

# PROLETARIAT



Theory is the experience of the working-class movement in all countries taken in its general aspect. Of course, theory becomes purposeless if it is not connected with revolutionary practice, just as practice gropes in the dark if its path is not illumined by revolutionary theory. But theory can become a tremendous force in the working-class movement if it is built up in indissoluble connection with revolutionary practice; for theory, and theory alone, can give the movement confidence, the power of orientation, and an understanding of the inner relation of surrounding events; for it, and it alone, can help practice to realise not only how and in which direction classes are moving at the present time, but also how and in which direction they will move in the near future. None other than Lenin uttered and repeated scores of times the well-known thesis that:

*"Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."*

The twenty years of the Communist Party of China have been twenty years in which the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism has become more and more integrated with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution. If we recall how superficial and meagre our understanding of Marxism-Leninism and of the Chinese revolution was during our Party's infancy, we can see how much deeper and richer it is now. For a hundred years, the finest sons and daughters of the disaster-ridden Chinese nation fought and sacrificed their lives, one stepping into the breach as another fell, in quest of the truth that would save the country and the people. This moves us to song and tears. But it was only after World War I and the October Revolution in Russia that we found Marxism-Leninism, the best of truths, the best of weapons for liberating our nation. And the Communist Party of China has been the initiator, propagandist and organizer in the wielding of this weapon.



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PO Box 170

Times Plaza Station

Brooklyn, New York 11217



REPORT TO THE COMMUNIST COLLECTIVE OF  
THE CHICANO NATION ON THE CHICANO  
NATIONAL-COLONIAL QUESTION (AUGUST, 1972  
- APRIL, 1973)

Introduction.

This document was written by a member of the Communist Collective of the Chicano Nation (Marxist-Leninist) early in 1973. The position outlined in it of the existence of a Chicano Nation in the Southwest, which was presented at the Conference of Northamerican Marxist-Leninists held in Chicago in May, 1973, has received local and national interest.

"The Southwest Region (including the area that has been described as the Chicano Nation) is an annexed territory of USNA imperialism. It was annexed by the USNA during the colonial war of 1846. With the consolidation of USNA imperialism, beginning in 1880, the economy of the region was made to serve the needs of the USNA imperialists. In the era of imperialism nations, and not individuals or groups of individuals, are enslaved. At the same time, imperialism, in its oppression, welds people together resulting in nations which are needed in order to capture markets, raw materials and cheap labor. This kind of oppression is further justified and reenforced by the ideology of white chauvinism (eg, the Negro and Puerto Rican nations). Under such circumstances the unity of the class in opposition to imperialism can only be realized with our full support for the demand of the right of secession of the peoples of the Southwest."  
("Report on the Southwest Question," Conference Paper, 1973, p 3)

In the Marxist-Leninist analysis of the Southwest region, there is the recognition of specific characteristics and a specific historical development of certain areas within the Southwest. The area which has been described as the "Chicano Nation" is one such area: Southern Colorado, New Mexico and Southwest Texas.

This area was first settled by Spanish and Mexican settlers in the 1600s without much resistance on the part of the Pueblo Indians. The area was extremely isolated from the rest of Mexico mostly because of its great distance from the more central zones and the difficulty of reaching the area by land. In Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado particularly, the language, customs, farming methods, etc of the people changed very little even as they changed throughout Mexico and North America. And even such a minor thing as the predominance of certain surnames in certain areas, and the network of relations many New Mexicans have in the area testifies to the fact that the people of New Mexico are not newly-arrived immigrants, but rather have a long history of oppression and development in this general area.

Another peculiarity of this section of the Southwest is the peasant question. Here perhaps more than anywhere else in the USNA there is a historically stable peasantry which has systematically been oppressed by the imperialists, denied their lawful land claims and rights, taxed, cowed, forced, overcharged and beaten into submission. And although many peasants have been forced off their land and into the cities, their ties with the land are still strong, and demands concerning the land are dear to the ears of nearly every native in the area. Any thorough-going analysis of this area must recognize the importance of the question of the peasantry and of the strategy which seriously takes into account the peasantry as an ally of the proletariat.

One thing in general is certain: this area of the Southwest has a very specific historical development which distinguishes it from the rest of the Southwest. The Anglo-American occupation was not accompanied by a huge influx of Anglo-Americans, as was the case in California; the majority of the Spanish-speaking peoples here have ties which go back for over 200 years, although a substantial minority has come from Mexico and Central America. The peasantry, semi-proletariat and rural proletariat are extremely important potential forces in the area. And the people in particularly Northern New Mexico consider themselves neither Mexicans nor Americans, but somewhat distinct, be it called Spanish, Chicano, Hispano-Indio or whatever.

It is clear, however, that the question needs more study. We must redouble our efforts to apply the Marxist-Leninist theory of the national question to the situation in the "Chicano Nation" area so as to be able to formulate a correct strategy in this area. Such a formulation is not an idle task; the results of our research and conclusions will shape the success or failure of our work in this area. Marxist-Leninist analysis is not an easy thing, but it is essential for the victory of the revolution. A Marxist-Leninist analysis of the national question in the Southwest will not be easy to work up; but it must be done, and done well and correctly. A correct understanding of this question may prove to be the key to uniting the proletariat of the USNA with the peoples of the colonies and dependent countries of Latin America.

Precisely because the "Chicano Nation" area is a region with a specific history of development and oppression, there is a pressing need for communists there to unite with communists in the rest of the USNA. A major part of the strategy for socialist revolution in the USNA is the uniting of the national liberation struggles of the people of the Negro Nation and Puerto Rico with the struggle of the Anglo-American proletariat. Just so is there the great necessity to link up the liberation struggles of the peoples of the Southwest, of the Indian peoples, and of the other people of the "Chicano Nation" area with the struggle of the Anglo-American proletariat for socialism. This is accomplished concretely by the call for regional autonomy for the Southwest and for the Indian peoples being raised by the Anglo-American working class; but also by communists and working people in the "Chicano Nation" area joining organizationally and politically with communists and working people in the rest of the USNA. This proletarian internationalism expresses itself in two ways: 1) by the Anglo-American proletariat fighting for the freedom and democratic rights of the oppressed peoples of the Southwest, and 2) by the proletariat and oppressed peoples of the Southwest joining the Anglo-American proletariat in the common struggle against the USNA imperialist state.

The following paper is the first thorough attempt by this collective to study the national-colonial question in the "Chicano Nation" area as Marxist-Leninists. Already numerous weaknesses in the paper are recognized: the lack of full consideration of events in Mexico that have affected the political and economic developments in the Chicano Nation; limited evaluation of the effect of USNA imperialism on the area in the last 200 years; inadequate "proof" to unite all of the area claimed by the "Chicano Nation" as one, etc. Still we are presenting this paper to encourage discussion and further research into the question. Suggestions, criticisms and comments on the ideas, statistics, etc being presented are encouraged.



REPORT TO THE COMMUNIST COLLECTIVE OF  
THE CHICANO NATION ON THE CHICANO  
NATIONAL-COLONIAL QUESTION (AUGUST, 1972  
- APRIL, 1973)

I. The National-colonial question.

Any correct presentation of the Chicano national-colonial question must first begin with a discussion of the Marxist-Leninist position on the national-colonial question. Marxism-Leninism teaches that a nation is a historical category. However,

"A nation is not merely a historical category but a historical category belonging to a definite epoch, the epoch of rising capitalism. The process of elimination of feudalism and development of capitalism was at the same time a process of amalgamation of people into nations. Such, for instance, was the case in Western Europe. The British, French, Italians and others formed themselves into nations at the time of the victorious advance of capitalism and its triumph over feudal disunity." (1)

Thus we see that rising capitalism calls nations into existence, for it is that development of the economic community most suitable for capitalism (the national state) which demands the adoption of a common language, breaks down tribal and feudal barriers, and welds people into a nation.

Nations possess fundamental characteristics, all of which must be present in order for a nation to exist.

"A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture." (2)

Thus we see the characteristics which all nations possess. It need only be added here that it is the peasantry of a nation which determines the common territory of a nation for it is the peasantry which anchors a nation in place and provides the basis of its economic community.

The national-colonial question is not a fixed question but instead can be divided into three distinct periods of development which we have historically experienced: the period of rising capitalism, the development of nations, and the view that the national question was confined to Europe and a circle of questions dealing with the Irish, the Poles, etc; the age of imperialism, the breakdown of national borders, the dispersal of nations, and the merging of the national question with the question of the colonies in general; and the period of Soviet power, the demise of capitalism, socialist construction, and the solution of the national-colonial question. These three periods are by no means walled off from each other but are interrelated and connected.

The merging of the national question with the question of the colonies is of great importance for it represents the possibility and necessity of converting the colonies and neo-colonies from reserves of the bourgeoisie into the vast reserves of the proletariat, thus linking the national liberation movement in the colonies and dependent nations with the question of proletarian revolution.

Comrade Stalin explained why this linkage was possible: "Leninism has proven, and the imperialist was and the revolution in Russia have confirmed, that the

national question can be solved only in connection with and on the basis of proletarian revolution and that the road to revolution in the West lies through the revolutionary alliance with the liberation movement of the colonies and dependent nations against imperialism." (3)

Another extremely important development in the national-colonial question during the age of imperialism is the inability of the bourgeoisie to lead the national liberation movement. Because the question of national liberation has been merged with that of proletarian revolution and the struggle against imperialism, and because the liberation of the colonies and dependent nations can only be accomplished by the overthrow of capital, it follows that only the proletariat of the colonies and dependent nations is capable of leading the struggle for national liberation for only the proletariat is capable of waging uncompromising struggle against the power of capital and ultimately of overthrowing it.

The Marxist-Leninist solution of the national-colonial question is based on four propositions:

- "A) Recognition of the right of nations to secession;
- "B) Regional autonomy for nations remaining within the given state;
- "C) Special legislation guaranteeing freedom of development for national minorities;
- "D) A single, indivisible proletarian collective, a single party, for the proletarians of all nationalities of the given state." (4)

Leninism took the slogan of the right of nations to self-determination and transformed it from the watered-down misinterpreted slogan of the Second International to a revolutionary slogan calling for the right of dependent nations and colonies to complete political secession, to existence as independent states. This does not mean that because the proletariat of oppressor nations must raise this slogan that each and every dependent nation must secede and form an independent state. "Hence the question of secession must be determined in each particular case independently, in accordance with the existing situation, and, for this reason, recognizing the right of secession must not be confused with the expediency of secession in any given circumstances." (5)

## II. The development of the Chicano Nation.

The history of the Chicano Nation can be divided into two major periods: the period before the Anglo-American conquest; and the period after the Anglo-American conquest. These two periods can then be divided further. The period before the Anglo-American conquest may be divided into three sub-periods: the sub-period from 1540 to 1680, with the Spanish exploration and colonization of New Mexico, the establishment of a feudal economy based entirely on the exploitation of the Pueblo Indians, and the revolt of the Pueblo Indians in 1680 which terminated this sub-period; the sub-period from 1680 to 1820 which includes the reconquest of New Mexico by the Spanish, the establishment of a feudal economy based on the exploitation of Chicano peasants, the colonization of Texas, the beginning of Chicano culture, the beginnings of capitalism, and the end of Spanish rule over Mexico; and the sub-period from 1821 to 1846 which includes the opening up of trade with the United States, the development of a Chicano bourgeoisie and its almost immediate split into a comprador and a national bourgeoisie, the beginning of the bourgeois democratic movement, and the invasion of Mexico by the United States. The period after the Anglo-American invasion may be divided into two sub-periods: the sub-period of the bourgeois democratic national

movement; and the sub-period of the national liberation movement.

Before the Anglo-American Invasion

1540 to 1680

"The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black skins, signaled the rosy dawn of capitalist production."

- Karl Marx

The conquest of Mexico by the Spanish opened up hitherto untapped sources of wealth to the Spanish aristocracy. In the following development and exploitation of the mineral and agricultural resources of Mexico, thousands of Mexican Indians were enslaved for the enrichment of their Spanish masters. The exploration and subsequent colonization of the Southwest of the United States must be seen as only a part of the gigantic quest for mineral wealth that the Spanish were conducting throughout the New World.

The atrocities committed by the Spanish in their explorations of the Southwest were typical of the brutality of the conquistadores throughout the Americas. During the expeditions the Spanish survived by requisitioning supplies from the meager stores of the Pueblo Indians and in doing so severely strained the Pueblos' food stores. Whenever the Indians refused to aid the Spanish or rose in defense of their pueblos, they were ruthlessly repressed by the Spanish and often extremely brutal retaliatory measures were taken against the entire pueblo.

The actual colonization of the upper Rio Grande valley was a direct outgrowth of the discovery of the rich silver mines at Zacatecas in 1548 and at Santa Bárbara and San Bartolomé in the southern part of the present Mexican state of Chihuahua. The development of these mines demanded a labor force and thus brought into existence slaving expeditions into Northern Mexico and the Southwest. The importance of the mineral wealth of the New World to the rise of capitalism in Europe is undisputed and the signal importance of the mines at Zacatecas and the northern movement in search of silver in general can be seen from the fact that between 1560 and 1821 Mexico and the rest of the Americas minted two billion dollars in silver and sent another two billion in ingots to Spain. Before the nineteenth century two-thirds of the world's silver passed through the port of Veracruz and the mines of Zacatecas alone produced one-fifth of the world's supply of silver. (6)

The first colonizing expedition set out for New Mexico in 1598 and was headed by Juan de Oñate, a Zacatecas millionaire and one of the four richest men in Mexico. New Mexico was colonized not only as part of the general movement in search of mineral wealth, but also as a northern outpost to make good Spain's extensive territorial claims in the Americas and to serve as protection against the colonizing efforts of rival European nations.

The colonists established the village of San Juan de los Caballeros at the junction of the Rio Grande and the Rio Chama and remained there until 1600 when they established a new capital at San Gabriel.



The small colony did not become self-sufficient from Mexico until 1601 and even then it depended on the plunder of Pueblo Indian food stores for survival. In addition to requisitioning food from the Indians, the Spanish explored the surrounding area for mineral wealth. It was during these expeditions that the Spanish earned the unforgiving hatred of the Indians.

The pueblo of Acoma refused to aid the Spanish with food and instead attacked a detachment of Spanish soldiers. In retaliation, the Spanish destroyed the pueblo. Some 600 to 800 Indians were killed in the battle. Almost 600 were captured. The revenge taken by the Spaniards reverberated throughout Puebloland. All males over twenty-four years of age had one foot cut off and were bound in servitude for twenty-five years. All other Indians, men and women, over twelve years of age were bound in servitude for twenty years.

The colony proved unproductive and the Council of the Indies recalled Onate in 1606, suspended exploration of the area, and announced that only mission work would continue in New Mexico. From 1606 to 1680, the Catholic Church became the primary tool of Spanish rule in New Mexico. In 1609 a new secular capital was established thirty miles south of San Gabriel and was called La Villa Real de la Santa Fe de San Francisco. Today it is known as Santa Fe. The missionaries established their headquarters at the pueblo of Santo Domingo.

Throughout Mexico, including New Mexico, a feudal system developed in which the Indians formed the most brutally exploited class. The Catholic Church managed to concentrate in its hands the greater part of the land and wealth of the country. By 1800 the Church had in its possession fully two-thirds of all the arable land in Mexico. (7)

In New Mexico agriculture, stockraising and trade formed the basis of society. Feudal society in New Mexico consisted of four distinct classes: the Pueblo Indians, the most oppressed and exploited of the classes, forced to work in the fields of the Church and the aristocracy; the Hispanic peasants who were exploited by the aristocracy in the feudal exchange of economic and military services for protection and favors; the aristocracy, the gachupines (Spaniards born in Spain) and criollos (Spaniards born in Mexico), who were responsible for the military protection of the missions and were the secular rulers of New Mexico; and the various Church officials, the real rulers of the colony and primary exploiters of the Pueblo Indians.

The Pueblo Indians had occupied that Rio Grande valley since early in the 11th Century and held the best land. Puebloland and the small Spanish colony were ringed by hostile nomadic tribes who prevented expansion to uncultivated lands. Thus it was inevitable that great competition would arise between the Pueblo Indians and the Spanish colonizers on the one hand and between the aristocracy and the Church on the other. In addition, competition between the aristocracy and the Church over the use of Indian labor power generated fierce political struggles in the colony. This competition grew out of the establishment of the encomienda system in New Mexico. The encomienda had its historical roots in Roman Spain and in feudal Spain developed into the simple exchange of services to a lord in return for his protection. The encomienda system served only as a means of intensifying the already severe exploitation of the Pueblo Indians.

Between 1600 and 1680 a number of workshops were established in Santa Fe by the governors of New Mexico where Indian slaves were forced to work long hours producing cotton cloth and blankets which along with the export of sheep formed the basis of commerce for the colony.

By 1680, there were some 2,500 Hispanic settlers in New Mexico, the majority of whom were peasants located in the Rio Grande valley north of Santa Fe. In contrast, the vast majority of the aristocracy were located in the Rio Grande valley south of Santa Fe where they possessed large amounts of land and were completely dependent on Indian labor for the maintenance of their vast herds of stock.

The Pueblo revolt of 1680 was the culmination of nearly a century and a half of oppression, cultural and religious persecution, and brutal exploitation at the hands of the Spanish. The immediate causes of the uprising were the drought and pestilence of 1670 in which the Pueblos suffered greatly and the vicious persecution of the religions of the Pueblos. Many Pueblo leaders were arrested between 1675 and 1677 for witchcraft and hanged. A few escaped, among them Pope, the architect of the revolt. The revolt was carefully planned and coordinated and it was a great victory for the Indians. The Spanish were driven completely out of Puebloland and retreated to El Paso del Norte taking with them a number of Christian Indians. Spaniards were killed wherever they were found and all the churches, houses and fields of the Spaniards were sacked and burned.

However, the victory was only transitory.

#### 1680 to 1820

In 1692, Don Diego Jose de Vargas Zapata y Lujan Ponce de León y Contreras, the newly appointed Governor of New Mexico, moved northward from El Paso up the Rio Grande valley to Santa Fe. The capital was occupied without bloodshed, but Spanish rule in New Mexico was not secure until 1696 after a number of sharp battles were fought throughout Puebloland.

The effects of a hundred and fifty years of oppression and resistance had taken their toll of the people of Puebloland. By 1800, only 8,000 Pueblo Indians would remain out of the estimated 75,000 who had lived in Puebloland prior to Spanish colonization. (8) The Spanish had effectively destroyed the base of their former feudal system in New Mexico. Thus it was imperative to shift the entire weight of feudal exploitation onto the backs of the Hispanic peasantry. This made it necessary to increase the Hispanic population of New Mexico and in so doing to make the colony self-sufficient by bringing more land under cultivation and by increasing the amount of stock in the colony. Further economic development was also demanded by the establishment of an elaborate system of presidios (garrisons) which eventually would stretch from San Francisco to San Antonio as a ring of defense against encroachments by the French and English and later the Americans, and as protection against the nomadic Indians.

The increased number of soldiers and the drastic reduction of the Pueblo Indians opened up large amounts of land to be settled. This settlement was accomplished by means of landgrants of which there existed three types. The first type was the community grant and charter made to a group of persons who promised to lay out a village site with a plaza, a church site, and delineated residential lots. Home sites and land for irrigation were distributed by lots. Each family received a title to its residential site and irrigated land and the right to graze stock and cut timber on the village common. The majority of this type of grant were made to peasants in the North of New Mexico and to the various pueblos.

The second type of grant, also leading to the formation of a town, went to an individual who promised to secure settlers, distribute residential sites and

irrigated land, secure a priest, build a church and provide for the building of dams, canals, and other necessary edifices. This individual became the patrón or feudal lord of the village and had the right of appropriating agricultural produce or labor power in exchange for protection. The peasants of the village were subject to call for military duties in the service of the patrón.

The third type of grant was the sitio. It was usually made as a reward for some type of service to the Spanish crown. The grantee was merely required to settle the land. The last two types of grant predominated in Texas and Southern New Mexico.

The economy of the colony during this period was based on subsistence agriculture and the wealth of the ruling class, ie, the landed aristocracy and the appointed Spanish officials, was concentrated in the form of livestock.

In 1690, the Spanish made their first attempt to colonize Texas. By 1800, some 3,500 settlers lived in Texas, and more than half were concentrated in San Antonio.

