

The publication of the policy article by Chinese Defense Minister, Lin Pao, is an event of great importance. This article evaluates the relationship of forces in the world. It formulates the main strategic task of Marxist-Leninists in this period. It strikes crushing blows against bourgeois pacifism, defeatism and revisionism. It offers hope to the people of the U.S. by discussing the forces we can work with to destroy U.S. imperialism and stop the horrible crimes it is committing in Viet Nam, the Congo, in Los Angeles, Mississippi and the Dominican Republic. The U.S. working class and its allies, the Afro-American liberation movement and its allies, will move toward stronger alliance with the oppressed peoples of the world and will wage greater struggles against the monsters ruling and ruining our country.

The editorial board of HAMMER & STEEL believes that this statement, based on the teachings of Mao Tse-tung, fills a great need in the world Marxist-Leninist movement. Its creative study will aid Marxist-Leninists in all countries in developing their own specific objectives. This article will enable Marxist-Leninists in all countries to make greater theoretical contributions to the world Marxist-Leninist movement.

Some present "equality" in the Marxist-Leninist movement in an abstract way. Equality for Marxist-Leninist organizations means standing on their own feet ideologically and organizationally; it means that every Marxist-Leninist is equally responsible to do his or her utmost for the common cause. Because capitalism develops unevenly some Marxist-Leninists have experiences and opportunities that others do not. Therefore it is impossible for equality to have real meaning unless some comrades and some parties have leading responsibility.

Some comrades pretend that the Chinese Party has no such responsibility, or if it does it should be discussed only in the closet. The publication of Lin Pao's article should help dispel the non-objective fog of abstract equality and let in the sunlight of real equality--equality designed for the maximum contribution to Marxism-Leninism by each person and organization regardless of the different conditions faced.

There are other great Marxist-Leninist Parties making important theoretical contributions as well as the CPC. They will be the first to say that study of the Chinese experience and contributions is helpful to further strengthening all Marxist-Leninist organizations. The CPSU failed to recognize the significance of the Chinese Socialist revolution and its impact on other oppressed peoples. The CPSU could not, therefore, understand the changes in the world relationship of forces and the elevation of the Chinese Party to a position of vastly greater responsibility in the world Marxist-Leninist movement. This led to many other serious errors by the CPSU. If the logic of the above still does not appeal to every reader we suggest they consider which Party has the special hatred of the main enemy of all peoples, U.S. imperialism.

The above remarks are a brief restatement of our position in our newsletter No.2, Feb., 1965. Some claiming to be Marxist-Leninists are not reaping the full benefit of Chinese theoretical contributions because they do not understand the special responsibility of the CPC in the ideological field. Those in capitalist countries who are most emphatic about denying the role of the CPC or soft-pedaling it or playing the question "real cute" are the first to fall victim to U.S. imperialist propaganda about "Chinese expansion." They have the greatest difficulty breaking with revisionism ideologically.

Some Marxist-Leninists are hesitant about recognizing the role of leadership in the international Marxist-Leninist movement because of negative experiences with the CPSU when that Party occupied a position of special responsibility in the world Marxist-Leninist movement. The benefits from the CPSU's leadership in that period were great. But we should learn from the mistakes. It was not helpful to Marxism-Leninism that the CPSU often made unilateral decisions on whose articles were to be published in international magazines when controversy existed within a Marxist-Leninist Party or between Marxist-Leninist Parties. This explains in part the lack of theory and the dearth of theoreticians in the West. Theory and theoreticians develop in struggle. Take away the opportunities for, and practice of, ideological struggle and the result is little theory and few theoreticians.

Denial of the special role of the CPC is harmful to Marxist-Leninist theory. We also repudiate the idea that polemics should be used only against Soviet revisionists. Sometimes the idea is put like this: "You lack sufficient forces. Your struggle against revisionism must concentrate on the CPSU leadership and the Gus Hall clique." True, the CPSU leaders, because they attempt to speak in the name of the October Revolution and Lenin, are most dangerous exponents of revisionism. But the CPSU leaders are not the source of revisionism—that source is capitalism in its imperialist stage. Sole attention to the CPSU and Gus Hall would mean tendencies to ignore the international aspect of revisionism and its danger in all countries.

U.S. imperialism, as Gus Hall's groveling before the Johnson administration becomes more obvious and farcical, needs revisionists who claim to be pro-Chinese and pro-Albanian. Such people are active in New York City and on the West Coast helping U.S. imperialism expose revolutionaries. They say, "Our clubs are open Party clubs in the community and we are open Party members." (Progressive Labor, May-June edition).

Lin Pao's article is a hammer blow at Soviet revisionism in the first place and a solid blow against revisionism in all countries. His article proves that real differences can only be resolved by involving the masses. Recent experience again teaches us that serious disagreement between Marxist-Leninists cannot be resolved only by top level conferences. Taking issues to the peoples strengthens Marxism-Leninism.

Lin Pao says, "The peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and other regions can destroy it (U.S. imperialism) piece by piece, some striking at its head and others at its feet." Very good, but what about the solar plexus? We believe this section should cite the importance of Afro-American liberation struggles.

PEKING REVIEW has done an excellent job upholding Marxism-Leninism on most questions. It has refuted all those, including those in China, who deny the universal value of Mao Tse-tung's teaching. It has correctly portrayed Mao as a great contemporary leader continuing the revolutionary tradition of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. We cannot, however agree with the line of PEKING REVIEW on Afro-American liberation.

