialism and a working class state can be set in place which aims to actually end all forms of oppression.

Collective Labor and Social Surplus

Since the early days of humankind, we've used tools to aid in the production of the things we use and consume every day such as shelter, food, clothes, medicine, etc. As those tools have improved throughout history the overall productivity of labor (e.g. the amount of goods that can be produced in a given time) has increased substantially. These conditions have led to a situation where society as a whole is able to produce amounts far above and beyond what is immediately needed to simply reproduce the existing society as it is. This extra product is known as social surplus.

In socialist society this surplus is used in the interests of the masses and becomes socialized (in capitalism it is largely pocketed by a handful of billionaires). It is used to raise the living stan-

⁴ For example, before the socialist revolution in China, women were in a deep state of subjugation. Forced marriage, no access to education, no political or economic rights, and foot-binding were a few of the heinous injustices done to them at the time. The struggle against these practices was an essential part of the Chinese Revolution. During the course of this struggle overcoming key aspects of patriarchal oppression allowed for broader and more substantive participation of women in the revolutionary struggle. However, after the complete liberation of China in 1949, it was possible to advance this struggle in new ways. A nationwide movement to promote new marriage practices (in which men and women were equal) was launched, struggles against the sexual division of labor in childcare began, and more. However, despite these gains, there were still old ideas about women that prevailed. Many men and women still thought that household work such as raising children, cooking, and cleaning were primarily the duties of women, which limited how involved women could be in politics and leadership of the revolutionary struggle. In response to this, local mass initiatives were undertaken to convince people who still held patriarchal beliefs differently. The Women's Federation of Hopeh (a province in northern China) launched a province-wide campaign during the GPCR which sought the "establishment of year-round nurseries and kindergartens, along with agitation for the idea that men should share in household chores" in order to allow women great opportunities to study revolutionary theory, attend political meetings, and to lighten the load of work placed on them. This is just one example of how, after the overthrow of the ruling class, it is possible to advance the struggle against all forms of oppression in new and dynamic ways (*Evaluating the Cultural Revolution in China and its Legacy for the Future*, 2007).

dards of the masses, repair/replace/expand the tools used in production, provide funds for relief from natural disasters, accidents, etc., provide funds for those who are unable to work, pay out wages, and overcome inequalities which are inherited from capitalism (such as lack of access to resources in urban slums and poor rural areas). The surplus of product created by society will no longer be privately owned by the capitalist class nor will production be at the whim of the profit motive (e.g. capitalists only building transportation infrastructure if they can get richer off of it or if the state subsidizes their construction of it, which in turn allows them to get richer off of it), thereby allowing for the resolution of issues such as environmental damage or for the production of goods that the people need, but aren't profitable.

Actually, with socialism comes the need for a larger social surplus and thus expanded production, which capitalism can't provide because production is only carried out insofar as it is profitable for the capitalists (and thus they avoid expanding production too much even when many are in need of basic necessities); we can see some of the issues with and limitations of capitalist production in the incredible waste in capitalist society which exists side-by-side with the extreme poverty and want that so many live in. Socialism will allow us to direct and expand production according to social need. As Friedrich Engels put it, “. . . *expanded production, which for the present order of society is overproduction and hence a prevailing cause of misery, will then be insufficient and in need of being expanded much further. Instead of generating misery, overproduction [in socialism and communism] will reach beyond the elementary requirements of society to assure the satisfaction of the needs of all; it will create new needs and, at the same time, the means of satisfying them.*”⁵

Socialism is a Lengthy Period of Transition to Communism

“And now as to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists, the economic anatomy of classes. What I did that was new was to prove: (1) that the existence of classes is only bound up with the particular, historical phases in the development of production, (2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat [aka socialism] (3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society [aka communism].”

[Karl Marx, *Letter to J. Weydemeyer*, 1852]

Politicians and news anchors who tout “socialism” as simply being a government that provides welfare or regulates the free market completely miss the point. As Marx explains in point 3 above: socialism is a *temporary transitional* phase between capitalism and communism—the later society where classes, private property, money, and profit are absent.

This transitional period is akin to preparing a plot of land that will have a structure built on it. The land has to be cleared and remolded, and a firm foundation has to be laid to allow the structure to have a stable base. But just like the process of constructing a building, socialism won't automatically turn into communism at the snap of a finger. Communism requires that people labor not only to get something in return but, ultimately, that people see their labor and their lives as deeply tied up with the whole of humanity in one common struggle, once classes are overcome. The laying of a foundation for

5 *Principles of Communism*, 1847

communism is one which happens over many generations and rightly earns the designation of being a historical era.