During the 18th Century the Chicanos began to develop as an ethnic group distinct from the Pueblo Indians, the Mexicans and the Spaniards. Inter-marriage between the Hispanic settlers was extremely common. By 1822, out of some forty-two thousand Chicanos, a more one thousand were of pure Spanish ancestry. Coinciding with the development of the Chicanos came the development of a Chicano culture. This development came about because of the isolation of the colony from the mainstream of Mexican life. This isolation is reflected today in the Spanish spoken in Northern New Mexico where antiquated words and expressions are still used by the people. The Spanish spoken there is the Spanish of Cervantes. The Chicanos achieved great artistic distinction in the carving and painting of Santos, the working of gold and silver, weaving, and the making of finely carved chests, cupboards, etc. A distinctive architecture was developed out of the adobe structures of the Pueblo Indians. In essence, the Chicano culture represented the merger of Spanish medieval folk culture with the culture of the Pueblo Indians and the further development of the resulting product.

A feudal economic system continued to exist throughout this period and the only changes that took place occurred in the superstructure.

The role of the Church was greatly diminished as the development of a powerful landed class saw the political power shift to Spanish governors who were directly supported by the landed class. At the base of the superstructure was the feudal exploitation of both the Pueblos and the Chicano peasantry. As the Chicano peasantry grew the burden of exploitation was shifted more and more onto their backs and the Pueblo Indians, instead of being assimilated into the economic and social structures of the colony, as so many Indian tribes were in Mexico, successfully resisted assimilation and continued developing as an oppressed people within the colony. They remained, however, Spanish subjects, adopted the Spanish language as the common language of the colony, and were an integral part of the colony. In addition to the above classes, there began the development of a merchant class which was brought into existence as an intermediary in the exchange between town and country and between New Mexico and Mexico. This was the embryonic Chicano bourgeoisie whose development would necessarily call into existence the Chicano proletariat, the wage-laborers who have nothing but their labor power which they must sell to survive.

1820 to 1848

The entire period of Spanish colonial rule in Mexico was marked by numerous revolts and insurrections by Indians and mestizos. However, the actual cause of the Mexican Revolution for Independence lay in the contradictions between the criollos and gachupines. The independence of Mexico brought no real changes in the plight of the Indians and mestizos, but it did allow for the independent development of Mexico, the rise of capitalism, and the beginning of the bourgeois democratic movement which would culminate in the Mexican Revolution at the beginning of this century. The armed struggle for independence began in 1810 in September with the famous "Grito de Dolores" of Father Hidalgo, but it was only when the conservative landed classes in Mexico joined with the Hidalgo movement that Mexico was declared independent in 1821. The conservative elements had felt threatened by the results of the bourgeois democratic revolution in Spain in 1820 which forced the Spanish king to accept a liberal constitution. In 1823, a revolutionary republican coup defeated the reactionary elements and installed General Antonio López de Santa Ana in power.

The events in Mexico had little direct effect on the developing Chicano Nation. The most important repercussion was the opening up of trade with the United States.

During this period a number of important economic events took place which contributed greatly to the development of the Chicano Nation. Copper was discovered and mined at Santa Rita. Gold was discovered in the Sierra del Oro and the Ortiz mine alone produced three million dollars worth of gold by 1846. The production of sheep increased greatly and some 400,000 head of sheep were sent down yearly to Chihuahua. And finally, trade with the United States brought about increased trade with Chihuahua and in the quest for the accumulation of agricultural surplus, handicraft goods, minerals, the Chicano bourgeoisie developed quickly. Contemporaneous with the bourgeoisie's development was the development of the proletariat which first appeared as miners, teamsters and wage-laborers in small manufacturing enterprises.

From its inception the Chicano bourgeoisie was divided into two sections: the section completely tied to Anglo-American capital; and the section which sought national privileges for itself. The landed class, on the other hand, remained loyal to Mexico.

Further development of the Chicano Nation demanded the struggle against feudalism and the separation of the peasant from his land, thus converting him into a proletarian.

The bourgeois democratic movement in the Chicano Nation began in 1834 with the publication of "El Crepusculo de la Libertad" by Father Antonio Jose Martinez, the owner of a few small ranches and a flour mill. In the paper he called for a redistribution of land and denounced tithes and church fees. Father Martinez founded many of the first schools in the Chicano Nation and served in the provincial assembly.

The Chicano bourgeoisie chafed under Mexican rule and the domination of the home market by merchants from Chihuahua, and in 1835 when Santa Ana sought to impose tighter control over New Mexico, the Chicano bourgeoisie incited the peasants and the Taos Indians to revolt. The peasants and Indians attacked Santa Fe, beheaded the Mexican governor, and elected Jose Gonzales, a Taos Indian, governor of New Mexico. The peasants and Indians had no intention of giving up state

power, and filled all government posts with Indians and peasants. At that point, one of the major instigators of the revolt, Manuel Armijo, a wealthy merchant with close ties to the Anglo-Americans, gathered a force of soldiers and brutally suppressed the revolt. He then installed himself as governor of New Mexico.

In 1823, Stephen Austin received an empresario landgrant from the Mexican government to settle Eastern Texas. The Mexican government made this grant in the hope of displacing the nomadic Indian tribes in Eastern Texas and in doing so of easing the pressure of Indian attacks on the settlements between the Rio Nueces and the Rio Grande and on San Antonio. By 1830, there were some 25,000 Anglo-Americans in Texas as compared with a mere 4,000 Chicanos. The Anglo-Americans in general came from the slave states of the South of the United States and established themselves in Eastern Texas as slave-holders growing cotton.

The Anglo-American colonists brought with them, besides Negro slaves, the concept of the superiority of the "White" race to all others; in other words, white supremacy. It grew with Anglo-American expansionism and served as a justification for the genocidal policies of the Anglo-Americans toward the Indians and for the enslavement of Negroes. Because of the historic role which white supremacy has played in the development and expansion of the Anglo-American nation it was and is quite logical that the specific form that Anglo-American national chauvinism would take would be that of white chauvinism. White chauvinism dominated relations between the United States and Mexico and provided the justification for the Colonialist war of 1846 which the United States launched against Mexico.

The Texans chafed under the rule of a "colored" people. Mexico in turn was worried about the large presence of white supremacist Anglo-Americans for she had no illusions about the territorial ambitions of the aggressive Anglo-American Nation. The Mexican government sought to stem the tide of Anglo-American immigration through a series of measures beginning in 1829 with the abolition of slavery in Mexico, a measure aimed directly at Texan slaveholders. Relations between Texans and the Mexican government steadily worsened until, in 1834, Santa Ana sought to change the government from a federalist to a centralist one. At this point the Texans declared conditional independence. By 1836, after a number of battles, Texans won independence and by 1840 had secured the recognition of the United States, France and England.

During the nine years of the existence of the Texas Republic, a policy of white chauvinist expansionism was carried out. Texan territorial claims were exorbitant and totally unfounded, claiming as her boundary the Rio Grande and in 1841 invading New Mexico to make good her outlandish claims. The invasion was soundly defeated and many of the Texans were hanged in Santa Fe while the rest were forced-marched across La Jornada del Muerto to prison in Mexico City.

"The economics of slavery demanded the constant expansion of slavery into fresh and fertile soils and the only way for this expansion to take place was in a westward direction." (9)

The annexation of Texas by the United States provided the slave system with fresh territory and with ready-made border disputes which could be utilized for provoking war with Mexico and conquering vast amounts of territory for the further expansion of slavery.

In December, 1845, Anglo-American troops were deployed in the disputed border area between the Rio Nueces and the Rio Grande. In May, 1846, Anglo-American troops had penetrated Mexican territory by two hundred miles when they were

engaged by Mexican troops. After two years of bloody warfare, the loss of vast amounts of territory, and the fall of Mexico City, Mexico was prepared to surrender.

The Colonialist war of 1846 set a standard of brutality which the armed forces of the United States have maintained and perfected right up to the present time with the aggression in Vietnam. Murder, robbery and rape were everyday affairs. Mothers were raped in front of their husbands and children. Children were murdered in front of their parents. The overwhelmingly Protestant Anglo-American troops desecrated churches and got drunk from wine out of holy vessels. Partially out of sympathy for the Mexicans and partially out of outrage at the atrocities, some 250 Irish-American soldiers sent over to the Mexican side and fought the Anglo-American invaders in the San Patricio battalion. Eighty of these heroic soldiers were subsequently executed by Anglo-American troops in a village outside of Mexico City after the Mexican surrender.

Mexico was forced to cede to the United States what is now California, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, a corner of Wyoming, and the western half of Colorado for fifteen million dollars, the same price Mexico had been offered before the war. Peace was formalized by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which in addition to those articles dealing with the peace and the cession of territory, provided for certain rights of Mexican citizens who remained in the ceded territories. All such persons became US citizens after one year (Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Article VIII). The property of Mexican citizens was to be inviolably respected (Article VIII). It was the responsibility of the government of the US to secure surveyors, etc, to determine boundaries of the land held by Mexican citizens. The United States was also required to set up a special appeals court to deal with land questions. All the original records of landgrants in the ceded territories were to be turned over to the US government. In general, the treaty allowed the people to continue utilizing the land as they had under Spanish and Mexican rule, the only major exception being that the land now became taxable.

In the Chicano Nation, the ruling classes were split over the question of resistance or capitulation to the Anglo-American invasion. The landed class and what was to become the national bourgeoisie pushed for resistance, while the section of the bourgeoisie tied to Anglo-American interests, the comprador, headed by the treasonous Governor Armijo, advocated surrender. The question was settled when the latter sabotaged immediate resistance and fled New Mexico. The Anglo-American General Kearny took possession of New Mexico in the Old Town Plaza in Las Vegas in 1846 and proceeded to occupy Santa Fe and establish a military government.

The Anglo-American invasion forever split the Chicano bourgeoisie into two parts, the comprador and national. The former facilitated the Anglo-American occupation and participated in the formation of a new government; the latter advocated resistance and allied itself with the landed class, which favored resistance in order to re-establish Mexican rule. The chief organizers of the resistance were Tomas Ortiz and Colonel Diego Archuleta, members of the landed class, the Armijos of Albuquerque, also large land-owners, and several priests, including Father Martínez, who were members of the national bourgeoisie.

In 1847, an uprising occurred in Taos and the peasants and Indians of the village killed and scalped Charles Bent, the first Anglo-American governor of



New Mexico, and five others. The revolt spread throughout New Mexico and Anglo-Americans were killed wherever they were found. However, Anglo-American troops acted quickly to suppress the uprising. In Taos, 150 Chicanos and Indians were killed in a battle with Anglo-American troops; some thirty Chicanos and Indians who surrendered were executed by a firing squad. Many were publicly flogged before being shot. About three hundred Chicanos, many of them women and children, were massacred by drunken Anglo-American troops in Mora as they destroyed the entire village. Two men were directly responsible for the brutal suppression and aftermath of the revolt, Kit Carson and the despicable comprador Domiciano Vigil. The leaders of the revolt were tried for treason and murder and fifteen of them were hanged. The charge of treason did not apply since the Chicanos were not citizens of the United States. One of the judges was a close friend of the dead governor and the other judge's son had been killed during the revolt. The foreman of the jury was the dead governor's brother. Such was the introduction of the people of the Chicano Nation to the bourgeois justice of the Anglo-American state.

#### After the Anglo-American Invasion

#### The Bourgeois Democratic Movement

The period of the bourgeois democratic movement runs from 1850 to 1934 in the Chicano Nation. The national bourgeoisie had actually become incapable of leading the national liberation struggle well before 1934. The objective conditions for the proletariat to assume leadership existed due to the shift in the political forces involved in the national movement brought about by imperialism and the October Revolution in Russia.

The territory which today is the Chicano Nation was not flooded by Anglo-American colonists after 1848, as was the case in California. Instead of fleeing to Mexico or being wiped out, the Chicanos expanded their territory, founding new towns and bringing more land under cultivation. The genocidal wars conducted against the Navajos, Apaches, Utes and Comanches opened up vast areas which were quickly settled by Chicanos.

The Chicano Nation was of no immediate interest to the Anglo-American colonialists and so their objectives were not the elimination of Chicanos, the immediate seizure of their lands, and the development of the resources of their nation. Instead, the Anglo-Americans were primarily interested in securing New Mexico, a link in the lines of communication with the West Coast, and in preparing for future exploitation.

To accomplish this, the Anglo-American colonialists began their methodical campaigns against the Indians and their campaign against the primary base of the Chicano national bourgeoisie and the bulwark of the resistance, the penitentes.

The penitentes were a peasant religious group which had come to hold great secular power in Northern New Mexico after the expulsion of all Spanish priests from Mexico in 1821. They were primarily a service organization which aided the sick and poor of the peasant communities. However, after 1846 the penitentes became centers of resistance against Anglo-American rule and played an important role in the uprising of 1847. For this reason, the arrival of Jean Baptiste Lamy as Bishop of New Mexico must be seen as one of the major tools to the Anglo-Americans for combating resistance in New Mexico. Under Lamy, the Church reinstated tithing, which caused hardship for the Chicano peasantry. Father

Antonio Martínez, an outstanding member of the national bourgeoisie, vocally opposed Lamy and consequently was excommunicated. Nevertheless, he continued to oppose him and the Anglo-Americans until his death in 1867. Bishop Lamy repeatedly sought to bring the penitentes under official church control, but this resulted only in increasing secrecy within the order. In 1859, the Church disbanded the organization and excommunicated its members. It was left to the Anglo-American military to suppress the penitentes who organized militant peasant organizations like La Mano Negra and Las Gorras Blancas. It was a literal case of what Lenin called "the priest and the hangman" approach to keeping people in their place.

The two-pronged attack against the forces of the national bourgeoisie allowed the Anglo-American colonialists to consolidate their position within the Chicano Nation, which they did by cultivating and solidifying the comprador bourgeoisie. The political dominance of the comprador was formalized at the territorial convention of 1850 which resulted in great numbers of vendidos (comprador Chicanos) holding high territorial positions. The most outstanding representative of the compradores during this period was Miguel Otero, who served three terms in the US House of Representatives. He formed the important business house of Otero, Sellar and Company. He was director of the Maxwell Land Grant Company and a vice-president of the Atcheson, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad. His son served as territorial governor from 1897 to 1906. The political base on which his power rested was inherited by Senator Dennis Chavez and today belongs to Senator Joseph Montoya.

Conditions in Southeastern Texas did not allow for the development of a definite comprador class. Individual Chicanos capitulated but the ideology of white chauvinism reigned supreme and all manners of atrocities were committed against Chicanos. These conditions resulted in militant struggle. Beginning with the Cart War of 1857, Chicanos fought the Texas Rangers and Anglo-American vigilantes as well as the US Army. In 1859, Juan Nepomuceno Cortina, a large landowner, enraged by Texan atrocities, seized the town of Brownsville, Texas, freed several peasants who worked on his ranch, shot three Texans who were accused of mistreating Chicanos, and began a decade of warfare in the border region between the Rio Nueces and the Rio Grande.

The Civil War found the Chicanos siding with the Union, but only after Texas-Confederate forces invaded New Mexico in 1861. Chicanos viewed this primarily as a repeat of the 1841 Texan invasion. Some 5000 Chicanos volunteered for military service in the Union Army. Many of them did this as a means of earning enough money to pay off their debts to their patrones. In Texas in the part of New Mexico occupied by the Confederacy, Chicanos harrassed Texan soldiers by "liberating" their horses and cattle and by staging numerous small ambushes. In 1864, Union troops under the command of Colonel Manuel Chávez destroyed the Confederate supply base during the battle of Glorietta Pass and thus brought about the withdrawal of Confederate forces from New Mexico.

Improved transportation and the increased demand for beef after the Civil War brought about a boom in the cattle industry in Texas and New Mexico. It was this combined with the coming of the railroads into New Mexico which made the expropriation of the Chicano peasant possible.

"One of the prerequisites of wage labor and one of the historic conditions for capital is free labor and the exchange of free labor against money, in order to reproduce money, not as use value for enjoyment, but as use value for money. Another prerequisite is the separation of free labor from the objective conditions of its realization - from the means and material of labor. This means above all that the worker must be separated from the land, which functions as his natural laboratory. This means the dissolution both of free petty landownership and of communal landed property, based on the oriental commune." (10)

The capitalist development and exploitation of the Chicano Nation and indeed of the entire Southwest could only take place through the expropriation of the land and the creation of a large proletariat to build the railroads, work the mines, and labor in the fields. The seizure of the landgrants was not the result of the "greedy nature of the gringo" as some Chicano petty-bourgeois nationalists wish people to believe; it was the prerequisite of the imperialist exploitation of the Chicano Nation.

The US government quietly began their offensive against the Chicano peasantry in 1854 when the Congress passed an act reserving the right to pass upon private land claims in New Mexico by direct legislative enactment. It was impossible to judge decisions, nor were provisions made for surveying land claims. After the Civil War, hordes of Anglo-American lawyers descended on New Mexico sensing that a profit could be made out of the expropriation of land. At one time it was estimated that one out of every ten Anglo-Americans in New Mexico was a lawyer. The infamous Santa Fe Ring developed as the ruling circle of the territory. The Ring was a tightly-knit alliance of Anglo lawyers and business men with some twenty Chicano families, the comprador bourgeoisie, included. The most well known member was Thomas B. Catron, a lawyer and the Ring's political leader. By 1894 he personally owned about two million acres of land and was part owner or attorney for an additional four million acres.

A variety of methods were used to force Chicanos off their land. Because of the long period of time and great expense involved in securing congressional affirmation of land titles, many Chicanos simply could not afford to have their claims approved. Both lawyers and surveyors demanded their payment in land. Another method utilized to whittle down or seize land was county taxes. They were juggled so as to be unbearably high for peasants, but went down greatly when the land fell into the hands of the Ring or other Anglo-American businesses. In cases where Chicanos paid the taxes, they were given false receipts or else the payment was not recorded at all in the county tax records. The system of seizing land through taxation reached a new high in 1926, when the New Mexico legislature passed a law saying that any land which was tax delinquent for three years could be sold by the county.

When the need for land became very great in the late 1800's with the building of the railroads and the maturation of US imperialism, legal means of seizure were supplemented by legal and extra-legal terror. Ruthless, barbarian bands of Texans rode through the countryside murdering Chicanos, burning their homes and ranch buildings, and running off their herds of sheep and cattle. To this very day "the word Texan is a hiss and a byword" throughout the Chicano Nation.

The activities of the Federal Government was also costly to the land holdings of Chicanos. The establishment of national forests meant the enclosure of millions of acres of pastureland and to this day forest administrators harrass the semi-proletarian Chicanos of Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado by denying

them grazing rights and by impounding stock.

The homestead laws were a vicious means by which the imperialists came to possess the land. The ideology of white chauvinism and the usage of Anglo-American farmers as pawns in seizing land effectively generated hatred and distrust between two peoples with a common enemy. The homesteaders settled on millions of acres of Chicano land, thus depriving the Chicano peasants of the basis for their existence as peasants, and when droughts or taxes forced the Anglo-American farmers off, the land fell into the hands of the imperialists.

Since 1854, owners of Spanish and Mexican land grants throughout the Southwest have lost 2 million acres of private lands, 1.7 million acres of communal lands, 1.8 million acres lost to the states, and vast areas lost to the Federal Government. In New Mexico alone the United States government holds 27 million acres excluding federal Indian reservations, that is, 34.6% of the entire area of the state.

However, life is dialectical, and where there is oppression there is resistance. Chicano peasants organized armed groups to combat the expropriation of their lands. These groups were organized to protect villages from rampaging Texans. Las Gorras Blancas appeared in the 1890's in San Miguel county in New Mexico and sought to sabotage the fencing off of grazing lands. La Mano Negra appeared about the same time in the Northwestern part of the state and was active in the area as late as the 1920's.

The arrival of the railroads meant the beginning of the imperialist exploitation of the Chicano Nation. Almost immediately the mining and timber industry expanded and copper became one of the most important products of New Mexico. The railroad made possible the settlement of the Pecos Valley which produced a thriving truck farming industry.

