

What the CWP is Copying and What It Is Not

Imitation, goes the old saying, is the highest form of flattery. Aping, on the other hand, is a different matter. And the recent splurge of mimicry of the RCP by the Communist Workers Party (CWP) only leads to suspicions about what these folks are up to. At the very least, these are none too creative people. Coinciding with their efforts to reflect a fun house mirror-distorted image of the RCP are numerous, and quite obviously intentional, instances of the bourgeois media confusing the two.

Now the RCP has no objection to copying, if they are really trying to copy our revolutionary line and practice. If someone were honestly trying to do this—no problem—we'd seek to unite. But unfortunately that is not the case with the CWP. Their persistent reformism and flights of obstreperous dogmatism have nothing in common with the line of the Party. All that they imitate are particular phrases and bits and pieces of analyses, which are torn out of their context. So one is led to speculate on what other purpose motivates their little burlesque. For instance:

Over the past year the RCP has begun to emphasize the leadership role and contributions of Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Party's Central Committee, as a representative and concentration of the Party's revolutionary line and leadership. Comrade Avakian's picture has appeared in numerous Party publications and on a nationally distributed poster around the government's legal attacks focused on him.

This May the CWP began advertising the General Secretary of its group, a Mr. Jerry Tung, well known for representing and concentrating many things, but not a revolutionary political line. Quotations from Mr. Tung on important matters featured in their newspaper, and his picture adorns the fly leaf of their rebaptized theoretical journal.

In January 1979 the RCP began to stress the crucial importance of the decade of the '80s, with its prospects for war and revolution. "If you liked the '60s, you'll love the '80s," we said. At the beginning of 1980 the *RW* printed an important statement by Bob Avakian entitled: "1980: A Year, A Decade of Historic Importance." (This was reprinted as a pamphlet.)

At the end of January 1980 the CWP began to talk about the 1980s as a decade of fascism, war and revolution. In May the CWP renamed its theoretical journal *The 80s*. In June the CWP announced a special forum with Jerry Tung on the topic, "Which Way Forward for the '80s?"

Early January 1980. In articles in the *RW* (No. 35) and *Revolution* on the CWP, the RCP noted (among other things) their virtually complete failure to include the prospect of inter-imperialist world war in their analysis of the coming period. We pointed out that only a new redivision of the world following the winning of such a war (or from the opposite side, successful revolution) could resolve the present imperialist crisis, and not a new New Deal, as the CWP was putting forward.

January 21, 1980: A front page editorial in the CWP newspaper puts forward their new line: The U.S. can only escape from economic crisis through war.

In late 1979, building for the historic actions of May Day 1980, the RCP put forward the statements and questions of the advanced section of the working class: "We will march on May 1, taking history into our hands, serving the highest interests of our class. Where will you be? What will you be doing? Who will you be serving?"

May 1980: The CWP issued a poster, the importance of which was stressed in their newspaper. The first slogan featured on the poster: "What will you do and which side are you on?" The same slogan is frequently featured in their articles.

March 1980: the RCP issued a new draft *Programme* and draft *Constitution*. They are made necessary by the changing situation and reflect the understanding that revolution in the U.S. is a real possibility in the 1980s. Thus, the draft *Programme* contains a concrete summation of what such a revolution will mean, a description of how socialism will resolve the burning contradictions of imperialism.

May 1980: A prominent part of the CWP's poster, under the heading of "Revolutionary Socialism is the Only Solution," is a description of how socialism will provide jobs for all, universal education up to college, equal pay for equal jobs for women, the strengthening of marriage and home life, and give every family its own home. (They forget to mention a chicken in every pot and two cars in every garage. They deny the poster was copied from a recipe for goulash.)

Thursday, May 1, 1980: Militant demonstrations erupt in cities across the country, fighting their way through attacks by police and cop-organized reactionaries, as thousands of workers and other advanced forces, as a core of the class-conscious proletariat, leap onto the stage of history. In building for May Day, 800 revolutionaries are arrested in cities all over the country. The eyes of millions are focused on this historic event. On several occasions the press identifies actions by the RCP and the May Day Brigades as CWP demonstrations.

June 9, 1980: The CWP, which had done nothing on May 1st (declaring afterwards that May Day has been "a solemn occasion to review our forces"), features a letter in the centerfold of their newspaper from a reader who talks of having just become acquainted with the CWP and then asks: "Did you happen to see the picture in the *L.A. Times* covering the May Day rally? Those two fucking guys that looked like marines with T-shirts on that said 'Commie Killers'?" The CWP does nothing to correct the impression that May Day demonstrations had something to do with them.

Of course, such instances of political pickpocketry are nothing new for the CWP. In October 1978, after waging a massive campaign throughout the country in defense of Mao Tsetung and the Four, the RCP announced a "Mao Tsetung Enrollment" for revolutionary fighters to step forward and apply for membership in the Party. Months later, after keeping their line on Mao and the revisionist coup in China secret for as long as possible, the CWP announced its own "Mao Tsetung Enrollment." And when the RCP issued the call to "Turn D.C. Upside Down" in the battle to stop the railroad of Bob Avakian and to free the Mao Tsetung Defendants, the CWP followed a little while later with their slogan, "Turn the Country Upside Down."

At the very least you can fairly draw the conclusion that this group is consciously trying to confuse the masses of people about themselves and the RCP. What else they have in mind will bear careful watching. □