The Struggle for Socialism, Today

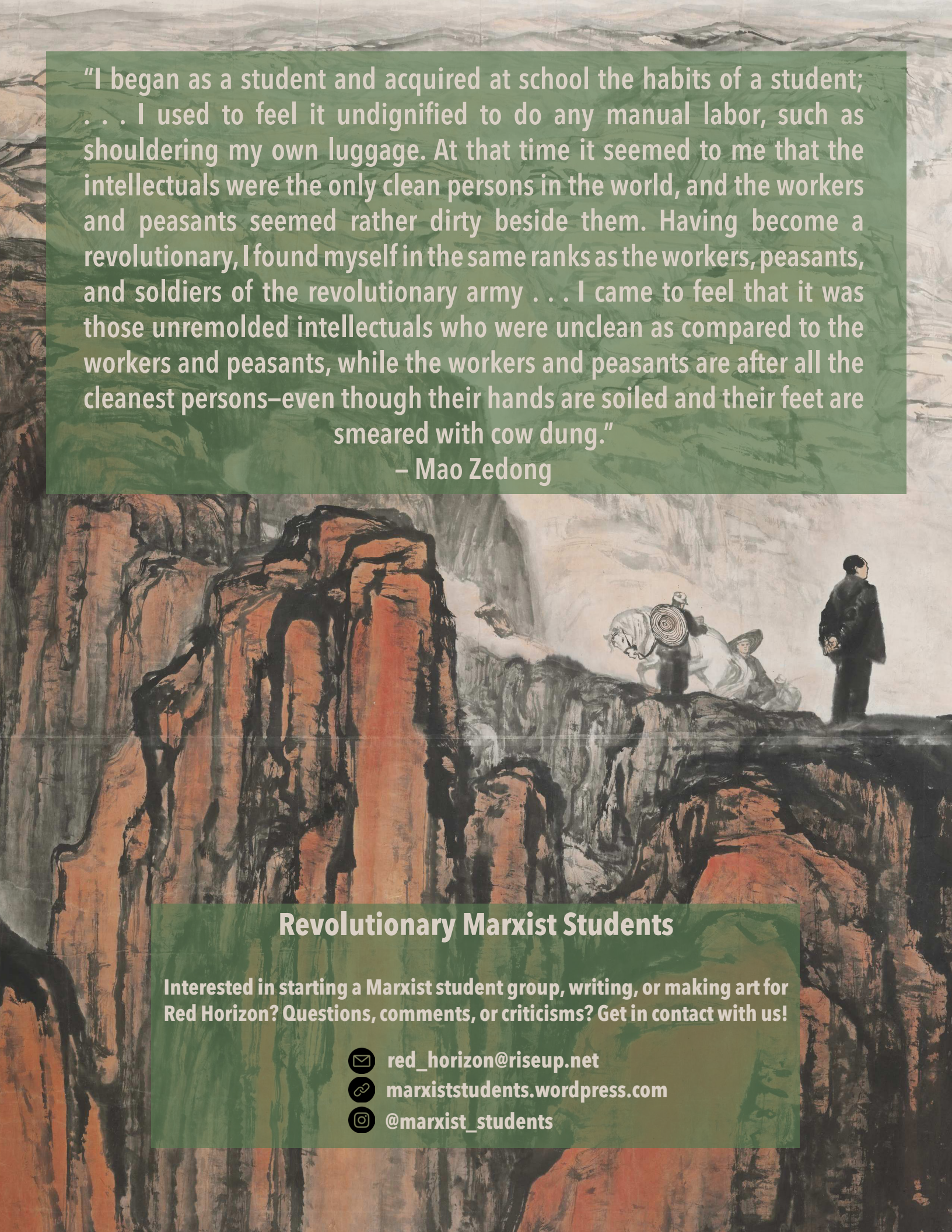
“How should we judge whether a youth is a revolutionary? How can we tell? There can only be one criterion, namely, whether or not he is willing to integrate himself with the broad masses of workers and peasants and does so in practice. If he is willing to do so and actually does so, he is a revolutionary; otherwise he is a non-revolutionary or a counter-revolutionary. If today he integrates himself with the masses of workers and peasants, then today he is a revolutionary; if tomorrow he ceases to do so or turns round to oppress the common people, then he becomes a non-revolutionary or a counter-revolutionary . . . when we assess a person and judge . . . whether he is a true or false Marxist, we need only find out how he stands in relation to the broad masses of workers and peasants, and then we shall know him for what he is. This is the only criterion, there is no other.”

[Mao Zedong, *The Orientation of the Youth Movement*, 1939]

With issues like catastrophic wars, environmental destruction, and rising cost of living, capitalism is sinking like a ship with too many holes to plug, a ship which threatens to take humanity down with it, into a state of barbarism. We must wake up from our deep (social media, distraction, and drug induced) sleep to realize that it is only by integrating deeply with the masses and their struggles against capitalism, and bringing the light of revolution to them, that a revolution can be waged to overthrow the capitalist class which oppresses us and holds back the wheel of progress. To put our faith in politicians or corporate figureheads who proclaim empty promises about making life better through this or that policy, this or that technological invention, is to

keep falling for the same old fool’s gold. Similarly, putting our hopes in trying to land a good career does nothing to move society as a whole forward or prevent those with higher-paying jobs from getting pushed down into poverty during times of economic crisis. The widespread nature of this “me first” attitude (often justified in one way or another by various forms of liberal politics) is a very corrosive form of capitalist ideology among students at present.

Instead, students and the youth must leave the supposedly isolated confines of college and put our feet on the ground. This means to go among the working class and other oppressed groups, investigating the conditions of their subjugation in light of revolutionary Marxism to gain an understanding of the world around us, joining in the people’s struggles in light of this theory, and raising the masses’ current political consciousness to one that recognizes the ultimate necessity to overthrow the capitalists. In order to do this we must simultaneously dare to reshape our own thinking and swim against the tide that coerces us to “sit down and listen up.” We must dare to think, dare to act, and dare to win.



"I began as a student and acquired at school the habits of a student; . . . I used to feel it undignified to do any manual labor, such as shouldering my own luggage. At that time it seemed to me that the intellectuals were the only clean persons in the world, and the workers and peasants seemed rather dirty beside them. Having become a revolutionary, I found myself in the same ranks as the workers, peasants, and soldiers of the revolutionary army . . . I came to feel that it was those unremolded intellectuals who were unclean as compared to the workers and peasants, while the workers and peasants are after all the cleanest persons—even though their hands are soiled and their feet are smeared with cow dung."

– Mao Zedong

Revolutionary Marxist Students

Interested in starting a Marxist student group, writing, or making art for Red Horizon? Questions, comments, or criticisms? Get in contact with us!

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