The expropriation of the peasants and the development of the resources of the Chicano Nation went hand in hand. The proletariat became the growing class in the nation while the national bourgeoisie increasingly lost its ability to lead the national liberation movement. It was in a desperate attempt to turn back the hands of time that the people of Socorro fought the railroad crews to prevent the building of the railroads and preserve the old order.

#### The National Liberation Movement

"Imperialism is the most barefaced exploitation and the most inhuman oppression of hundreds of millions of people inhabiting vast colonies and dependent countries. The purpose of this oppression is to squeeze out super-profits. But in exploiting these countries imperialism is compelled to build there railways, factories, and mills, industrial and commercial centers. The appearance of a class of proletarians, the emergence of a native intelligentsia, the awakening of national consciousness, the growth of the liberation movement - such are the inevitable results of this 'policy.' The growth of the revolutionary movement in all colonies and dependent countries without exception clearly testifies to this fact." (11)

"Thus the October Revolution, having put an end to the old bourgeois movement for national emancipation, inaugurated the era of a new socialist movement of the workers and peasants of the oppressed nationalities, directed against the rule

of the bourgeoisie, their own and foreign, and against imperialism in general." (12)

The consolidation of the rule of US imperialism over the Chicano Nation was achieved by the careful cultivation of the comprador bourgeoisie and its own consolidation of its position. The comprador was able to convert the penitentes into its own reserve. A number of small concessions were made on the question of land grants, eg, the establishment in 1891 of a Court of Private Land Claims. This scrap from the imperialist table approved only one-third of the land claims brought before it, but nevertheless served to pacify the explosive situation in the Chicano Nation. The Nation was carved up between three different states and territories and when the imperialists felt their political control over the Chicano Nation was secure, Colorado and finally New Mexico were admitted as States. The only victory which the national bourgeoisie was able to bring about during this period was the inclusion of those articles in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo which concerned the protection of the rights of Chicanos.

However, imperialism, in its quest to extract super-profits from the Chicano Nation, was forced to develop its resources, to build cities, and to construct means of transportation. In the process of doing these things, the proletariat developed as the most important and revolutionary class in the nation.

As early as 1890 Chicano miners organized Los Caballeros de Labor in Colfax County. The organization was eventually destroyed by means of extra-legal terror, but the miners of the Chicano Nation continued to be the vanguard of the proletariat. In 1912, one delegate to the state constitutional convention identified himself as a socialist and was elected from an area of proletarian concentration. The organizing efforts of the Industrial Workers of the World among the coal miners, in Raton, New Mexico, prompted the state to call out the National Guard in 1928.

The depression years (1930-37) drove thousands of Chicanos into the ranks of the proletariat. These were the years of the most violent struggle the proletariat of the Chicano Nation has to date waged. There was not a single strike by Chicano workers that was not met by violence. Largely ignored by the Communist Party and the American Federation of Labor, the Chicano proletariat stood as a beacon to the entire nation. Among the most significant strikes were those by the pecan shellers in San Antonio in 1934 involving six thousand workers and by several thousand miners in Gallup who sought recognition of their recently formed union, La Liga Obrera de Habla Española, which claimed eight thousand members at its height. One of the few unions to organize workers in the Chicano nation was the United Mine Workers, but their efforts came only after Chicanos had violently struggled alone. The only significant work done by the Communist Party was at the huge copper mine at Santa Rita.

During this period of unrest and widespread opposition to US imperialism, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) was formed. It was an organization of the compradors seeking to co-opt the struggles of the people and to divert them onto the path of cultural autonomy, and at the same time to cash in on these struggles by utilizing them to consolidate and expand their influence in the Chicano Nation. LULAC spread its influence over all the Southwest and consciously served the Anglo-American imperialists by glossing over the national-colonial question in the Southwest, making no distinction between Chicanos and the Mexican national minority; between the border question (the question of the massive importation of Mexican workers) and the Chicano national-colonial question. In addition, it sought to divert attention from the particular questions of the

of the Southwest by seeking unity with all Latin Americans in the United States on the basis of a struggle for "democratic" rights for the Spanish-speaking. In reality this meant only a struggle for the advancement of the Chicano compradors and the petty-bourgeois elements in Latin American communities achieved through the bloodshed of the masses.

The rapid development of the Chicano Nation after 1947 has resulted in the magnificent struggles of recent years. The single most important economic development since World War II has been the massive presence of Anglo-American military forces, particularly those sections which are occupied with atomic weaponry. Today, the largest nuclear stockpile is located inside the Manzano mountains outside of Albuquerque. Three large and extremely important facilities connected with atomic weapons are located in the Chicano Nation: Los Alamos, a research center; White Sands Proving Grounds; and the military facilities at Albuquerque. The facilities under the Atomic Energy Commission and a number of other military bases such as Kirkland Air Force Base account for more than 20% of the income of the total labor force in New Mexico. Fort Bliss is another important installation where NATO troops, particularly West German, are trained in the use of atomic weapons.

In addition to the military presence, major discoveries were made of uranium, oil, natural gas, and potash, which contributed to the growth and concentration of the proletariat. The growth of manufacturing industries is recent but the arrival of Levi Strauss Inc, Lenkurts, Singer Freiden, in addition to older establishments such as Farah, points to the further growth of the proletariat. Since 1947 the number of workers employed in non-agricultural activities has increased 78.6%.

The increased imperialist exploitation of the Chicano Nation has been met with militant resistance. Among the first to feel the stepped up oppression were the Chicanos living in Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado. No longer were they peasants but semi-proletarians, selling their labor power when possible to supplement their meager earnings from the land. In 1963 these Chicanos founded the Alianza Federal de Mercedes, which became the leading organization of the Chicano national bourgeoisie. The Alianza believed that all the problems of the Chicano people derived from the loss of their lands. They demanded their return and the complete implementation of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. They further denied the validity of Anglo-American law over Chicanos and stated that each Chicano village was self-governing and had the right of self-determination. By 1966 the Alianza claimed some twenty thousand members and organized armed actions against Anglo-American ranchers who were occupying landgrant land. The Courthouse Raid in 1967 struck fear into the hearts of the imperialists. Armed alianzistas entered the county courthouse in Tierra Amarilla, freed two alianzistas held prisoner and shot two deputies. The naked force of the US imperialists was poured into the area as troops, tanks and helicopters were used to search for the alianzistas. People were dragged from their homes at gunpoint and herded into a barbed-wire corral. The repression was quick and brutal.

The decline of the Alianza in recent years has been paralleled by the growth of militancy in the proletariat of the Chicano Nation. Its growth and concentration dialectically brings with it unionization and the growth of the communist movement. Throughout the Chicano Nation workers are struggling to organize. The role of the most militant sector of the working class has passed from the miners to the industrial and service workers. The organizing drives and militant



strikes at Farah, the University of New Mexico, the Albuquerque city workers, the city workers of Santa Fe and Artesia, and at many other workplaces throughout the entire Chicano Nation testifies to this. Of great significance is the fact that the proletariat is increasingly coming to reject petty bourgeois leadership (the wildcat strike at UNM in 1970) and is thus becoming more and more open to Marxism-Leninism.

The more the struggles of the Chicano Nation have taken the path of the struggle for national liberation, the more frantic the efforts of the comprador class to re-establish hegemony over the Chicano people's movement. The founding of El Partido de la Raza Unida typifies these efforts. This organization comes to the masses with militant rhetoric, but in reality LRUP seeks to liquidate the national-colonial question in the Southwest; it pushes the bourgeois line of cultural autonomy in order to divide the proletariat of the Chicano Nation along national lines and to distract the Chicano people from the cause of national liberation; and it diverts the struggles of the Chicano people into electoral channels and the fight for cheap concessions from the US imperialists.

However, everyday it becomes clearer that the people of the Chicano Nation are becoming aware of the real intentions of these traitors and the objective conditions exist for the people of the Chicano Nation to come to look to Marxism-Leninism and communist leadership for the organization of the national liberation movement and the attainment of a victorious socialist revolution.

### III. The Historical Evolution of the Chicano Nation

Like all nations, the Chicano Nation is the product of rising capitalism. Its formation as a nation began with the growth of the sheep industry, mining, and trade with Mexico and the United States. A Chicano bourgeoisie began to develop around the accumulation and sale of stock and minerals. The relationship of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is dialectical, thus as the Chicano bourgeoisie developed, it called into existence a Chicano proletariat. The first Chicano proletarians appeared as miners, teamsters and agricultural workers. Today the proletariat is the most numerous and important class in the Chicano Nation. Before a strategy for national liberation and socialist revolution can be discussed and worked out for the Chicano Nation, and before particular questions within it can be presented, it is necessary to understand not only its history, but its present situation. This is best done by showing that the Chicano Nation possesses the characteristics of a nation and by showing what particular forms these characteristics take.

#### A Historically Evolved, Stable Community of People

The Chicano people are ethnically distinct from their ancestors. In the veins of Chicanos flows the blood of Mexican Indians, New Mexican Indians, Spaniards, Frenchmen, Anglos, Negroes, etc. Historically the Chicanos differ from their forebears in that they have evolved in relation to the material conditions that exist in the territory that makes up the Chicano Nation and the events that have transpired in this territory, events which have shaped the Chicano physically, economically and culturally. Much of the development of the Chicano people has taken place under the rule of US imperialism and so consequently the normal development of the Nation has been twisted and deformed by economic exploitation, white chauvinism and the continual use of the raw power of the state against it.

The Chicanos are a stable community of people. They have occupied the same territory continuously since 1692 (the first settlements existed in 1598). By 1880

the Chicano Nation reached approximately its present territorial limits. The Chicano Nation is firmly rooted in place by a peasantry. The decrease in the rural population in the Chicano Nation is a normal result of the increased industrialization of the area and does not signify the loss of the peasantry. Nor does the immigration of Chicanos to Los Angeles, Denver, or Phoenix signify the disappearance of the Chicano Nation. This phenomenon is typical of the age of imperialism which tends to disperse peoples and break down national extension of the territory of the Chicano Nation. No one but a fool would suggest that, for example, the large immigration of Italians into the United States was an extension of the territory of Italy.

As indicated in Table 1, the Chicano population is growing. This growth is taking place also in those areas of Texas and Colorado which are part of the Chicano Nation. The decline in percentage of Chicanos between 1950 and 1960 was due to the massive immigration of Anglo-Americans into the Chicano Nation combined with an emmigration of Chicanos, mainly to Arizona and California, in search of work.

Recent figures indicate that throughout the Chicano Nation, the number of Chicanos is on the rise.

Growth of Spanish Surnamed or  
Spanish Language Population in New Mexico

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	1950	1960	1970
Total Population	681,187	951,023	1,015,998
Spanish Surnamed or Spanish Language Population	248,880	269,122	407,286
% of Total	36.5%	28.2%	40.0%

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Table 1 (The U.S. Census gives only figures recording the number of persons with Spanish Surname or of Spanish Language. This results in the impossibility of considering these figures as actually applying to the Chicano population which includes literally thousands of Chicanos with Anglo surnames. In addition, hundreds of Indians have Spanish surnames, there are a number of Latin Americans and there are Chicanas married to Anglos and vice versa, thus this set of figures must be considered as only a representation of the Chicano population.)

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Community of Language

The common language of the Chicano Nation is Spanish. All nations do not have to speak a different language, but capitalism demands that each nation have a common language.

For many years the use of the Spanish language declined in the Chicano Nation because of the immigration of Anglo-Americans and the brutal efforts of the U.S. imperialists to stamp out the Spanish language. Many Chicano parents did not pass the Spanish language on to their children, but now this trend is reversing itself. Though at one time it seemed that the English language would replace Spanish as the common language of the Chicano Nation, this no longer appears likely.

Anglo-American occupation of the Chicano Nation has retarded the development of the Spanish language in this part of the Spanish speaking world, and instead a number of developments have taken place in the Spanish of the Chicano Nation which are particular to the Chicano Nation and the Southwest of the United States in general. Chicanos have adopted a number of English words and expressions into their language. This is a completely logical and normal phenomenon. It is enough to see the vast number of words and expressions which the Spaniards adopted from Arabic during the Middle Ages to see how generalized this phenomenon is. In addition, both Indians and Anglos have adopted Spanish words into their languages. This development is quite common in smaller towns with a small Anglo population. In fact, it is not uncommon to hear Anglos who do not speak Spanish, speak English with a Spanish accent.

#### Community of Territory

The Chicano Nation gravitates toward the areas first colonized by the Spaniards. As the nomadic and Pueblo Indians were drastically reduced in numbers, the Chicano Nation historically expanded outward from these originally colonized areas. Its essential territorial limits were reached by 1880. Significant expansion after that time was severely limited by the influx of Anglo-American settlers and the intensive offensive of the U.S. imperialists to drive Chicanos off their lands.

The present territory of the Chicano Nation is divided between three states. This division was purely arbitrary and was done in the attempt to divide the people of the Chicano Nation.

#### Economic Community

The common economy of the Chicano Nation began to develop well before the Colonialist War of 1846 and consisted of the production and export of livestock. Mining was a small but relatively important component of the economy. The maturation of U.S. imperialism beginning in 1880, meant that the economy of the Chicano Nation would be reforged to meet the needs of U.S. imperialism. The political and economic life of the Chicano Nation have indeed become completely subordinate to the interests of the U.S. imperialists.

Opportunists of all shades will certainly say that the Chicano Nation has no economic community because economically and politically it is so closely tied to U.S. imperialism. This thoroughly degenerate position leads to the conclusion that imperialism is able to destroy nations by knocking down the barriers between separate economies. It is clear that most of the nations of Latin America are almost as closely tied to U.S. imperialism economically as the Chicano Nation, yet they exist as separate nations.

The common economy is the product of rising capitalism and its existence is made visible by the existence of those economic classes associated with capitalism.

The main classes of the Chicano Nation are the comprador bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie, the peasantry (or semi-proletariat), and the proletariat.

The comprador bourgeoisie is well referred to within the Chicano Nation as vendidos for they have sold themselves and their people to U.S. imperialism. From the early days of the subjugation of the Chicano Nation to U.S. imperialism, the imperialists have ruled the Chicano Nation through these disgusting puppets such as Miguel Otero, Sen. Dennis Chavez, and Sen. Joseph Montoya. The comprador class is a direct appendage of U.S. imperialism and depends completely on the imperialists for its survival. It has its base in the governmental bureaucracy, the educational bureaucracy, Chicano capitalists and shopowners, the welfare and social bureaucracy, the clergy and the upper level of Chicano students.

The most important members of the comprador class occupy governmental positions and have served the imperialists well in oppressing not only the Chicano Nation, but other colonies and dependent nations throughout the world. Historically, U.S. imperialism first used the strategy of neo-colonialism in the Chicano Nation, that is, the turning over of governmental positions in the Chicano Nation over to Chicanos so that it appears that Chicanos are actually determining their own fate. This same strategy has been employed in Puerto Rico and is now being implemented in the Negro Nation.

The national bourgeoisie historically derives from those members of the Chicano bourgeoisie opposed to the Anglo-American invasion of 1846 and for the establishment of a Chicano Nation so that they could exploit their own people and control the home market. They were the small land owners, artisans, and merchants of Northern New Mexico. The fierce oppression of the Chicano Nation has not allowed the economic development of the national bourgeoisie so today this role belongs to the nationalist movements such as the Alianza, the Black Berets, El Grito del Norte, and the New Mexico and Colorado sections of El Partido de la Raza Unida. The national bourgeoisie is constantly vacillating between capitulation and opposition to U.S. imperialism. Above all, they hate imperialism but they are terrified of the toiling masses.

The Chicano bourgeoisie is based in small businesses such as bars, gas stations, franchises of all types, etc. Many Chicanos own construction companies and loan associations. A few also deal in real estate and a good number are large landholders and stockmen.

For a good many years the Chicano bourgeoisie has held the leadership of the Chicano people's movement. The fights of LULAC, the G.I. Forum and MAPA for desegregation and concessions from the imperialists have predominated the struggle. The Chicano bourgeoisie is forced to raise some demands close to the hearts of the Chicano proletariat and toiling masses in order to rally them to the bourgeoisie's side. However, this is merely a sham designed only to gain more privileges for the bourgeoisie and oppress and exploit the working class even more.

The militant actions of the Chicano peasantry in their demand for a solution of the agrarian question have inspired the entire Chicano nation. They have also placed the comprador class in crisis by toppling its hegemony and opening the way for the hegemony of the proletariat in the national liberation movement and the revolutionary alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry. The Chicano peasantry is located throughout the nation, but is mainly concentrated in Southern Colorado and Northern New Mexico and in the Mesilla Valley. For years the peasantry has formed the backbone as well as the anchor of the Chicano Nation. The major crops produced are apples, chile, pecans and cotton. Thousands of head of cattle are raised.

Since 1935 there has been a substantial reduction in the number of farms and ranches in the Chicano Nation. This reduction was brought about by the seizure of farms and ranches for nonpayment of taxes. This brought about a migration to the urban centers and provided the proletarians for the further exploitation of their nation. However, the size of the peasantry is not the important question - what matters is its existence, since it anchors a nation in place and in the final analysis determines the common territory.

The demand most dear to the peasantry is the re-distribution of land. This is the key aspect of the national-colonial question and can only be accomplished by means of the victory of socialist revolution in the Chicano Nation brought about by the revolutionary alliance of the proletariat and peasantry led by a vanguard Communist Party.

The proletariat of the Chicano Nation has grown rapidly in the past few years. The proletariat includes Anglo, Negro and Indian minority workers as well as Chicanos. As has been mentioned earlier, the workers in the service and clothing manufacturing industries have taken a leading role in recent years as witnessed by militant strikes in these industries. The proletariat has rejected or is in places in the process of rejecting the leadership of the Chicano bourgeoisie. A particularly strong indication of this is the almost complete rejection of El Partido de la Raza Unida by the working class in New Mexico, where the masses know from experience that there is almost no difference between having a Chicano or an Anglo as a US Senator.

What remains to be done at this time is to build a strong multi-national Communist Party in the United States and unite the proletariat of the Chicano Nation behind the red banner of Marxism-Leninism in order that it may go on to become the vanguard of the Chicano national liberation movement and assure a just solution of the Chicano national-colonial question and the victory of socialism in the Chicano Nation.

#### Community of Culture

The roots of the Chicano culture are ancient and varied. Its origins lie in the cultures of mesoamerica, in the old cultures of the Pueblo Indians and in those of Spain, which are mixtures of Moorish and European. The common psychological makeup of the Chicanos is expressed through their culture, which has developed under the persecution of US imperialism.

Chicano literature and folk tales also have a varied origin and many of the latter are distinctively native to the Chicano Nation, e.g., the legend of La

Llorona, stories about the epic deeds of Elfege Baca and Vicente Silva, and many other stories of supernatural or historical events.

The food of the Chicano Nation is distinct from that of Mexico. One could compile an almost endless list including enchiladas, calavacitas, roast lamb, posole and menudo. Its music has been influenced by that of Mexico, Latin America and the United States. There are, however, a number of songs native to the Chicano Nation.

In conclusion, it must be said that like all things, the Chicano Nation had a beginning and will have an end. Like all things, it is subject to change. As Stalin pointed out, any one of the above characteristics does not in itself constitute a nation and should any one of them be lacking, a nation would cease to be a nation.

#### IV. The Indian Question within the Chicano Nation

Within the probable borders of the Chicano Nation there are an estimated 75,053 Indians. In addition, some 100,000 more Navajos are located outside these probable borders but must nevertheless be considered as part of the Indian question within the Nation because of their economic and cultural gravitation toward urban centers within it (e.g., Gallup New Mexico). It is easy to see that the Indian question today is of primary importance within the Chicano Nation. Hence we shall discuss it within the general framework of the Chicano national-colonial question.

#### Historical Presentation

The first inhabitants of what is now the Chicano Nation appeared in the area about 25,000 years ago. They were big game hunters who probably wandered into North America from Asia following the herds of mammoths and other suitable game. As the big game gradually became extinct, these people were forced to turn increasingly to the gathering of wild foods supplemented by small game hunting as a means of existence.

One of the single most important events in the prehistory of the Americas was the development of maize, domesticated in Mexico about 7000 years ago. Its cultivation spread slowly throughout the Americas and was introduced into the Southwest between 3000 and 1500 years ago, thus making possible the development of societies based on agriculture.