Statements in PEKING REVIEW concerning Afro-American struggles have appeared on the basis of talks with Robert Williams. Robert Williams participated in an important, but limited, liberation struggle in North Carolina. He has correctly upheld the right of Afro-Americans to defend themselves with arms. He does not claim to be a Marxist-Leninist. Yet the statements in PEKING REVIEW give the impression that they are a result of discussions between Marxist-Leninists from the U.S. and China. The efforts of U.S. Marxist-Leninist on Afro-American liberation are never discussed in PEKING REVIEW. We refer to the writings of Wm. Z. Foster, James W. Ford and Harry Haywood when the latter upheld Marxism-Leninism.

Most of the people from the U.S. that PEKING REVIEW quotes are middle class professional people who have little knowledge of the working class in our country and its revolutionary efforts in theory and organization.

PEKING REVIEW maintains that the Afro-American question is primarily one of "racial discrimination." We believe this is in contradiction to Mao Tse-tung's teachings on the national democratic revolution, to Lin Pao's article and to the CPC's pamphlet, "A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the Communist Movement." This pamphlet identifies as harmful tendencies by people who "are trying their best to efface the line of demarcation between oppressed and oppressor nations and between oppressed and oppressor countries and to hold down struggles of the peoples in those areas."

Here is what Harry Haywood said on this question in "Negro Liberation" page 136, published in 1948. This book was based on the CPUSA position at that time, under Wm. Z. Foster's leadership. We quote, "The white supremacists insist on presenting the Negro question as one of race. This makes it possible for them to justify the notorious color-caste system in the name of spurious race dogmas which depict the Negro's servile status in American life not as the result of man imposed prescription but as a condition fixed by nature." "In reality, the so-called racial persecution of the Negro in the U.S. is a particular form and device of national oppression." (page 137) "And once a people has been smeared with the stigma of racial inferiority they are ipso-facto ruled out as unworthy of nationhood and its inherent right of self-government--a right which in itself is presumed to be the special privilege of "superior races." (page 138)

No one denies that race is a factor in many cases of national oppression. But can a Marxist-Leninist substitute "racial discrimination" for national oppression? Was racial discrimination the main reason for Japan's aggression against China? Or U.S. aggression in Viet Nam? Or England's continued oppression of Ireland? The use of such a wrong formulation raises doubts as to the attitude toward self-determination in Quebec and in Puerto Rico. For Marxist-Leninists in the U.S. it is timely to recall Lenin. "The weight of emphasis in international education of the workers in the oppressing countries must necessarily consist in advocating and urging them to demand freedom of secession for oppressed countries. Without this there can be no internationalism. It is our right and duty to treat every Socialist of an oppressing nation who fails to conduct such propaganda as an imperialist and a scoundrel. This is an absolute demand even if the chance of secession being possible and feasible before the introduction of Socialism is only one in a thousand." (our emphasis, H&S).

The other side of the coin marked "racial discrimination" is marked "simply and solely a question of class." These two lines seem opposed but they actually unite in opposition to liberation of the oppressed Afro-American nation. PEKJNG REVIEW #31 wrote about Los Angeles describing the oppression and then said, "Until all this is changed--and it cannot be changed under the capitalist system--the pent up hatred of Negroes is bound to blow up again, higher and higher." Thus they maintain, despite all evidence to the contrary, it is a question of class and the present Afro-American sacrifices are wasted. According to this logic the Afro-Americans must place their destiny in the hands of whites and wait on their inclinations. Wrongly designating the national liberation struggle as a class struggle serves to narrow the number from all classes of Afro-Americans fighting U.S. imperialism. It cannot but tend to separate Afro-American struggles from other national liberation struggles. The real issue is involving more working class Afro-Americans in leadership--not the exclusion of other classes.

The U.S. is composed of two nations. One nation oppresses, the other is oppressed. The Afro-American people in the South are an oppressed nation, "an historically evolved stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological makeup manifested in a community of culture." (Stalin). In the North and West the Afro-Americans are clearly an oppressed national minority--an oppression based on the Black Belt but not restricted to that area.

The extreme heroism of the Afro-American people in Los Angeles, their concentration against the armed forces rather than the ordinary white people, exposed the bourgeois cries of "racist blacks" as false. The courage and clear-sightedness of the masses of Afro-Americans prevented the genocidal U.S. imperialists and L.B. Johnson from killing even more innocent peoples. In Los Angeles the Afro-Americans

raised their demands for autonomous rights. They sought their own police, firemen, schools and the right to run their own community free of U.S. government oppression. Why was there no support from the Socialist camp for these concrete demands?

At this stage of the discussion we do not claim that anyone has all the answers on Afro-American liberation. We do insist that Marxist-Leninists everywhere have a duty to recognize the efforts of U.S. Marxist-Leninists, past and present, in fighting revisionism and opportunism on this question. We oppose unilateral decisions on the Afro-American question as harmful to unity and our common aims. Marxist-Leninist theory develops through discussion, by struggle, by testing theory in day to day actions with the people.

A great responsibility rests on the shoulders of Marxist-Leninists in the imperialist countries, especially in our country, to convince the workers that their class interests require support of the national liberation struggles. Not only is a clear explanation of L.B. Johnson's reactionary role required but also why George Meany and Gus Hall represent class betrayal on Viet Nam, on Pakistan's struggle against Shastri's aggression and on Afro-American liberation.

Full utilization of the Lin Pao article requires recognition of the CPC's most responsible, special, leading role as well as avoiding any obsequious, non-critical, non-creative adherence or relationship. We believe the article helps restore the rightful place of theory. Upholding Marxist-Leninist theory with such a major effort guarantees greater strength and greater unity of the people, greater victories for national democratic revolutions and for Socialism.

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