About 200 AD an important culture began to develop in the Southwest and is called the Anasazi culture. It was centered in the San Juan River valley and extended South to Delen, East to the Rio Grande Valley and West to Nevada. The Anasazi culture reached its highest stage of development between 1000 AD and 1300 AD. It was a patriarchal society based on agriculture. Beans, squash and maize were cultivated. The diet was supplemented by small game. Various archaeological findings indicate that this culture, like many of the North American Indians, was heavily influenced by the economic and cultural developments of Mexico. In addition, evidence indicates that there was substantial intercourse among the various tribes of North America.



In the Thirteenth Century, the Anasazi began the large-scale abandonment of their large urban centers such as Mesa Verde and Chaco Canyon, and moved to the Rio Grande valley. The cause of this migration is unknown but one can safely assume that a combination of the large drought in the Southwest between 1276-1299, the arrival of the Apaches, disease and arroyo cutting were contributing factors. Their membership depleted, the Anasazi established villages in the Rio Grande basin, which became known as Puebloland. It stretched from the Pueblo of Taos in the North to that of Senecul in the South; from those of Acoma and Laguna in the West to those of Pecos and Tabria (Gran Quiviva) in the East. The Pueblo Indians of New Mexico are the present-day descendants of the Anasazi.

#### The Pueblo Indians

At one time there were about 75,000 people living in Puebloland. They belonged to two linguistic groups, the Keres and the Tanoan (Tano, Tewa, Tiwa and Towa). Today the Tiwa people are located in the pueblos of Sandia, Isleta, Picuries and Taos. Before the arrival of the Spanish, the Tiwas occupied twelve additional pueblos stretching from Isleta to Bernalillo. The Towa are represented by the Jemez pueblo; however, at one time they were located in 21 other villages. The Tewa lived in the Española Basin and occupied nine pueblos, but this number today has been reduced to five, San Juan, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Nambe and Tesuque. The Tano people occupied the Galisteo basin with four settlements, of which none remains. The Keres were located in eight settlements at the time of the arrival of the Spanish and today are found in the pueblos of Cochiti, Santo Domingo, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Sia, Acoma and Laguna. The pueblo of Zuni is only remotely related to the Tanoan groups.

Agriculture was the basis of the Puebloland economy. The dog and turkey had been domesticated. Agriculture was made possible through irrigation systems. Trade was carried on with nomadic tribes for skins and meat. The Pueblo people lived in fortified adobe structures.

A common ancestry and origin plus a common economic basis allowed the development of a marked cultural unity. However, the stage of economic development allowed for no political unity. In general, villages were governed by a cacique and a war priest of equal importance. The responsibilities of the cacique were largely social and he was charged with insuring fertility and the general well-being of the people through religious ceremonies. The war priest managed internal affairs and led in the safeguarding of the people against natural calamities.

The Pueblo Indians were scattered throughout the Rio Grande Valley in seventy to eighty villages and generally occupied the best land. However, Spanish exploration and colonialization cut short the independent development of all Indian tribes in the area.

Relations between the Spanish and the Pueblos were marked by vicious and brutal exploitation of the latter, on whom the Spanish depended entirely for their existence. In New Mexico between 1540 and 1680 the Indians were forced to swear allegiance to the King of Spain and to adopt the Catholic faith. A feudal

economic system was established which was based on Pueblo labor in the fields of the missionaries and encomenderos. A sharp conflict developed between secular and religious authorities over the exploitation of Indian labor. The result was that the missionaries instituted the Inquisition in New Mexico as a weapon directed against the secular authorities. However, the Inquisition soon became a tool for securing adequate Indian labor, the Indians being forced to adopt and adhere to the Catholic faith and their leaders being eliminated. The persecution of these leaders for heresy reached frenzied proportions between 1675 and 1677. But some leaders escaped the noose. One of these was Popé, who went on to organize the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.

The Revolt was the only time in history that the Pueblos achieved unity of action. The rebellion was completely successful and the Spanish were driven out of New Mexico. A few hundred Christianized Indians left with them and settled around El Paso.

Between 1692 and 1696, the Spanish reconquered New Mexico in a number of bloody battles. A century and a half of Spanish exploitation and brutality had almost eliminated the Pueblo Indians. In 1692 only some 8,000 remained in 18 villages.

From that year to 1820 the Indians were again exploited by the Spanish feudal system; this time, however, they did not constitute the base of it. They suffered alongside the Chicano peasants to whom they were related by intermarriage. The Pueblo Indians became Spanish subjects and were legally "given" grants of land around their pueblos. In addition, they were subject to military service and were extensively used as cannon fodder against the nomadic tribes.

Mexican independence meant only a change of citizenship for the Pueblos. The rise of capitalism after 1820 meant only increased exploitation. In 1837 the Taos Indians alongside Chicano peasants revolted against Mexican rule. The immediate cause of the revolt was taxes. The Indians and peasants elected a Taos Indian as governor and filled many of the government posts with Indians. However, the Chicano bourgeoisie who had agitated for the revolt and spurred it on seized the occasion in order to install itself in power, raise an army and crush the revolt.

In 1847, Taos Indians again united with Chicanos in a revolt against the Anglo-American invaders. The ensuing repression took its toll in Indian lives.

Pueblo Indians were formally freed from feudal exploitation when peonage was officially abolished in New Mexico in 1866. But the New Mexico Territorial Supreme Court did not rule on the question until 1885 and peonage persisted in some areas into the Twentieth Century.

Although the Pueblos were declared citizens of the United States in 1867 and their landgrants were recognized in 1868, they were forced to struggle desperately for their land throughout the territorial period and after. The United States Government sought to destroy the communal land holdings of the Pueblos through a series of measures (the Dawes Act of 1887) whereby all Native Americans throughout the US were granted citizenship and the right to own private property. Thus it was made possible for individuals to sell tribal communal land. The Pueblos successfully resisted these measures and maintained their traditional land areas,

The formation of the National Forests saw the seizure of thousands of acres of traditional Pueblo land (e.g., Blue Lake). One of the major effects of American occupation was the cultural deterioration which accompanied the economic isolation of the Pueblos. In fact during the early years of the 1900s, the art of pottery-making disappeared at the Santa Ana Pueblo.

Statehood had little meaning for Pueblo Indians. In 1921 landowners holding Pueblo land sought to introduce a bill in the US Senate giving the Government jurisdiction over internal Pueblo affairs and confirming the ownership of their land by non-Indians. The Indians successfully resisted this move. In 1924, the Pueblo Lands Act recognized them as wards of the government living on communal land. It declared that such land could not be alienated without the consent of the US Government. To this day there is sharp conflict around the question of Pueblo land. The mobilization of the Taos Indians to win the return of Blue Lake and the resistance to the Colonias de Santa Fe land development project, which is taking place on Indian land, are examples.

#### The Pueblos Today

There are 20 pueblos in the Chicano Nation. The populations, landholdings and income vary widely. The Zuni Pueblo controls 407,247 acres while the Tinguas in Ysleta del Sur have only 73 which are only a state trust. The Zuni Pueblo has a population of 5,128 and a tribal enrollment of 5,352 while the Pojoaque Pueblo has a population of 60. The Ysleta del Sur has an unemployment rate of 50% and an underemployment rate of 50%, according to Federal figures, while the Isleta Pueblo has an unemployment rate of 26% and an underemployment rate of 19%. The Nambe Pueblo has a median family income of \$3,200 per year while the Sia Pueblo has an average family income of \$1,400.

Despite certain variations it is crystal clear that the Pueblo Indians are the most oppressed of the peoples within the Chicano Nation. The cause of their oppression is US imperialism. The poverty of the Pueblos is due to the lack of land; this has forced them to be dependent on subsistence agriculture, seasonal jobs and handicraft work for mere existence. US imperialism has deprived them of adequate land for two reasons: 1) the imperialists' need of land and water rights for purposes of economic exploitation of the Nation; and 2) their need to increase the size of the proletariat for the same purposes.

Historically it has been seen how the Indians and the US imperialists have clashed over the control of land. What remains is to show the increasing proletarianization of the Indians. This can be illustrated by our noting that of the 72,788 Indians in New Mexico, only 32,722 are living on a reservation or enrolled in a tribe. Of that remaining 40,066 the overwhelming majority have been driven into the proletariat, living and working in Albuquerque or other cities of New Mexico. However, US imperialism, in its ruthless oppression of the Pueblos, in its driving them into the proletariat, creates the objective conditions for its own overthrow and the solution of their problems.

## The Apaches

The Apache tribes first appeared in the Southwest in the early Fourteenth Century. They had a matriarchal society which depended upon the gathering of wild food and small game-hunting. It is sometimes thought that the arrival of the Apaches hastened the decline of the Anasazi culture. Relations between the two societies were transitory and alternated between peaceful trade and attacks by the former on the latter for the purpose of obtaining food and horses.

The arrival of the Spanish found the Appaches to be the most numerous of the Indian tribes and <sup>they</sup> were quick to name all of them. The Mescalero were so named because of their use of the mescal plant as food. The Jucarilla gained their name because of their use of baskets. The Navajo were referred to as either Navajo or Apache in Spanish writings, which makes it difficult to know whom exactly they were referring to.

The Navajo developed distinctly from the Apache tribes. They were the first American Indians to utilize the horse. This important development took place between 1650 and 1680. The Spanish sought to exploit the labor of the nomadic Indians and recognized that they would first have to force them to develop a way of life based on agriculture. They tried to achieve this through warfare and more than met their match. The Apaches and Navajos raided Spanish settlements and Pueblos almost at will. In the Sixteenth Century they brought about the closing of more than half of the Spanish missions in New Mexico. The Spanish retaliated by seizing Apache children and selling them as slaves.

The Navajos offered protection to those Pueblo Indians who fled from the Spanish yoke, and encouraged them to launch the Revolt of 1680.

The Navajos adopted many things from the Pueblos. They began raising sheep and cultivating the land. They learned the art of weaving from them and picked up the art of working silver from the Spanish. Their religious beliefs were and are those of the Pueblos superimposed on the Athapascan beliefs.

The Spanish were unable to control the Apaches at any time. When the rule of New Mexico passed to Mexico, the Mexicans did no better and the Apaches severely limited the growth of the Chicano Nation. Thus in 1848 the Mexicans insisted that the Americans assume responsibility for controlling the nomadic Indians and this agreement was written into the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

The colonialist war of 1846 and the subsequent Chicano rebellion caused the Anglo-Americans to station more soldiers in the Chicano Nation than had either Spain or Mexico. Further, the Anglo-American imperialists realized full well that exploitation of the Nation could not be achieved without the annihilation or neutralization of the nomadic Indians.

Genocidal campaigns against them were methodically carried out. It was no accident that the Anglo-Americans directed their first sustained blows against the Navajos, the largest and most influential of the Indian tribes and one which concentrated on stealing livestock.

New Mexico was organized into the Ninth military department in 1851 and in 1863, after the defeat of Confederate forces, the first expedition of the campaign

against the Navajos was launched under the leadership of Colonel Kit Carson.

Orders were given that no male Indian was to be taken prisoner. All women and children were to be. All cultivated land was to be burned and the livestock seized or destroyed. By the fall of 1864 the Navajos, two thousand of their men dead, had surrendered. They were then forced to march to Fort Sumner during the winter, and were interned there along with the Mescaleros until 1865. Thousands died of starvation, smallpox, chickenpox, whooping cough and pneumonia. In 1868 General Sherman negotiated a treaty which allowed them to return to their native lands which make up the present-day Navajo reservation.

The Mescalero were the first Indians to suffer the attacks of the Anglo-Americans. In August, 1862, Kit Carson headed an expedition to destroy them. All the men were killed, all the women and children taken prisoner, and all food destroyed. Their resistance broken after a winter-long series of attacks, they were forced to move to a temporary reservation at Bosque Redondo near Fort Sumner. After intense suffering they simply walked off this reservation, and finally, in 1873, they were given their own real Mescalero Reservation.

The Jicarilla Apaches had close relationships with the Utes and traded frequently with the Chicanos and Pueblos. Immediately after the Anglo-American invasion they professed a desire for peace. Although often carrying on small raids against livestock ranches, they never suffered the large military campaigns such as were directed against the other Apaches. Instead, they suffered more from federal bureaucracy. The Government continually sought to move them to the southern part of the state, but they successfully resisted, insisting that they would consider a reservation only in Cimarron County. In 1887 the Jicarilla Reservation was finally established.

The western Apaches (the Mimbrenos, Mogollones and Chiricahuas) came under attack when the Anglo-Americans sought to explore the area for gold and build a railroad through their lands. Specifically, an Anglo-American general tricked the Apache leader Cochise into surrendering. He escaped but the Anglo-Americans murdered his family. The Apaches under Cochise and Mancos Colorados retaliated by destroying all mines, small settlements and ranches in the area. During the Civil War they attacked both the Union and Confederate forces. Afterwards, the Anglo-Americans murdered more than one hundred peaceful Apaches, mostly women and children, in the Camp Grant Massacre. In 1872 Cochise finally surrendered and most Apaches went to Canada Alamosa to live. Many times after that Apaches left the reservations to fight the invaders, the last time being in 1885 when Geronimo led a group of Chiricahua Apaches off the reservation and fought the American and Mexican forces for a whole year before surrendering. They were forced to go to Florida until 1910, when 187 were allowed to go to the Mescalero Reservation and the rest were sent to Oklahoma.

### The Shoshone

They are the most recent of the Indian peoples to come to the Chicano Nation. Their arrival is contemporaneous with that of the Spanish. No one knows why they left their lands in Wyoming to move into the Southwest.

### The Comanches

They arrived late in the Seventeenth Century and quickly mastered horse-back riding; so well, in fact, that they were named the "Huns of the Plains" by the Spanish. They established themselves in the eastern plains of New Mexico and hunted Buffalo. They traded with the Chicanos and Pueblos at the town of Taos and the Pueblo of Pecos, and blocked any attempt of these peoples to settle East of the Rio Grande, boasting that "the only reason they allowed the Spanish and Mexicans to remain in New Mexico, Texas and Northern Mexico was to raise horses for them." (Warren A Beck, New Mexico: A History of Four Centuries, pp 37-8)

The Comanches frequently raided the Santa Fe trail. After the Anglo-American invasion they continued to do so. Close relations existed between them and the Chicanos. In fact, those Chicanos who had made their way out from Las Vegas and other towns in order to trade with the Comanches were known as Comancheros, and traded guns for cattle and whiskey for Texan scalps. They often incited the Comanches to attack Anglo-Americans and warned them of the latter's military plans.

In 1874 an extensive military campaign crushed the Comanches and the remnants of the tribe were moved to Oklahoma.

### The Utes

They arrived in New Mexico at about the same time as the Comanches and established themselves in the Espanola Valley, blocking Chicano expansion to the North. They traded extensively with the Chicanos and Pueblos.

After the Anglo-American invasion they continued much as before, and even fought alongside Anglo-American soldiers against the Navajos and Comanches. They alternately attacked and traded with Chicano settlements. In 1849 Congress appropriated \$18,000 to finance a treaty with them, and in 1850 they agreed to settle on a reservation.

However, it was not until 1853 that a site was chosen. The southern Utes settled down but the northern Utes banded together with the Jicarilla Apaches to continue raiding and fighting. In 1855 they again agreed to settle down. A number of treaties were signed and petty fighting continued until 1873 when the present Ute reservation was established. Soon afterwards a part of the Ute tribe moved to the northeast part of the reservation, which was subsequently divided into two parts, one belonging to the Southern and the other to the Mountain Utes.



### The Nomadic Indians Today

Within the Chicano Nation they are located on seven reservations. The huge Navajo tribe lives on three, totalling 1,950,000 acres, 146,996 acres and 76,813 acres. There are an estimated 140,000 Navajos enrolled in the tribe with 119,546 living on the main reservation and 1800 on the other two. (Figures come from a 1969 Federal census of Indian Reservations). The tribe has an income of \$16 million a year: 69% from oil, gas and minerals, 16% from businesses, 3% from forestry and 22% from investments. (The tribe has more than \$10 million invested in securities.) It is governed by a tribal council of 74 members representing 96 chapters of the reservation. It employs 1000 full-time and another 400 part-time workers. The tribal council owns a number of businesses including two motels, agricultural cooperatives, a Crafts Guild, the Navajo Forests Products Industry and the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority. Seven large private businesses operate on Navajo land, including Fairchild Semiconductor and General Dynamics. It is obvious that the exploitation of the resources of the Navajo people by the US imperialists would bring into existence a stratum of Navajos whose purpose is to facilitate this exploitation. This stratum is represented by the Tribal Council in general and is personified by Peter McDonald, the Navajo Tribal Chief.

Despite the wealth of Navajoland, the Navajos have an unemployment rate of 51% and an underemployment rate of 23%. The life expectancy of males is 44 years. Tribal law prohibits the unionization of Indians on the reservation. Clearly, only a handful of the Navajos profit by the US imperialist exploitation of their land and labor power, while the vast majority suffer unbearably. Slowly poverty and unemployment are forcing more and more of the people into the proletariat of the cities.

The situation of the Mescaleros, Utes and Jicarillas is similar but on a smaller scale. There are 1676 Mescaleros on 460,384 acres of land; they have an annual income of \$570,000 coming mainly from production of forest products. They have an unemployment rate of 69% and an underemployment rate of 11%. The Jicarillas hold 742,315 acres. Of the 1491 on the reservation the median yearly family income is \$4,500; the unemployment rate is 42% and the underemployment rate is 14%. As far as the Utes are concerned, there are 596 on the Southern Ute reservation and 1147 on the Mountain. The former hold 307,100 acres, and have an annual total income of \$448,800 and an annual median family income of \$4,500. The rate of unemployment is 52% and that of underemployment is 35%. The latter hold 567,377 acres and have a total annual income of \$1, <sup>million</sup> and an annual median family income of \$4,500. The unemployment rate is 84%.

In each of these tribes a stratum has arisen which fronts for US imperialism. The miserable lives of the masses stand in complete contradiction to the imperialists' lies about the prosperity of the New Mexico Indians, more and more of whom, in reality, are forced into the proletariat. It is the duty of communists to fight for the unity of the working class. In the Chicano Nation it is the duty of communists to unite the nation under the leadership of the working class to defeat US imperialism and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the coming battles the oppressed Indian peoples constitute a reserve of the working class and will certainly be a valiant and staunch ally in the struggle.

## V. The Border Question and the Chicano Nation

### The Waves of Immigration

The Border Question, that is, the massive influx of Mexican workers into the United States, has its origin in the demand of the imperialist exploitation of the Southwest for a proletariat. U.S. imperialism instituted a policy of encouraging immigration of Mexicans to meet this need for labor power to develop and exploit the Southwest as a region. Mexican labor built the railroads, developed the truck farming industry, the sugar beet industry and the cotton industry in the Southwest.

In general, there are three distinct waves of Mexican immigration. The first one in 1900, the second during the Mexican revolution beginning in 1910 and lasting until 1930, and the third which began during and after World War II.

The first wave resulted from the immediate economic demands of U.S. imperialism. The period from 1870 to 1900 was the period of the completion of the western railroads and the beginning of capitalist agriculture in the Southwest. Between 1870 and 1900 the total farm acreage tripled and the amount of land under irrigation increased from 60,000 to 1,446,000 acres.\* It was during this period that U.S. imperialism was busy committing genocide against the Indians and ruthlessly driving Chicano peasants off the land by legal means and extra-legal terror. However, there were not enough Chicano workers to fill the vacuum that was created in the labor market by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. The vacuum was filled by Mexican national minority workers.

The first capitalists to send agents to recruit workers from Mexico were the railroad bosses. After 1880, seventy percent of the section crews and ninety percent of the extra gangs on the principal western lines, which employ between 35,000 and 50,000 workmen in these categories were Mexican workers. (McWilliams, North from Mexico, Greenwood Press, NY p. 168, 1948).

The railroads constantly lost workers to other industries and so they were constantly recruiting workers in Mexico. The railroads spread Mexican national minority workers throughout the Southwest and the country. Mexicans worked in Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Montana, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. In 1900 the Southern Pacific was employing 4,500 Mexicans in California and the Mexican community in Watts (Tajauta) dates from 1906.

The major industry to which the railroads lost workers initially were the sugar beet and cotton industries which expanded rapidly in the West between 1900 and 1917. Between 1890 and 1910 cotton became an important crop in Western Texas and Mexican labor re-

\*Meier and Ravira, The Chicanos, Hill and Wong, NY, p. 124, 1972

placed poor-white and Negro sharecroppers. Mexicans were recruited out of Brownsville, Laredo, Eagle Pass and El Paso and concentrated in San Antonio from where they were shipped into the fields.

The recruitment and delivery of Mexican workers became an enterprise in itself. so-called labor smugglers recruited and sold Mexican workers. Workers who tried to escape were chained. At night workers were locked in barns to prevent a rival smuggler from stealing them. During the day they were marched under armed guard to terminal points.

The Mexican Revolution displaced large numbers of Mexicans, many of whom fled to the U.S. This wave of immigration had tremendous effects on the Southwest. Because of its tremendous volume, it provided the matrix for the Mexican national minority communities in California and elsewhere and underscored and reinforced Chicano communities in Texas.

The massive influx of Mexican national minority workers caused by the Mexican Revolution was aided and encouraged by the U.S. imperialists. The expansion in industry brought on by selling to the Western European imperialist powers was in part made possible by Mexican workers. Between 1917 and 1920 some 50,000 Mexicans entered the U.S. "legally" and an additional 100,000 others are estimated to have entered during the same period. Mexican workers generally faced the lowest wages and were given the most menial jobs. Housing was incredibly poor and any sort of health care was non-existent. Much of the work was for short duration. Many workers were fired and never paid.

During this process, many Mexican national minority workers who had arrived in the first wave of immigration sought work in factories in the larger cities. By the end of World War I, Mexicans were working in coal mines, steel mills, meat packing houses, automobile plants, etc., in Michigan, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois and Pennsylvania, as well as in the Southwest. In 1918 Detroit had a Mexican national minority community of 8,000, and Chicago of 4,000. All totaled, some 70,000 Mexicans including some Chicanos (natives of the Chicano Nation) were living east of the Mississippi; however, some 423,000 Mexican born persons were concentrated in the four states of Texas, California, Arizona and New Mexico.

It was during this second wave of immigration that the focal point of entrance shifted from Texas to California. This was caused by the tremendous economic development which was taking place in California, such as the development of more than 200 commercial crops in California. By 1930 there were 368,000 persons of Mexican descent in California. By 1925 there were more Mexicans in Los Angeles than in any city in Mexico except Mexico City. And between 1920 and 1930, California had an annual increase in the Mexican national minority community of 20.4 percent, as compared to Texas with 26 percent. The depression ended the second wave of immigration with large numbers of deportations and the voluntary return of workers who found no work in the U.S.

As we stated above, most American national minority workers found jobs in the agricultural industry, especially in California. Because life is dialectical, the rise of the large commercial farm companies, like the DiGiorgio Fruit Corporation, the Kern County Land Company, the Newhall-Sangus Land Company, etc. was accompanied by the formation of workers' organizations. The intollerable conditions of life for agricultural workers gave rise to militant and violent struggles throughout the Southwest. Beginning in 1903 when Mexican and Japanese workers walked out of the field near Ventura, California to today, with the struggles of farm-workers throughout the country, minority workers have had a long history of militant struggle. Nor have they confined their resistance to the fields. Bitter struggles have taken place in coal mines, on the railroads and in factories.

The conditions of Mexican national minority workers in that period and today were exemplified by the Durst Ranch in 1913 where there were eight toilets for three thousand workers, inadequate drinking water, no garbage disposal, dirt low wages, etc. The IWW sought to organize the workers there and met with fierce resistance. Sheriffs fired on workers, killing four. Four companies of national guard occupied the rance. More than 100 workers were arrested, many were deported. The IWW organizers were sentenced to prison for life.

This type of vicious repression was the rule in the struggles of Mexican national minority workers. Evidence of this is the strike of workers in the Imperial Valley in 1928. This strike was broken by wholesale arrests and threats of deportations. Between 1930 and 1935 there were a large number of strikes led by the Trade Union Unity League and the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union, (CAWIU) both communist led. The TUUL was involved in the struggles of the migrant workers from 1929. It organized a number of hunger marches to protest high unemployment and poor wages. In 1933, dissatisfied with wages of 39 cents an hour, workers struck the El Monte Berry Company in a strike led by the Confederación de Uniones de Campesinos y Obreros Mexicanos. This organization became the most active agricultural union and by 1933 claimed some 5,000 members.

One of the most significant strikes of the thirties was by the San Joaquin Valley cotton pickers led by the CAWIU in 1933. It involved some 18,000 workers. The strike was defeated by large scale extra-legal terror, the national guard and the use of the Mexican council to try to "reason with the workers".

In order to meet the growing militant unity of Mexican national minority workers, the growers formed the Associated Farmers of California which opposed unionization in general and called for use of the state's criminal syndicalism law in labor struggles and for legislation to outlaw picketing. By 1934, this group turned

to blatant force as a means of suppressing the desires of the workers to organize. An example of this was the Brentwood, California strike in 1934 when deputies and vigilantes penned up 200 workers and shipped them out of the country. Raids were carried out against the CAWIU and its leaders arrested. When the CPUSA dissolved the TUUL in 1935 the CAWIU went into decline.

Militant strikes continued under the leadership of the CUCON through 1935, 1936, 1937. These strikes were crushed by the traditional methods of growers, police, guards, tear gas, killings, arrests and deportations.

In 1937, many Mexican national minority agricultural workers' unions affiliated with the United Cannery, Agriculture, Packing and Allied Workers of America (CIO) at the first national convention of agricultural workers in Denver. However, most Mexican unions went on to affiliate with the AFL.

The third wave of immigration began during World War II and has continued through today. In August of 1942, the U.S. imperialists began recruiting Mexican workers according to an agreement between the U.S. and Mexico. In a five year period approximately 250,000 braceros were brought into work, primarily for California agricultural companies (especially citrus and sugar beet industries. During this period 200,000 braceros were employed in 21 states. In 1947 this program was ended and another began which spanned the years from 1948 to 1964, during which time 4,500,000 braceros temporarily came into the United States to work. In addition, the "legal" braceros were supplemented by thousands of Mexican workers who "illegally" came into the United States. Between 1946 and 1954 these workers supplied the main amount of labor power to growers in the lower Rio Grande Valley. In 1949, an estimated half million workers crossed the border into the U.S. "illegally".

The end of the bracero program in 1964 saw a rise in the so-called "commuter labor". These Mexican workers are divided into Bluecarders and Greencarders. Greencarders are entitled to permanent legal residence in the U.S., while Bluecarders may not stay more than 72 hours in the U.S.. These workers have taken the position of braceros. In 1970, between 100,000 and 150,000 "commuters" were working in the Southwest. Forty percent of them work in agriculture. Others work in the garment industry. In 1965 "commuters" formed twenty three percent of the work force in Brownsville, seventeen percent in El Paso, and five percent in San Diego.

#### The Border Question Today

There are two major aspects to the border question in the Southwest today: the presence of millions of Mexican national minority people in the states of California, Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado, and the influx of Mexican national workers into the border area, both legally as commuters and illegally as *mojados*.

Let us consider the latter aspect first. The extensive use of Mexican workers in the Southwest is an excellent example of how a semi-colonial country like Mexico is used as a reserve for the U.S. imperialists. The imperialists use the Mexican national workers to create a vast reserve labor force in the Southwest. The use of Mexican workers has depressed the wages in the region and results in high unemployment for Chicanos and Mexican national minority workers as well as for other workers. Mexican workers are used to break strikes and thwart union organizing drives. The white chauvinist policies of the AFL-CIO and the revisionist CPUSA stand as our obstacles to proletarian internationalism. This white chauvinism is directed against Chicanos and the Mexican national minority as well as Mexicans and thus blocks the unity of the working class in the Southwest. In addition, the national chauvinism of Chicanos and Mexican national minority workers is actively developed and pushed by the U.S. imperialists and their agents like the CPUSA and creates the absurd, idiotic situation where Mexican workers are mistreated by their class and block brothers and sisters.

Conditions for the Mexican workers are some of the worst suffered by any workers in this country. Labor contractors (contractistas) have a thriving business smuggling workers in at \$150 and \$200 a head. As they are being brought in and taken to their place of work, Mexican workers suffer gross indignities and physical abuse and pain. Hundreds die of dehydration or carbon monoxide poisoning. They are crowded in vans, cars or trucks and transported hundreds of miles without being allowed to relieve themselves. Many die of suffocation in these crowded conditions.

Once on the job, usually in the fields, the workers are served poor food, many times unfit for human consumption. There is sub-standard housing at excessive rates, no sanitary facilities, inadequate sewage, infested drinking water causing malaria and dysentery. They are physically abused, exposed to pesticides, subject to excessive deductions from their paychecks. Often they are not paid but deported.

Efforts to organize trade unions are met by the usual methods of the growers: legal violence, extra-legal terror, arrests and deportations.

The bourgeois solution to this aspect of the border question is exemplified by the Rodino Bill. (sponsored by Congressman Peter Rodino D-NJ) This bill will lay the legal foundation for the massive deportation of Mexican and of Latin American workers who are in the U.S. without immigration papers. In addition to the deportations, there is the strengthening of the Border Patrol, which is already charged with the task of rounding up and deporting about 400,000 Mexicans a year.



The agents of the bourgeoisie among the working class, like reformist labor union leaders and the revisionist CPUSA are supporting the bill as a "realistic solution" to the border question. On the question of the fascist border patrol, the CPUSA merely asks that "the border patrol in its present form (our emphasis) must be abolished." This demagogic position of the revisionists coupled with their white chauvinism against Mexican workers successfully aids the bourgeoisie in their drive for super-profits and the division of the international working class.

Communists proceed to solve this aspect of the question by pointing out first, that nothing short of proletarian revolution will actually lay the basis for the ultimate solution of this question. U.S. imperialism has no intention of ending the general depression of wages in the Southwest by closing the border to Mexican workers. The deportations and other fascist tactics are merely means by which U.S. imperialism controls Mexican workers, breaks their organizing drives, and deceives workers in general.

Communists do not fight for closing the borders nor do they support deportations. Instead of national chauvinism we advocate proletarian internationalism as the basis for the solution of the border question. We raise the slogan: "Full democracy and equal rights for Mexican national workers." Communists must fight for an end to deportations and the abolition of the Border Patrol in any form. We seek to carry out political work among Mexican national workers, organize them and lead them in the fight for equal wages and conditions for the Mexican national workers.

Among native workers, communists expose the imperialists and their agents in the working class like the CPUSA. True communists set forth the real nature of the question and publicize the conditions of Mexican national workers. They resolutely point out that fascist laws are not the basis for the mistreatment and exploitation of Mexican national workers, nor are Mexican workers to blame for the depressed wages and high unemployment of the Southwest. Communists show that U.S. imperialism is solely responsible for this situation and only a proletarian revolution led by a multi-national Communist Party can put an end to this situation and lay the basis for a just solution of this aspect of the situation.

The second aspect of the Border Question is the large presence of a Mexican national minority in the Southwest. This aspect divides into two distinct but interrelated questions: The question of the Mexican national minority in the Chicano Nation, and the question of the Mexican national minority in the rest of the Southwest.

Let us consider the former question first.

Travel between the Chicano Nation and Mexico continued almost uninterrupted after the Anglo-American conquest. This was especially true in Southwestern Texas. When, between 1890 and 1920, the U.S. imperialists needed workers to make possible the imperialist exploi-

tation of the Southwest, the workers were expropriated Chicano peasants and Mexican workers. The majority of Mexican workers passed through the Chicano Nation. El Paso and San Antonio became large centers where Mexican workers were grouped up and sent out into the fields and the factories. Only during the second wave of immigration did the majority of immigrants begin to go into California in search of work.

Mexicans moving into the Chicano Nation faced a different situation from Mexicans moving into the rest of the Southwest. They found security and support in the Chicano Communities. Mexicans quickly merged into the Chicano Nation as their own. Mexican integration strengthened and reenforced the Chicano culture and language. They infused it with new values and attitudes from Mexico. They swelled the number of Chicanos making them an extremely visible people in the Southwest. The integration of Mexicans into the Chicano Nation brought about closer emotional and cultural ties between the Chicano Nation and Mexico. It produced feelings of solidarity and internationalism between Chicano and Mexican workers and peasants.

All of these facts illustrate the historical merger of the Hispano and Mexican (along with others) into the ethnically distinct Chicano, the transformation of a Mexican national minority into an integral part of the Chicano Nation. This fact should not be misconstrued to mean that regional differences do not exist in the Chicano Nation, or that Chicanos do not suffer from that same absurd national chauvinism the American Negroes often feel toward African or Latin American Negroes. Regional differences do exist as they do in every nation in the world. There are cultural and language differences between the Northern and Southern parts of the Chicano Nation. The Southern part has closer ties with Mexico due to the closeness of the border and large number of Chicanos with Mexican ancestry within the past three generations.

The result of this merger of the Mexican national minority into the Chicano Nation means that the principal aspect of the Border Question is the aspect of the commuter workers.

In the rest of the Southwest the principal aspect is the presence of a vast Mexican national minority. An estimated eight million Spanish surnamed persons live outside of the Chicano Nation in the Southwest. The vast majority of these persons are of Mexican descent. These people have retained, for the most part, the language, history, and traditions of Mexico. The vast majority of them are workers. The just solution of this question is therefore of greatest importance to the working class of the Anglo-American Nation.

The slogan of regional autonomy for the Southwest raises the concrete solution of the border question. This allows for the establishment of full democracy in the Southwest.

This solution of the Border Question also allows most importantly for unity of the working class of the Anglo-American nation because regional autonomy does not divide workers along national lines.

It does, though, deal with a definite territory where a national minority lives in compact groups. It gives the working class power to utilize and develop the resources of the territory. The Mexican national minority will have the right to organize their own courts and offer political and economic bodies functioning in Spanish with members recruited from among Mexican national minority people to develop the culture, press, schools, etc. (See Stalin, Marxism and the National Question)

The historical evolution of the national-colonial question in the Southwest has made possible the development of bourgeois organizations pushing the line of cultural autonomy. (LULAC, La Raza Unida Party, etc) These organizations seek to liquidate the national question in the Southwest by denying the existence of two separable questions, the border question and the Chicano National-Colonial Question. They seek to utilize the struggles of the Chicano Nation for national liberation and the struggles of the Mexican national minority for democratic rights in order to advance and consolidate their own positions in the Chicano Nation and in Chicano and Mexican national minority communities.

These organizations are tools of the US imperialists, backed by the Chicano comprador bourgeoisie and financed by large foundations. An examination of their record of action provides adequate proof of their role in coopting struggles in the Southwest.

First of all, they are attempting to drag the Chicano national liberation struggles onto the path of electoral politicking. They are trying the same thing in Mexican national minority communities. Secondly, these organizations are raising seemingly militant slogans against discrimination in support of working class struggles, and against US imperialism in a broad general sense. However, they ignore key issues such as the redistribution of lands in the Chicano Nation. They raise these slogans to rally the working class and patriots of the Chicano Nation and Mexican national minority workers behind them and direct their struggles to their, the opportunists', advantage.

The real struggles of these organizations are for more privileges for the petty bourgeois elements. They fight for OEO and other governmental bureaucratic positions. They demand more teaching and business positions. Thus they make it very clear where their interests actually lie.

And finally they push the rotten line of cultural autonomy and the idea of a raza unida without classes. Thus for them Aztlan is not a territorial entity, but a psychological state, and national liberation is a metaphysical construct.

In conclusion, we see how the border question in the Southwest overlaps with the Chicano National-Colonial Question. This fact provides the material basis for the existence of imperialist-backed organizations seeking to sabotage the struggles of the people of the Chicano Nation and of the Mexican national minority by pushing the line of cultural autonomy and diverting the struggle into the electoral arena.

We saw how the Border Question divides into two aspects, the presence of a Mexican national minority and the immigration of Mexican workers. We raised the

slogan of "Regional Autonomy for the Southwest" as a general solution to the Border Question and noted that the solution of the Chicano National-Colonial Question, that is, the exercising of the right to self-determination, will result in the solution of the Border Question in the Chicano Nation.

At present, communists must fight for full democracy and equality for the Mexican national minority and Mexican immigrants; an end to the border patrol and the fascist deportation of Mexicans; and self-determination for the Chicano Nation.

The Communist Collective of the  
Chicano Nation

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## AN OPEN LETTER TO THE DENVER LEFT

Recently in Denver certain members of the progressive intelligentsia, accompanied by some workers and a scattering of trade union bureaucrats held a demonstration organized around the program that: "We have a right to organize and to fight for a better standard of living and working conditions. We believe that workers in Denver must stand together to win against this organized attack. This means not only refusing to scab and cross picket lines and joining each other's lines, but also fighting against the divisions among ourselves that the employers and government promote - pitting the organized against the unorganized, union against union, men against women, white against black, anglo against chicano." (Quoted from the leaflet announcing the demonstration.)

The Communist League supports the democratic demands advanced by this demonstration and the struggles of those honest workers and progressive-minded intellectuals moving toward the working class who took part in it. That the working class in order to win its war against capital must be united is obvious. However, as Communists, the CL knows that it is its duty not only to support the progressive motion of the working class and its allies, but also to raise the level of the consciousness of the working class forces. We are also aware as Communists and as dialecticians that all things contain internal contradictions and that one divides into two. Finally, we understand that it is our duty to expose opportunism and revisionism in all its guises and to crush the influence of opportunism and revisionism in the working class movement in order to prepare the conditions for the triumph of socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat. How this Marxist-Leninist position is applied in practice can be seen by the stand taken by the Communist League on the question of Chile. We have always supported and do support the just revolutionary struggles of the workers and oppressed peoples of Chile against USNA imperialism for socialism and a dictatorship of the proletariat. We were also aware, however, that the movement in Chile contained two contradictory elements, the revolutionary workers and peasants, and the petty-bourgeois revisionist leadership under the hegemony of the revisionist line of a "peaceful transition to socialism" pushed by the counter-revolutionary clique which is temporarily in power in the Soviet Union. We saw even then (February 1973 People's Tribune, Volume 5, Number 1, "Reply to October League Attack") that the petty-bourgeois leadership of the Allende government and the Communist Party of Chile, dominated by the revisionist line of the CPSU, was leading the working class of Chile into counter-revolutionary slaughter by not carrying through the revolution to its goal: socialism and a dictatorship of the proletariat. We criticized the Allende government for not smashing the old bourgeois state apparatus, the police, and the army particularly, and we pointed out that by not doing so the petty-bourgeois revisionist leadership of Allende and the CP of Chile were leading the workers and peasants of Chile to fascism. The CL's analysis of last February has proved to be tragically correct. We would have given much to be wrong. The revolutionary workers and peasants of Chile are now paying in blood for the opportunism and revisionism of their leadership in succumbing to the line of the ruling Soviet revisionist clique.

As Communists we must apply to all manifestations of the motion of the working class the same thorough dialectical Marxist-Leninist analysis that we applied to

the Chilean situation. We must distinguish between the honest revolutionary motion of the working class and its allies and the opportunist and revisionist leadership that seeks to mislead this revolutionary motion. We must isolate and ruthlessly expose opportunism and revisionism. We must trace it back to its source, in this country the CPUSA and ultimately the revisionist clique that has murdered its way into power in the Soviet Union. For this we will earn the hatred of the opportunists but only in this way can we build a real Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, unite the working class and triumph in our struggle for socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In Denver also we must apply this analysis. The recent demonstration was composed of many elements, honest and opportunist. We encourage the honest elements to continue to move toward the working class, to examine their position and to constantly strive to more and more closely approximate a line which is in accordance with the objective class struggle and its subjective expression which is the line of Marxism-Leninism. To be young and inexperienced is no crime, all parties and all persons must pass through such a stage. If we struggle to study and apply the line of Marxism-Leninism we will pass safely through this stage, we will renounce opportunism and grow to be able to serve our class as conscious communist revolutionaries. On the other hand there were elements that participated in the demonstration who were opposed to the line of Marxism-Leninism and who go to the working class movement to mislead this movement with the line of revisionism and opportunism. These elements group themselves around the line of the Revolutionary Union, a lap-dog organization of the CPUSA. In opposition to the line of Leninism on party-building the RU pushes the position that what we need to do is build the class struggle and an anti-imperialist united front. In practice this line differs not at all from that of the CPUSA: Build an anti-monopoly coalition. The spontaneous class struggle is an objective process constantly occurring, what a Communist must do is not build it but build a Marxist-Leninist party that can give to the spontaneous struggle correct leadership. Lenin fought out this question some seventy years ago in his struggle with the Economists in Russia. His views are presented in his great work What is to be done? In this work, while speaking of the necessity for a party, Lenin says, "Only a gross failure to understand Marxism (or an 'understanding' of it in the spirit of Struvism) could prompt the opinion that the rise of a mass spontaneous working-class movement relieves us of the duty of creating as good an organization of revolutionaries as the Zemlya i Volya had, and even an incomparably better one. On the contrary, this movement imposes this duty on us, because the spontaneous struggle of the proletariat will not become its genuine 'class struggle' until this struggle is led by a strong organization of revolutionaries." (FLPP, 1973, Peking, p 166)

Further, Marx says that the proletariat must do its utmost to gain final victory by "taking up their position as an independent party as soon as possible and by not allowing themselves to be seduced for a single moment by the hypocritical phrases of the democratic petty-bourgeois into refraining from the independent organization of the party of the proletariat." (Marx, "Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League," CL pamphlet, p 185)

It is not the duty of a Communist to build the spontaneous struggle of the proletariat against capital; this struggle grows out of the objective contradictions inherent in bourgeois society and fundamentally from the contradiction between the socialized nature of the means of production and the anarchistic capitalistic



nature of the relations of production. The duty of a Communist, in conditions where there is no independent party of the proletariat to lead the struggle of the working class for socialism is to build such a party as soon as possible.

What does the RU line of building an anti-imperialist united front mean in practice in the USNA at a time when the USNA is the main imperialist oppressor of the entire world? We believe we can best see what this line means by examining the recent demonstration in Denver which the RU participated in, helped to organize, and misled. The demonstration was called under the slogan of "Unite to Fight Union Busting." Now to understand the worth of this slogan, Communists must, of course, go into an analysis of what role the trade unions play for the bourgeoisie and for the proletariat under capitalism. Lenin points out the progressive nature of trade unions in the early days of capitalist development by calling them "schools for communism," but he goes on to say, "In countries more advanced than Russia, a certain reactionariness in the trade unions has been and was bound to be manifested to a much stronger degree than it was in our country...The Mensheviks of the west have acquired a much firmer 'footing' in the trade unions; there the craft union, narrow-minded, selfish, casehardened, covetous, petty bourgeois, 'labor aristocracy,' imperialist-minded, imperialist-bribed and imperialist-corrupted, emerged as a much stronger stratum than in our country...we wage the struggle against the 'labor aristocracy' in the name of the masses of the workers and in order to win them to our side; we wage the struggle against the opportunists and social chauvinist leaders in order to win the working class to our side." (Lenin, 'Left-Wing' Communism, FLPP, 1965, pp 42-3) Further, Lenin says, "The victory of the revolutionary proletariat is impossible unless this evil is combated, unless the opportunist, social-traitor leaders are exposed, discredited and expelled." (Ibid., p 30) This labor aristocracy of which Lenin speaks can be easily identified today in the USNA. The Meany clique, the Hutchesons, the Woodcocks, the Fitzsimmons clique, the Tony Boyles and the Arnold Millers. The men who supported USNA imperialist aggression in Korea, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic and Vietnam. These men have sold out the struggles of the workers here in the USNA and around the world again and again and we as Communists and Internationalists cannot support them, in fact it is our duty, which we undertake with pleasure, to expose and discredit them as the imperialist lackeys that they are. We as Communists also oppose union-busting, however; we oppose and will fight against with all our strength any fascist attacks on workers. We support the struggles of the militant Farmworkers against the growers and against the fascist attacks of the goon squads hired by the Fitzsimmons clique contrary to the will of the rank and file Teamsters. We do this in the name of the working class and we fight to organize workers under the banner of a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, not under the pacifist opportunism of a Cesar Chavez (who demands the deportation of illegal alien "scabs" saying that they are the cause of the Farmworkers' oppression) nor under the open fascist opportunism and white chauvinism of a George Meany who is notorious among progressive workers for his support of the USNA imperialists' brutal war against the Vietnamese people and for his white chauvinist trumpeting for "law and order," the well-known code phrase which means "crush the Negro People's movement by means of terror." Communists must fight to organize under the slogans of socialism and a dictatorship of the proletariat, not under the banner of bourgeois trade unionism which aims to betray the working class to fascism. For a Communist to organize a demonstration under such trade unionist slogans and not propagandize the need for a party and not expose the opportunist social-chauvinist leadership of the "labor aristocracy" is a serious right opportunist deviation. To say, "We have a right to organize and fight for a better standard of living and working

conditions" in the imperialist USNA without exposing that the standard of living which now exists in this country is based upon the imperialist plunder and rape of the colonies and semi-colonies is blatant white chauvinism, is reinforcing and heightening the divisions in the working class, not healing them. This of course is emphatically not to say that Communists should not work in the trade unions, for Communists must work wherever the working class is gathered. Communists must go into the trade unions and into all organizations of the working class to raise the level of the consciousness of the workers and expose the bourgeois and opportunist leadership that in most cases now has hegemony in these organizations. Communists must constantly strive to raise the spontaneous consciousness of workers to the level of class consciousness. We must build a vanguard Marxist-Leninist Communist Party that can organize, guide and direct the struggle of the working class for socialism and workers' democracy, which is a dictatorship of the proletariat. To do this we must struggle uncompromisingly with revisionism and opportunism whether it manifest itself as terrorism and anarchism, or as opportunism, the tendency to tie the working class to the tail of the liberal bourgeoisie, and the worship of the spontaneous motion of the working class above the Communist goal of socialism and a dictatorship of the proletariat. We must strive to create an independent political party of the class as our first step and we must always follow the path of Communist revolution as outlined by Marx and Lenin who many years ago correctly solved the same problems as we face today.

"All worship of the spontaneity of the mass movement and any degrading of social-democratic politics to trade unionist politics means precisely preparing the ground for converting the working class movement into an instrument of bourgeois democracy. The spontaneous working class movement is able to create (and inevitably creates) only trade unionism, and working class trade unionist politics are precisely working class bourgeois politics." (Lenin, What is to be done?, Op. cit., p 117)

"At the same time, and quite apart from the general servitude involved in the wage system, the working class ought not to exaggerate to themselves the ultimate working of these everyday struggles. They ought not to forget that they are dealing with effects, but not with the causes of those effects; that they are retarding the downward movement but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerrilla fights incessantly springing up from the never-ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand that, with all the miseries it imposes on them, the present system simultaneously engenders the material conditions and the social forms necessary for the economical reconstruction of society. Instead of the conservative motto, 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!', they ought to inscribe on their banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the wages system!' (Marx, Wages, Price and Profit, FLPP 1965, pp 77-8)

Crush opportunism!

Build a real Marxist-Leninist Communist Party!

Comrades in the Denver Area of  
the Communist League

ON THE WORKING CLASS HISTORY OF LOS ANGELES

(Note: This is a reproduction of a speech a comrade from the Communist League gave at a Los Angeles May Day rally in 1973)

Dear Comrades and Friends,

One year ago on May Day Comrade Nelson, chairman of the Communist League, summed up what our outlook should be on this happy day of the working class. He said then that "May Day is always a day of summing up experiences and pointing out the path of future development." And so it is with us today. I would like to make some brief remarks concerning the history of our working class in this Los Angeles area and the present situation in which the class finds itself today.

Our basic thesis centers around the fact that the increasingly rapid rise of USNA imperialism from 1900 to the present and its penetration and domination of the markets and nations of Asia and Latin America in particular are paralleled by the rise of the West Coast and particularly of the Los Angeles area as a center of shipping, manufacture, defense and of course the proletariat. The area around Los Angeles contains the second largest industrial concentration within the United States of North America. 70% of all manufacture in this area is directly related to the harbor. The defense industries service the huge military machine in the Pacific which has no less than 119 major military installations ringing mainland China from the Bering Straits to the Indian Ocean. The Japanese Islands alone are host to over 180 military installations of all sizes. In 1970 California defense contractors received almost \$6 billion worth of awards from the Defense Department. The California aerospace industry employs over one-half million workers.

Let us look back and point to some factors that contributed to the development of Los Angeles as a major area of concentration of the industrial proletariat. At the turn of the century there were barely 6,500 manufacturing workers employed in Los Angeles. San Francisco in comparison had early developed as a center of commerce and industry. The discovery of gold and certain other minerals in the North had led to extensive railroad construction. Also the strategic natural harbor of San Francisco had made it an important port in the Far East trade. Along with this developed, at least among the skilled workers, a highly organized and strong trade union movement.

Los Angeles on the other hand had no natural harbor, no readily apparent power or water supply, no well-developed transport routes. However from the bourgeois point of view it did have a few other things going for it. Firstly the capitalist class from 1888 onwards was highly organized, led from the first days by Colonel Harrison Gray Otis, editor of the Los Angeles Times. Their conscious goal, from the beginning, was to preserve LA as an open-shop town. Secondly there were virtually unlimited quantities of cheap land available. Thirdly and most importantly was the close proximity of the states of Northern Mexico with its large reserve pool of workers who were readily available as the USNA capitalist class needed their labor power.

At the turn of the century however the reserve labor pool in Los Angeles came from the teeming slums of the mid-western and eastern industrial centers. Carey McWilliams, the liberal California historian, writes, "During the winter months, special 'homeseekers' excursion trains' brought thousands of workers to the region at cut rates. Having land to burn, the Southland dangled the bait of 'cheap homes' before the eyes of the prospective homeseekers. 'While wages are low,' the argument went, 'homes are cheap'...From early beginnings around 1900, the homeseeker influx was gradually increased by systematic recruitment and advertizing. By 1910 the annual winter influx of homeseekers was estimated at thirty thousand and the excursion trains, starting in October, arrived at the rate of one a week...Naturally such a situation created a highly competitive labor market in Los Angeles, a market characterized by an extraordinarily high turnover. From 1890 to 1910, wages were from 20% to 30%, and in some cases even 40% lower than in San Francisco. It was precisely this margin that enabled Los Angeles to grow as an industrial center. Thus the maintenance of a cheap labor pool became an indispensable cog in the curious economics of the region. For the system to work, however, the labor market had to remain unorganized; otherwise it would become impossible to exploit the homeseeker element. The system required - it absolutely demanded - a non-union open-shop set-up." (1)

Early attempts of the San Francisco-based American Federation of Labor unions to assist in the organizing of LA were doomed to failure. Part of this was due to organized resistance put up by the local capitalists. McWilliams writes, "...in 1896,...two groups merged, under the leadership of the Times, as the Merchants and Manufacturers Association, which quickly became, in the words of Peter Clark MacFarlane, 'the greatest closed-shop organization this country has ever known.' One of the first acts of the newly-formed M & M was to raise \$25,000 by subscription for the purpose of 'rounding up the large army of idle men in the city and putting them to work'...In the spring of 1910, a series of strikes had occurred in Los Angeles, first of brewery workers, later of metal workers...As soon as the strike was called, the various companies involved obtained injunctions which prohibited all types of picketing. Instead of breaking the strike, the injunctions only further infuriated the workers and the picket lines became increasingly militant. Sensing that a real crisis existed, the M & M proceeded to draft and to dictate the adoption of July 16, 1910, of an anti-picketing ordinance. One of the most sweeping ordinances of the kind ever enacted in this country, the Los Angeles ordinance is famous in labor history as the original anti-picketing ordinance later used as a model by various employer groups across the nation. Within a few weeks after its adoption 470 workers had been arrested in Los Angeles... This tense situation existed in Los Angeles for seventeen months prior to the dynamiting on the LA Times (building). With the dreadful explosion of October 1, 1910, in which twenty men lost their lives, a reign of unmitigated political terror was unleashed in Los Angeles. Importing scores of thugs, professional gunmen and private detectives, the M & M sought to use the prosecution of the McNamaras - active in the organization of the metal workers - as a means of breaking the popular rebellion that had developed." (2) Up until the 1930's Los Angeles was still known as the town of the open shop.

Meanwhile the Los Angeles oil industry was discovered by Doheny of Union Oil and developed after 1900 and particularly rapidly after 1920. The water supply at this time was ensured by the siphoning off at gunpoint of Northern California's

Owens Valley water. The Los Angeles harbor was finally fully developed after World War One by the US Army Corps of Engineers. To fully understand the growth of Los Angeles, the West Coast and the USNA as a whole at this time - post-World War One in particular - let us refer briefly to the international situation. "Wars of conquest, inevitable under imperialism, bring about tremendous changes in the relation of forces among the various nations...The unevenness of development of the various countries is manifested with particular clarity and explicitness in the post-war years. America gained most by the war. It profited most from the struggle of the others. Formerly, it was indebted to other countries, especially England. Now almost the entire world, including England, is in debt to America. A number of branches of industry in America almost doubled production after the war...The warring countries could not themselves satisfy their growing war requirements of endless mountains of coal, iron, steel, bread, oil and cloth. This tremendous demand came to America. At the same time the markets for manufactured goods in the agricultural countries of South America, Asia, etc, were freed. Before the war Great Britain, Germany, and other European countries exported their goods to these markets. During the war there could be no thought of export from these countries. All this resulted in an unprecedented development of industry and agriculture in the USA. America became the richest country in the world." (3) Now in light of this let us consider LA's strategic position in relation to the vast colonial territories around the Pacific and the increasing ability of USNA imperialism to move into and dominate this arena and our picture is becoming clearer.

Along with this the Mexican national minority was becoming an ever larger part of the working class in Los Angeles. In 1900 a census stated that California had barely 8,000 residents of Mexican birth. By 1920 there were already 120,000 first or second generation Mexicans living in California. This tripled to 360,000 by 1930. Part of the reason the open shop survived as long as it did in LA was because of the treacherous refusal of the AFL union bureaucrats and the so-called socialists to deprive the capitalists of their reserve labor pool. McWilliams discusses the rise of the Mexican national minority population as follows: "...The Mexican population of Southern California began to increase after the turn of the century. In 1900 the Southern Pacific Company reported that it was employing 4,500 Mexicans on its lines in the southern part of the state. During the year 1906, the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe began to import two and three carloads of 'cholos,' that is, Mexican peons, a week. As thousands of Mexicans were imported, principally from the states of Chihuahua, Durango, Jalisco, Sonora and Zacatecas, the number employed in the citrus industry, in the desert mines and chemical plants, and in the cement and clay products plants, steadily increased. The rapid extension of the Pacific Electric system after 1900 also attracted thousands of Mexicans to Southern California...In the years 1920 to 1930, Mexican immigrants constituted the dominant elements in the great migratory labor pool in California...Most of the immigrants 'wintered' in Los Angeles County. Constituting 7% of the population of Los Angeles in 1925, Mexicans made up 27% of the relief cases and 54% of the general hospital cases. During the Depression Mexicans lost their dominant position in the migratory labor pool and began to settle permanently in Los Angeles. Today Los Angeles has the largest urban Mexican population of any community in the world, with the exception of Mexico City itself." (4)

Before and during the Great Depression of the 1930's the Mexican national minority engaged in many struggles against the cruel capitalist exploitation. "In June,



1933, seven thousand Mexicans walked out of the berry, onion, and celery fields of Los Angeles County in the largest strike of agricultural workers that had occurred in California up to that time. It was this strike that first aroused acute apprehensions on the part of the growers that the Mexicans might not be quite as docile as they had imagined...In 1936 Mexican field workers were involved in two strikes in Southern California which forever ended the infatuation of the growers with Mexican labor and left a heritage of ill-will which still survives in the region. The first of these strikes occurred in the celery fields located, so to speak, in the backyards of Los Angeles County. With two thousand workers on strike the police marshalled a force of approximately 1,500 armed men to break the strike...In the Domingues Hills near San Pedro - on the doorstep of the beautiful Palos Verdes Estates - a miniature battle was staged when police converged on an old barn in which the strikers had barricaded themselves. So many arrests were made that neither the police nor the union could keep a tally. Injured strikers had difficulty in securing medical aid at the country hospital and public funds were used to employ field agents who visited the growers and urged them not to settle. The growers alone spent thousands of dollars in the employment of armed guards recruited from a local strikebreaking detective agency." (5)

As a result of these struggles and also because of the excess of labor caused by the Depression the capitalist state began to launch fierce attacks against the Mexican national minority in the form of roundups and deportations. This was euphemistically titled in LA "getting the Mexicans off relief." "During the Depression, the County of Los Angeles repatriated thousands of Mexicans on relief. Arrangements were made with the Southern Pacific Company (which had imported most of the immigrants in the first place) to ship them back to Mexico at a wholesale per capita rate of \$14.70...In 1932 alone over 11,000 Mexicans were repatriated from Los Angeles." (6) "In the last six months of 1940 alone, 70,500 Mexicans were deported." (7)

During World War Two the situation was again reversed and there was a desperate manpower shortage. Under agreement with Mexico the USNA imported hundreds of thousands of Mexican workers to work in the fields and the defense industries. At this same time the imperialists directed a campaign of fascist police terror and mob violence against the Mexican national minority workers of East Los Angeles. The following is a letter to the Chief of the LA Police Department by a subordinate on August 12, 1942. "C B Horrall, Chief of Police. Sir: The Los Angeles Police Department in conjunction with the Sheriff, California Highway Patrol, the Monterey, Montebello, and Alhambra Police Departments, conducted a drive on Mexican gangs throughout Los Angeles County on the nights of August 10 and 11. All persons suspected of gang activities were stopped. Approximately 600 persons were brought in. There were approximately 175 arrested for having knives, guns, chains, dirks, daggers, or any other implement that might have been used in assault cases...Present plans call for drastic action...Respectfully,... (8) This sounds familiar.

Even more serious were the "zoot suit riots" of 1943 which occurred in downtown LA, and on Brooklyn Avenue and East First Street. Instigated by several months of press attacks in the LA Times and Herald Examiner against the Mexican national minority, mobs of US servicemen, led by their officers, ran wild for several days consecutively in June. "Roaming the downtown streets, a mob of 3,000 hoodlums dragged Mexicans, Filipinos, and Negroes from motion picture theatres and street



cars, beat them on the streets and sidewalks, and, in many cases, stripped them of their clothing. During the rioting policemen watched the violence, made no attempt to intervene, and arrested the victims of the mob after the mob had finally abandoned them. Instead of doing public penance for their instigation of the riot, the newspapers left-handedly condoned the violence and placed responsibility for its occurrence on the Mexican community." (9)

After the Second World War the deportations became much more severe. "'Operation Wetback' in 1945 was a massive round-up and deportation program which was organized with military precision. If a person could not immediately furnish documentary evidence of his legal residence in the US he was immediately deported. Another description in La Raza magazine made the picture even more graphic: 'Flying squads of US deputies swept through fields, factories, and communities to ferret out, capture, and herd over the border Mexican laborers. Private homes were invaded in the middle of the night; men, women and children were routed from their beds; business places were raided; street cars and buses were halted; planes swept down upon fields trying to pick out Mexican workers...In Los Angeles, the Country Playground for children and youth, the Elysian Park Recreation Center, was used as a stockade to hold thousands of Mexican-Americans pending their deportation to Mexico.' (La Raza, volume 1, number 7, p 48) Between 1950 and 1955, 3.8 million people were expelled under military and police force. There is no other word for this kind of reign of terror than fascism." (10)

The second largest national minority grouping in Los Angeles has been the Negro national minority. From 7,500 Negroes living in LA in 1910, by 1940 their numbers had increased to 75,000. As the Negro National-Colonial Question pamphlet published by the Communist League has pointed out, World War One dried up the steady flow of European immigrant cheap labor that the USNA ruling class had relied upon for decades. This fact plus the tremendous opportunity for the expansion of production and of USNA imperialism throughout the world during the war and in the post-war years absolutely required the imperialists to turn to the vast reserve labor force languishing in the main USNA colony - the Negro Nation in the black belt area of the South. After World War One the Negro workers played an increasingly prominent part in the industries and labor struggles of the North and West. In Los Angeles, from the beginning, Watts and the Central Avenue district south of downtown became Negro neighborhoods. Let us also say that as far as the migration of the oppressed peoples to the industrial heartland of the USNA is concerned, what went for World War One went double, so to speak, for World War Two. World War Two increased USNA imperialism's hegemony over the capitalist world's production and of course the labor to carry out these added chores came in large part - as far as Los Angeles was concerned - from the two aforementioned colonial reserves, Mexico and the Negro Nation. During the World War Two years thousands of Negro laborers were hired by the railroads and brought to the West Coast. By the end of the war there were already 150,000 Negroes living in LA.

Up until this day the industries that are low-paying and have large numbers of Negro and Mexican national minority workers are the least organized. For example, only about 12% of the garment workers and 8% of the electrical workers are in unions. The wave of unionization that swept over the country in the 1930's was supposed to have spelled the end of the open shop in Los Angeles, but we should keep in mind that over 70% of the working class in LA is still not in trade unions.

During the 20's and 30's Los Angeles also saw a large influx of Anglo-Americans from the Negro Nation and the Southern region, who were fleeing drought and foreclosures. In the midst of the Great Depression finance capital was consolidating its monopoly over agriculture and in the process displaced millions of poor peasants from their land. In turn these ruined peasants either replaced, during the 30's at least, the Mexican national minority as the migratory farm labor force, or settled in urban centers where they became a component part of the industrial proletariat. Today in Los Angeles the working-class towns of Bell, Bell Gardens, Cudahy, South Gate, Bellflower and Paramount are filled with the descendents of these refugees.

In considering the development of industry in Los Angeles, we observe that of great importance was the boom caused by World War Two and the permanent location here of a number of defense industries and in particular of the aircraft industry. In the years from 1939 to 1943 all manufacturing employment in Los Angeles doubled. Along with and tied to these defense industries came the steel industry, aluminum, rubber, electronics, instruments and so on. Ordnance alone - that's bullets, bombs, guns, explosives - employs some 60,000 workers in Los Angeles today.

Defense industry is not the entire picture, of course. As LA grew into a large population center other industries settled here and developed. We can point to the auto and food-processing industries in this regard. Also we must make special mention of the garment industry. Employing over 60,000 proletarians, mostly women, mostly national minorities, this is perhaps the most oppressed of all the industries in Los Angeles. It was established here in the 1930's and is second in size only to New York City's garment industry. It services the entire country and pays its workers, when they are not laid off, the lowest of all manufacturing wages.

When looking at the working class in Los Angeles today there are some points we would like to emphasize. Firstly, the national minorities are on the rise both as part of the population and the workforce. In 1950 national minorities comprised 13.5% of the population. Today in LA they, chiefly the Mexican and Negro national minorities, comprise no less than 32%. Moreover, they comprise 44% of the industrial proletariat, or almost half the total.

Secondly, a word on women workers. While 35% of all employed are women, they make up 39% of the industrial proletariat. National minority women make up 10% of the total workforce and 21% of the total industrial proletariat. When they marry about 40% of the women workers leave the workforce. Of those with children under 6 years, only 9% remain at their jobs.

As for the location of the proletariat and the working class in general in Los Angeles, we would like to emphasize that in the downtown area and in those industrial towns a few miles to the southeast, south and southwest of downtown extending to the ocean, there are one and one-quarter million persons employed, 40% of all manufacturing workers.

Lastly, we would like to address ourselves to a question that has been posed recently, that is, why do communists talk so much about the proletariat, the manufacturing workers? In the Critique of the Gotha Program Karl Marx says,

"Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.' ...The proletariat is revolutionary relatively to the bourgeoisie because, having itself grown up on the basis of large-scale industry, it strives to strip off from production the capitalist character that the bourgeoisie seeks to perpetuate." (11) Lenin wrote that, "Our work is primarily and mainly directed to the urban, factory workers. Russian Social-Democracy must not dissipate its forces; it must concentrate its activities on the industrial proletariat, who are most susceptible to Social-Democratic ideas, most developed intellectually and politically, and most important by virtue of their numbers and concentration in the country's large political centers. The creation of a durable revolutionary organization among the factory, urban workers is therefore the first and most urgent task confronting Social-Democracy, one from which it would be highly unwise to let ourselves be diverted at the present time." (12)

And finally in the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course, Stalin writes on page 13, "...In spite of the numerical preponderance of the peasantry and the relative numerical weakness of the proletariat (in Russia), it was on the proletariat and on its growth that the revolutionaries should base their chief hopes. Why on the proletariat? Because the proletariat, although it was still numerically small, was a labouring class which was connected with the most advanced form of economy, large-scale production, and which for this reason had a great future before it. Because the proletariat as a class was growing from year to year, was developing politically, easily lent itself to organization owing to the conditions of labor prevailing in large-scale production, and was the most revolutionary class owing to its proletarian status, for it had nothing to lose in the revolution but its chains."

In looking at our situation here in Los Angeles we can see that there are certain similarities to Lenin and Stalin's Russia. Tsarist Russia was known as a prisonhouse of nations and her factories were crowded with workers of all the nationalities. The USNA today is also a prisonhouse of nations. Here in Los Angeles the national minorities are, generally speaking, isolated from one another in their communities. In the factories and the workplaces, however, it is a different matter. The workers of all nationalities are here objectively united by the conditions of capitalist wage-slavery, the conditions of social production. Comrades, we must fight for this unity in a conscious way and develop it. Our class has always fought for this unity and understands that there will be no victory without it.

The main opposition to this motion from within the working class comes from the Communist Party of the USA. We all know their tactics within communities, pushing bourgeois nationalism and isolation of the national minorities from the rest of the class. Within the shops their tactics are also to divide the class, encouraging and developing all forms of national chauvinism, bourgeois nationalism and trade-union syndicalism, and never ever presenting to the workers their formidable and pressing tasks of proletarian internationalism. In the current period this bourgeois line takes on a distinctly fascist character. For example in the March 3, 1973 issue of the People's World an article sub-titled "Fighting

Scab Army" appears which constantly refers to those Mexican national minority workers who do not have USNA citizenship as "scabs" and complains that Nixon won't stop them from working. As if this whining were not enough they "dare" to go much farther in a letter to the editor in this issue which we are supposed to believe does not represent the opinion of the CPUSA even though it is printed without comment in their paper. The letter states that the most important consideration is the construction of a trade-union embracing all agricultural workers, that this union should put aside internationalism for the present and the basic membership principle should be USNA citizenship and that we can justify this because the non-citizen farmworkers take their comparative super-wages home to Mexico where they become capitalists anyhow. As for these "capitalists," their disposition is left up to the good sense of the US Immigration Service.

After Congressional investigations and the periodic bourgeois elections the CPUSA's first love is the trade union movement. Today their destructive influence is witnessed by the pitiful LA Herald-Examiner strike and the current Shell strike. Comrades, celebrities passing petitions, giving news conferences and issuing bumper stickers are not going to defeat the capitalist class. This can only be done by a class-conscious proletariat led by its own communist party.

And what was the Communist Party's role in the history of working class struggles in Los Angeles? We have yet to fully research this topic but a few things are evident. The Communist Party USA had in the past and has at present a large organization in the Los Angeles area. In his Pages From a Worker's Life William Z Foster writes of the Party in 1932 as being "strong locally." On Mayday, 1948, in San Pedro, the Party mobilized 80,000 to march behind red banners in support of a longshoreman's strike. We also know that the Bolshevik cadre of the Party, as opposed to the leadership, bravely organized, led and fought in the struggles of the workers whether they were strikes, hunger marches, demonstrations of the unemployed, and so on. For example, we can point to the trade union struggles of the Mexican national minority farm workers in the 1930's in the Imperial Valley and in Los Angeles.

However, what good work that was done was covered up or destroyed by the chauvinist, syndicalist, petty-bourgeois leadership of the CPUSA. In the famous party text, "The History of the American Working Class," written by Anthony Bimba in 1927 there is not one word on the struggles of the Mexican national minority in the Southwest. Twenty-five years later in 1952, Foster in his History of the CPUSA did manage one sentence. After World War Two the Party "started\* to defend the cause of Mexican-Americans in the Southwest, who number some three million and suffer from Jim-crow-like persecution." (Pp 479-80)

The Party launched vigorous campaigns around the trade union struggles (mainly of the Anglo-American workers), around the conviction of the petty-bourgeois so-called "Hollywood Ten" blacklisted film-writers, and so on. But where were these campaigns and mass rallies when 70,500 workers were deported in the last six months of 1940? Where were they in the first half of the 1950's when almost

\*Emphasis ours

4 million Mexican and Mexican national minority workers were deported? Where are they now that police lynchings and deportations of Mexican national minority workers are a daily occurrence? The CPUSA calls the Mexican national minority workers "scabs" and demands increased deportations.

These chauvinists of the CPUSA are traitors in the service of imperialism. Thanks to them our class finds itself today divided, disorganized and weak. The unity for which our class strives must be forged in the heat of the struggle to dislodge the CPUSA from the ranks of the working class movement. The proletariat is taking note of their crimes and the day of justice for the revisionists, as for their imperialist masters, is drawing near.

In closing, comrades, I would like to refer to Frederick Engels' remarks in the concluding paragraph of Socialism, Utopian and Scientific, in which he lays out quite clearly the tasks of the communists in relation to the proletarian class. "The proletariat seizes the public power, and by means of this transforms the socialized means of production, slipping from the hands of the bourgeoisie, into public property. By this act the proletariat frees the means of production from the character of capital they have thus far borne, and gives their socialized character complete freedom to work itself out. Man, at last the master of his own form of social organization, becomes at the same time the lord over nature, his own master - free. To accomplish this act of universal emancipation is the historical mission of the modern proletariat. To thoroughly comprehend the historical conditions and thus the very nature of this act, to impart to the now oppressed proletarian class a full knowledge of the conditions and of the meaning of the momentous act is called upon to accomplish, this is the task of the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement, scientific socialism.

P B, Los Angeles, California

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## ON PROLETARIAN MORALITY

Several years ago the Politburo of the Communist League, in response to inquiries from the comrades, held a discussion on the question of proletarian morality and issued a memorandum summarizing the discussion. Since then the League has grown and expanded. We are on the threshold of forming a new Communist Party in the United States of North America. Hence, once again the question of morality has become a very important factor in the carrying out of our work. In order to facilitate the struggle for a Marxist-Leninist party, and in order to assist the comrades in steeling themselves, I would like to reissue and update the essentials of the memorandum.

Firstly, what is morality?

The bourgeois dictionary states, "Morality - the doctrine of moral duties; morals; ethics; the practice of the moral duties; the quality of an action as estimated by a standard of right and wrong."

Behind this gibberish are some plain statements. The learned asses of the bourgeoisie are really saying that morality is what upholds and uplifts the social system. Morality is what stabilizes and makes permanent the existing class relationships.

Where does morality come from? How do people go about choosing one morality or another?

In the introduction to the Critique of Political Economy Marx states, "In the social production which men carry on, they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material forces of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure - the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the social, political and intellectual life process in general." What Marx is saying here is that our social codes, including the various aspects of our morality, rise out of the conditions of our lives and that the fundamental conditions of our lives are dependent on the mode of production. Hence, every change in the mode of production and the class struggle which results from it is bound to be reflected in shifts in our morality and other aspects of our philosophy. Marxism, of course, is dialectical, although many "new" Marxists ignore that fact. The dialectics here is that just as man's morality is ultimately determined by the economic relations, there is also a massive impact on these objective aspects of life created by his thoughts and morality themselves. Mankind dreams, and these dreams become goals and react on the objective world. If this were not true, humanity would simply become one more aspect of a mechanical world and there would be no reason to struggle for a better life.

Further, Stalin states, "Hence, the practical activity of the party of the proletariat must not be based on the good wishes of 'outstanding individuals,' not on



the dictates of 'Reason,' 'Universal Morals,' etc, but on the laws of development of society and on the study of these laws. (Dialectical and Historical Materialism, International Publishers, New York, 1940, p 19) Engels says, "The economic structure of society always furnishes the real basis, starting from which we can alone work out the ultimate explanation of the whole superstructure of juridical and political institutions as well as of the religious, philosophical and other ideas of a given historical period." (Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, Karl Marx: Selected Works, International Publishers, N Y, Vol 1 p 163\*)

Further, Marx states, "Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man's ideas, views, and conceptions, in a word, man's consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his material existence in his social relations and in his social life.

"What else does the history of ideas prove, than that intellectual production changes its character in proportion as material production is changed? The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class." (Communist Manifesto, International Publishers, N Y, p 29)

It is possible to quote reams of Communist literature that would all add up to show that morality in the epoch of capitalism cannot help but be bourgeois morality. In the main, every hippie understands this. But hippies do not and cannot understand where morality comes from. Therefore, they have an excuse when they reject bourgeois morality on the one hand, and reinforce and extend it on the other. We Communists have no such excuses!

Morality is what accords to the given social system. Thus, we have a slave morality that is different from capitalist morality. And of course socialist morality is different from bourgeois morality. In our political struggles as in our struggle for revolutionary morality, we Communists are at a disadvantage in as much as there are no socialist production relations against which we can test our activity - that is, we cannot know, many times, in any immediate way the consequences of our actions - whereas in capitalist society the bourgeois is quick to note what is "moral" or "immoral" from his point of view because it is immediately or over a long period of time reflected in the profit ledger. But we are pulled, on the one hand, by the "natural" flow that cannot help but be bourgeois morality - ie, male supremacy, taking advantage of people who are at a disadvantage, selfishness, etc. On the other hand, our consciousness demands that we reject bourgeois morality and orient our lives - public and private - around proletarian morality. However, proletarian morality is precisely the reflection of consciousness. Which consciousness? Is it simply social consciousness, which recognizes the existence of social injustice, of rich and poor, of humble and mighty? No, that is insufficient. Proletarian morality is the reflection of a much higher form, namely, class consciousness, which recognizes the exploiters as class enemies and unites the workers on the basis of the struggle against and overthrow of that enemy class. The difference between social and class consciousness was historically expressed in the development of the First International whose slogan Marx fought to have changed from "All men are brothers!" to "Workers of the world, unite!"

\*This reference contains a different translation of the passage than the one in the text, whose exact reference I do not have before me. -Ed.

Class consciousness is expressed as class hatred, the recognition of the brutal enslavement and destruction of our class around the world. The class conscious communist realizes that he or she is a soldier in the proletarian army. The main ideological attribute of such a soldier is discipline, expressed in never giving aid or comfort to the enemy, in being an example of steadfastness and in never working at cross purposes with oneself - that is, fighting the enemy in public but living a private life that erodes and destroys or disorients the will to struggle. The higher our consciousness, the less our tendency to hold back the struggle for socialism. The higher our class consciousness, the more readily do we integrate our personal activity with the general flow of the movement.

Our Communist League is a youthful organization which in its formation was influenced by the moral attitudes of preceding movements. This is natural since morals and morality are part of and drawn from history.

We cannot spend much time analyzing the morality of the CPUSA or the various movement groups - a left-wing petty-bourgeois morality which in no way contributes to the development of the revolution. For example, morality in the CPUSA was whatever suited the short-range political goals of the Party. It is well-known that women were, from time to time, urged to use their sexuality to assist them in recruiting, just as the men handed out jobs to those workers, particularly from the minorities, who agreed to join the Party. Overall, the concepts of sexual morality flip-flopped in the Party. During periods of rapid expansion sexual looseness was encouraged under all sorts of "freedom" slogans. At other times the pendulum swung in the opposite direction and if one did not treat women as if they were men charges would surely follow. The reason for these flip-flops on this question was that the CPUSA was and is a set of malcontents. We on the other hand are Marxist-Leninists and therefore we start from objective reality and not from subjective dreams.

Even the POC (the Provisional Organizing Committee), which really tried at first to rectify the twisted morality of the CPUSA, ended up with a Catholic morality smeared over with Marxist phrases.

Engels once said, "Life asserts itself." He meant that the dialectical laws of social development cannot be done away with no matter what blocks are put in their way. No one can for long deny life, the natural laws of social development and the assertion of these laws. Denying this, the CPUSA, like the Catholic Church, had one set of laws governing all aspects of conduct, and this is one of the reasons why the people in the CPUSA never learned how to think.

The slightest effort shows us that it is impossible to draw up a list of "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not." What is moral today might very well be immoral tomorrow when political conditions change. The moment we begin to view all moral demands from the point of view of class and the class struggle we see how absurd are the categorical demands set forth hypocritically by the bourgeoisie. For example, we demand "peace," but we are really demanding civil war between the proletariat and bourgeoisie. We want peace only in the sense of workers not killing each other. Similarly, we demand an end to "killing" - but we also demand the head of every butcher and slave-driver oppressing our class.

A political activity such as physically engaging the police in a fight would be adventurous and anti-class, hence immoral, if the revolutionaries were isolated and unable to get the support of the masses. But failing to carry out a temporary and ruthless assault when the masses are demanding it and participating in it themselves is also anti-communist and immoral. So we see that our estimates

of morality and immorality are strictly limited to the needs of the revolution. We have condemned and will continue to condemn as immoral every social or political act that in any way harms the revolution.

Comrades sometimes make the mistake of falling into the trap of formal logic. What is formal logic? It is "the systematic study of the structure of propositions and of the general conditions of valid inference by a method which abstracts from the content or matter of the propositions and deals only with their logical form." (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1965, volume 14, p 209) Of course, here is the rub. Dialectical materialism recognizes the natural and objective unity and struggle between form and content. The impossibility of discussing form without content is apparent once we admit to motion. Logic says, Dead is not alive - if you are alive you are not dead, if you are dead you are not alive. Real life, however, shows us that all living organisms begin to die at birth and that the exact moment of the death of anything is very difficult to establish, as any lawyer will testify. As Marx points out, "All that exists - all that lives on earth and under water, exists and lives only by some kind of movement." Engels applies this concept of motion to morality. He writes, "We therefore reject every attempt to impose on us any moral dogma whatsoever as an eternal, ultimate and forever immutable moral law on the pretext that the moral world too has its permanent principles which transcend history and the differences between nations. We maintain on the contrary that all former moral theories are the product, in the last analysis, of the economic stage which society had reached at that particular epoch. And as society has hitherto moved in class antagonisms, morality was always a class morality; it has either justified the domination and the interests of the ruling class, or, as soon as the oppressed class has become powerful enough, it has represented the revolt against this domination and the future interests of the oppressed. That in this process there has on the whole been progress in morality, as in all other branches of human knowledge, cannot be doubted. But we have not yet passed beyond class morality. A really human morality which transcends class antagonisms and their legacies in thought becomes possible only at a stage of society which has not only overcome class contradictions but has even forgotten them in practical life." (Anti-Duhring, International Publishers, New York, 1939, p 105)

To proceed. The bourgeoisie has scored an important victory among the post-World War Two generation. It has managed to twist the question of morality into a question of sexual conduct.

It is interesting to note that neither Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin nor Mao has much to say specifically about sexual morality. The reason for this is that never before has sexual morality been separated from morality in general. Before now sex was simply assumed to be an indispensable part of life and a reflection and integral aspect of a general class orientation. To Communists, sexual morality is an integral and minor part of our morality. This formulation has been stoutly resisted by some comrades. Such resistance only proves how deep a moral grip the bourgeoisie has on us. Can any one equate sexual questions with the slaughter of the peoples of Mozambique or Chile? Can anyone make a decision on sexual conduct apart from the overwhelming demands of the revolution? Mao sums up the answer to these and similar questions in his advice, "Put politics in command."

The bourgeoisie places the question to young revolutionaries in a very contradictory, treacherous way. The latter are allowed to carry on militant social

activity but at the same time are encouraged to lead a dispiriting, male supremacist, hedonistic sexual life. The bourgeoisie knows perfectly well that hedonism grows at the expense of politics.

We, on the contrary, have demanded and will continue to demand that in the moral and political sense League members be communists 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A comrade who is a communist leader in the factory and after 10 PM turns into a bourgeois is not a communist at all, but a fraud and a double-dealer.

We will give an example of how a libertine and undisciplined personal life in general will have political repercussions. It happened during the trial of the so-called "second string" group of CPUSA leaders in 1953. One of the key stool pigeons was an agent by the name of James Cummins. Although there was plenty of evidence to discredit this stoolie, it could not be presented because one of the leading Party women on trial had on several separate occasions very casually slept with the pig and was afraid of counter-exposure. It goes without saying that this comrade had also had such casual affairs with almost all of the local Party leadership, a fact which was known to Cummins and which provided him with protection.

Such cases were numerous in the Party, chiefly because certain "communists" were able to inject petty-bourgeois pleasure-seeking attitudes into the movement under the guise of "freedom" and rejection of bourgeois morality. Our Communist League, as opposed to the CPUSA, is a political revolutionary group. We demand that comrades think things through and be capable of making decisions based on Marxism-Leninism. As Stalin and Dimitrov point out, cadre, individual comrades capable of thinking and finding their own way, are the most valuable asset the revolution possesses.

In describing our outlook in the League on sexual morality, we should understand a few things from the thinking of Lenin. One, we instinctively distrust people who are constantly and totally absorbed in sexual matters. Such an attitude might appear to be very free and revolutionary, but really it is quite bourgeois and quite decadent. Such absorption and prying into sexual matters goes beyond the normal and healthy curiosity of youth and becomes a substitute for normal and healthy performance. Two, sex is a part of our lives and is therefore political. To be one-sided on this particular question is just as serious as to be one-sided on any other political matter. Above all we are organized to attack the class enemy, to emancipate the proletariat and to create the conditions for the happiness of mankind. Only people who organize their lives around this struggle are eligible for membership in the League. Three, Lenin railed against the so-called "new sex life" or, as it is called today, the "sexual revolution." What difference is there between a person, whether man or woman, staggering from one loveless sexual encounter after another and staggering from one whore house to another?

Fifty years ago there was a popular left-wing theory that sexual gratification under socialism would be no more important or difficult than taking a glass of water when one is thirsty. Aside from noting that implicitly the theory applies mostly to the desires of men, we should understand that the object of communism is to humanize, not dehumanize, mankind. There is nothing in the historical development of sexual relations to suggest that sex will ever again become an animal

urge to be satisfied as one satisfies thirst. Let us proceed from the concrete. Sex is the basis for the continuation of humanity. Because it is necessary, a pleasurable and common experience for all, it is open to exploitation and to being bent to the political and social needs of the class struggle. To deny the sexual side of our lives is to pervert both sex and our lives. But to take the free and easy attitude of the lumpen is also a perversion. We Communists are serious people and we extend our serious outlook to the question of sex.

So, since sex is a necessary and common thing, the question cannot be posed as "to be or not to be." Sex, as they say, is "here to stay." Therefore, it would seem that other factors are the ones we have to deal with. Marxists sum up these other factors as "conditions, time and place," and we might also add "results." Here again we are faced with another dialectical problem. As we have noted, individual activity has little effect on the general historical class struggle. Nonetheless, everything we do changes us. Ill-considered, bourgeois activity is bound to undercut our consciousness. This applies to our sexual lives. It is clear that we cannot carry on a principled political life and a hedonistic sexual life. One is bound to destroy the other and hedonism is bound to end up removing the comrade from the League. The study of conditions, time and place is fundamental to Marxist discipline and that extends to sexual activity.

It is clear that the form of the relationship between men and women is developing to higher and higher levels. When we say men or women as such we mean as sexual beings. When women appear as bricklayers or weavers or what have you they as well as the men doing the same things are identified as bricklayers, or weavers, or whatever, period. Therefore the relationship of men as men and women as women is a purely sexual one. When the two sexes appear as Communists, on the contrary, we have an equality that does not take the respective sexes into consideration - just as in the case of the bricklayer or weaver. Let us examine this difference a little more closely.

There is a deviation in the Communist League which declares that marriage is political. Nothing could be further from the facts. Take sex away from marriage, abstract marriage from sex, and it ceases to be a marriage. Marriage is a sexual relationship no matter what form it assumes. Within the League we fight to keep the form, not the content, political. However, any marriage has to be based on sexual attraction and consummation; otherwise it is a partnership, not a marriage.

Part of the confusion on the question of form and content in marriage is based on the misconception that the struggle against male supremacy does away with the differences between men and women. Of course, this outlook is itself male supremacist because it excludes the possibility of equality between the two. We should recognize and emphasize the differences between the sexes because it is the only way we can fight for equality, which is based on the recognition of differences. If there were no differences there would be no inequality or equality.

In what way are men and women universally different? Only sexually. We want to emphasize this in order to guarantee that there be no other legal difference. In this sense we demand that men be men and women women and we insist on equality. In the CL there is no room for the betwixt and between elements.



It is clear, or should be, that men and women have carried on sexual relations since their beginning. What is not always so clear is that the form of these relationships is constantly changing. In order to preserve the sexual content, the form the sexual relation takes is constantly sublated - that is, the form is overcome in order to preserve the real content. The form of marriage is a more or less legal institution and is a part of the superstructure, which in turn is based on the productive relations of classes. These productive relations are in the final analysis determined by the productive forces by which society wrests a living from nature. Therefore it is only natural that every development of the productive forces in history allowed for or demanded a greater concentration of people with corresponding changes in the forms of their relationships, including marriage. A brief summary of marriage presents to us:

- 1) The group marriage, wherein sexual intercourse is unrestricted, that is, promiscuous in its real sense. At this stage the productive forces are at a very low level, consisting mainly of sticks and stones. Social organization consists of small groups of gatherers wandering over a fairly wide territory.
- 2) The consanguine family. Here sexual intercourse is restricted to generations; that is, it is prohibited between mothers and sons and fathers and daughters. Economically, tools begin to be produced; hunting develops and the population increases. Group marriage is sublated with a resulting increase in the mental and physical well-being of the tribes.
- 3) The punuluan family. here marriage consists of several sisters with each other's husbands, or of several brothers with each other's wives. However, intercourse is prohibited between brothers and sisters and eventually between more distant relatives. Tools are developed further. The bow and arrow, sling and spear are used. Hunting and fishing are male tasks, and women control agriculture and the home.
- 4) The pairing family. Here we leave the legal group marriage and develop the gentile constitution with a resulting leap forward. Herding and animal husbandry begin.
- 5) The patriarchal family. Here one man has several wives. Mother right is lost forever. The man takes control of the house and subjugates the woman. Animal husbandry turns toward private herds.
- 6) Monogamy. This is the enslavement of the women and children. Private property exists in slaves and cattle, and civil society develops.

The point we are making is that the form of sexual relations have changed with every real change in the economic and social environment. However, the sexual content has remained throughout. In fact the reasons the forms had to be changed was precisely to preserve the sexual content.

It seems that the proletarian marriages in the USNA are the most advanced in the capitalist world. It is in them that the people are the least constrained by religion, national sentiments and so on. In other words, bourgeois monogamy as a form of marriage is close to dissolution within the proletariat because of the onslaught of bourgeois pressures themselves. Women are more free. Over 40% of the workforce are women with the result that their economic dependency on men decreases and the development of marriage based on sex love alone increases. We clearly see this in the gigantic growth and development of common law marriage. This is very good and progressive. For example, in Los Angeles County bourgeois



marriage is especially unstable - 3 out of 4 end in divorce within 2 years. We are not arguing for instability but we are saying that sex love is the only acceptable basis for marriage. It is the only basis for the proletariat and consequently for the Communist League.

The growth of the proletariat and the ever-shifting emphasis of the class struggle brings about ever-changing concepts regarding the revolution. We should take note of these changes because they affect our moral conduct. Sex involves our attitudes towards women; more so than a decade ago sexuality is openly linked with the fight against male supremacy. For example, what can the puritanical attitude be but male supremacy? To the puritan the sex relationship exists without women. It is an act between man and God and fully denies the possibility of women enjoying sex. All we have to do is see how the Christians have taken the beautiful love poem "The Song of Solomon" and attempted to pervert it into a love between man and the Church. Or take the situation where the Church attempts to explain to the nun that her sexual urges are an expression of her love for God. By this ethic sex when it is enjoyed between men and women becomes dirty and criminal. Or take the Don Juan idea. What is that but male supremacy? Here the attitude is one of conquest. The more the conquests, the greater the warrior. Actually such an attitude is loaded with homosexuality. Male supremacy itself, in fact, being an expression of hatred for women, cannot but express homosexuality. What is Don Juan trying to prove to society and himself? That he is a man and not a neuter.

On the question of sexual freedom, how can we Communists pretend that anything is "free," unfettered, under capitalism? There is no such thing as free sex because we are human beings and not commodities to be exchanged.

The concept of freedom is a very important category of Marxist philosophy. Freedom for the Marxist, far from being freedom from natural laws, is on the contrary the recognition of precisely these very laws. Engels writes, "Freedom does not consist in the dream of independence of natural laws, but in the knowledge of these laws, and in the possibility this gives of systematically making them work toward definite ends. This holds good in relation both to the laws of external nature and to those which govern the bodily and mental existence of men themselves - two classes of laws that we can separate from each other at most only in thought, but not in reality. Freedom of will therefore means nothing but the capacity to make decisions with real knowledge of the subject. Therefore, the freer a man's judgement is in relation to a definite question, with so much the greater necessity is the content of this judgement determined; while the uncertainty, founded on ignorance, which deems to make an arbitrary choice among many different and conflicting possible decisions, shows by this precisely that it is not free, that it is controlled by the very object it should itself control. Freedom therefore consists in the control over ourselves and over external nature which is founded on knowledge of natural necessity; it is therefore necessarily a product of historical development." (Anti-Duhring, p 125)

Can this profoundly true statement by Engels in any way be equated with the bourgeois concepts of freedom, especially as regards sexual morality? The only "freedom" we can have in our sexual lives is the recognition of the "restrictions" that are placed on us by our mission in life and a full assessment of the emotional and physical results of our actions.

Today, every question of sexual morality can be brought down to the level of the struggle against male supremacy. And it is from this point of view that we concretely discuss our morality.

In the relations between men and women, it is obvious that the trend is toward a higher and purer form of relationship. That corresponds to dialectics, which teaches us that things develop from lower to higher stages. Therefore, we have left the group marriage situation forever. We are developing a higher and higher form of individual sex love. This means that the sex act is becoming more and more tightly connected with individual love. Now it might seem contradictory that love is changing also. There is, however, no way to have a love under socialism that is the same love as under capitalism. Love is bound to become a social expression just as sex is bound to become more and more pointed to specific individuals.

In relations between husband and wife we insist on fair play and reject any attitudes that say that the wife belongs to the husband or vice versa. Both belong to the revolution and have to conduct their lives accordingly. Communist marriages are not property relationships. They are a special type of relationship between comrades and not exclusive like the feudal relationship where the woman is trapped in the tower for the remainder of her life. Communist marriages are a form of agreement between the comrades and it is impossible to be "free" where there is an agreement. In the most liberal strata of bourgeois society part of the price of marriage that a woman pays is to give up her male friends. But isn't it blatant male supremacy to imagine that a husband is such a superhuman that he alone and by himself can satisfy all the social and cultural needs of his wife? The male supremacy further lies in the assumption that women by nature are shallow creatures. We must take into account the objective conditions of our lives and not pretend that married women are single women or that married men are single men. What we are saying is that we do not want marriages in the League which tend to restrict the development of the woman simply because she is married. The husbands should realize that the very property relations that we are fighting against are the basis for jealousy. Jealousy is male supremacy and we should fight against it. A woman should stay with a man because she wants to. We will tolerate no other pressures.

As we approach the revolution, and more so under socialism, it is clear that there is going to be a separation between love and sex love. The dialectic is that love is going to become a social outlook. People will feel a love and a responsibility for society and will express it concretely in labor and in the militant defense of society. Then sex will become one individual aspect of this social attitude. In bourgeois society there is a romantic love where emotions are directed toward an individual to the exclusion of society. It is an escape. However the sexual side of bourgeois love (as opposed to the romantic, which is the "spiritual" side) is directed toward groups. Marx noted this when he stated that "the financial aristocracy, in its mode of acquisition as well as in its pleasures, is nothing but the resurrection of the lumpen proletariat at the top of bourgeois society." (Class Struggles in France, Handbook of Marxism, p 99) Further, Marx and Engels state in the Manifesto, "Our bourgeoisie, not content with having the wives and daughters of their proletarians at their disposal, not to speak of prostitutes, take the greatest pleasure in seducing each other's wives."

"Bourgeois marriage is in reality a system of wives in common and thus, at the most, what the Communists might possibly be reproached with is that they desire

to introduce in substitution for a hypocritically concealed, an openly legalized community of women. For the rest, it is self-evident that the abolition of the present system of production must bring with it the abolition of the community of women springing from that system, ie, of prostitution both public and private."

We cannot pretend that we live in an ideal communist society. We live in a real world with real people and with real problems.

The heart of the question that the comrades are asking is this: Is it anti-communist to have sexual relations with other than husband or wife, is it anti-communist to have sexual relations before marriage? These questions are too personal for us to comment on. Decisions by Communists are made by summing up the total of the objective and subjective factors and then making the decision in favor of the revolution. We cannot and will not start from bourgeois foundations and then construct a morality that is simply the left wing of the Victorians. Feudalism and its morality could rest in part on the preceding slave ideology, just as capitalism inherited and to a great extent could remold the ideologies of feudalism. This was possible because slavery, feudalism and capitalism are all exploiting systems. "The Communist revolution," however, as Marx points out, "is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations; no wonder that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas." No, we Communists take individual responsibility for every breath we take, and so it is with our personal lives. Most of our individual acts have no or very little influence on social development or the direction of the class struggle; therefore, we have no way of directly evaluating them. But those actions which harm the struggle are obviously immoral.

Stalin once wrote, "Communists are people of a special mold." This is entirely true in regards to the overall concepts of revolutionary morality. We are of a special mold because we are responsible to the working class, and our conduct must at all times and under all circumstances reflect credit on the Communist League and on our class. We must obliterate the phony bourgeois "idea" that we can separate our so-called "personal" from our political lives and willingly accept the responsibility of being Communists twenty-four hours every day. Nothing political is personal, but everything personal is political.

In summary, we can only say that collectives must hold comrades responsible for all their acts. In the Communist Party USA the members constantly found someone else to blame for their own individual shortcomings and wrongdoings. In the CL we want to train our comrades to think out every action so that in a real sense of the word we represent communism to ourselves as well as to our class.

Nelson P., Chairman

"Socialism, since it has become a science, demands that it be pursued as a science, i.e., that it be studied." - Engels



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## LITERATURE

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ON THE ERRORS  
OF THE "OPEN LETTER TO THE DENVER LEFT"

The "Letter to the Denver Left" appearing in this Proletariat is an attempt to clarify certain theoretical and political points that are loosely thrown around the "New Left" in this country and that could serve to mislead honest revolutionaries. As the "Letter" stated, and we would like to emphasize, revisionist projections must be traced back to their ideological source, "in this country the CPUSA and ultimately the revisionist clique that has murdered its way into power in the Soviet Union." (Note that this is only the ideological source; for the material base is imperialism and in the case of the New Left the fear the petty bourgeoisie feels towards the bourgeoisie) We want to emphasize this because it is often forgotten that behind, and camouflaged by, the incorrect projections of the "New Left" is the revisionism of the CPUSA and of the CPSU. In this country the revisionists of the CPUSA all too often get off without criticism while attention is focused on the relatively impotent "New Left."

The "Letter to the Denver Left," however, contains several theoretical errors that, as we will show, are not the line of the Communist League. The People's Tribune speaks for the Communist League; and we find in the "Letter" several statements that are in flat contradiction with the line of Marxism-Leninism and of the Communist League as expressed in the Tribune.

First of all, on the question of the revolutionary movement in Chile and the blow dealt it by United States of North America imperialism last year in the form of an armed coup in which President Allende was killed. The letter states on page 38, "that the petty-bourgeois leadership of the Allende government and the Communist party of Chile, dominated by the revisionist line of the CPSU, was leading the working class of Chile into counter-revolutionary slaughter by not carrying through the revolution to its goal: socialism and a dictatorship of the proletariat. We criticized the Allende government for not smashing the old bourgeois state apparatus, the police, and the army particularly, and we pointed out that by not doing so the petty-bourgeois revisionist leadership of Allende and the CP of Chile were leading the workers and peasants of Chile to fascism."

This is identified as the line put forward in the People's Tribune Volume 5, number 1. This was not the position put forward in the Tribune, and it is not the position of the Communist League. The People's Tribune stated

"The anti-imperialist revolution in South and Central American has always and will continue to receive the unqualified support of the Communist League. We support the Cuban revolution, the Brazilian revolution, the Venezuelan revolution, and the Chilean revolution, but we have reservations concerning the tactics of the National Communist Parties involved in these revolutions. And since we are an integral part of the world Marxist movement, we have every duty and right to voice and prove such criticisms."

And further,

"Without such a revolution (i.e., a revolution led by the working class)



the real organs of state power, the army, the police, the prison system and the indispensable extra-legal groupings remain intact. Throughout the colonial and semi-colonial world it is precisely the Army and police forces that form the base for the overthrow of the petty bourgeois anti-imperialist governments. Our position is that it is the revisionists' distortion of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state that led to the overthrow and slaughter of the progressives in Indonesia, Brazil, Cambodia etc. We have and we will continue to criticize the CPUSA, the CPSU and the Communist Party of Chile on this subject."

As we stated then, we are part of the international communist movement. It is our right and our internationalist duty to sharply criticize parties or individuals who, under the banner of Marxism-Leninism, and in the name of the proletariat, undermine basic principles which insure the independence of the proletariat and aim at achieving its leadership in the revolutionary movement against imperialism. It is in this spirit that we criticized and continue to criticize the Communist Party of Chile, the CPSU, and the CPUSA. It is there that we aim our criticism and there that we focus the attention of the working class; and not on Allende. Allende was a petty bourgeois democrat representing a certain stage in the struggle against imperialism. As such, it was not Allende that we could rely on to take the revolution in Chile further. In fact that is just the point; it was the responsibility of the Communist Party of Chile--which in name represented the working class, the only thoroughly revolutionary class--to lead the revolution toward the complete overthrow of USNA imperialism, to lead the working class toward carrying the revolution through to the end, to the overthrow of capitalism. In such a situation, the communists must work so as to insure the independence of the working class.

It was for a similar situation that Marx and Engels wrote the Address to the Central Committee of the Communist League, in which they clearly spelled out the tasks of the communist party in maintaining the political independence of the working class. A few short quotes from this Address will show the limits of the petty bourgeois democrats and the responsibility of the communist party in the leadership of the working class.

"As previously, so also in this struggle, the mass of the petty bourgeois will as long as possible remain hesitant, undecided and inactive, and then, as soon as the issue has been decided, will seize the victory for themselves, will call upon the workers to maintain tranquillity and return to their work, will guard against so-called excesses and bar the proletariat from the fruits of victory. It is not in the power of the workers to prevent the petty-bourgeois from doing this, but it is in their power to make it difficult for them to gain the upper hand as against the armed proletariat, and to dictate such conditions to them that the rule of the bourgeois democrats will from the outset bear within it the seeds of their downfall, and that their subsequent extrusion by the rule of the proletariat will be considerably facilitated." 1

And further, the tasks of the workers and their party are laid out, "But they themselves [the workers] must do the utmost for their final

victory by clarifying their minds as to what their class interests are, by taking up their position as an independent party as soon as possible and by not allowing themselves to be seduced for a single moment by the hypocritical phrases of the democratic petty bourgeois into refraining from the independent organisation of the party of the proletariat. Their battle cry must be: The Revolution in Permanence."<sup>2</sup>

These short quotes only partially indicate our tasks. The whole Address must be studied by all serious Marxist-Leninists.

Later on in the "Letter to the Denver Left", it is stated; "this struggle grows out of the objective contradictions inherent in bourgeois society and fundamentally from the contradiction between the socialized nature of the means of production and the anarchistic capitalistic nature of the relations of production." The antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat grows out of the objective contradictions of bourgeois society. This is true; and idealist desires to create the class struggle must be fought among all communists. But the source of this class struggle is incorrectly stated. In Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, Engels stated the contradiction of capitalist society which differentiate it from pre-capitalist commodity production.

"The contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation manifested itself as the antagonism of proletariat and bourgeoisie."

The point is that under capitalism, the relations of production are not at all anarchistic but are very definitely regulated so as to insure that the proletarian has no choice but to sell his labor power and to protect the private property of the capitalists, ie, to insure his ownership of the means of production.

Anarchy of production of society grows with the growth of capitalism, as Engels pointed out,

"But with the extension of the production of commodities, and especially with the introduction of the capitalist mode of production, the laws of commodity-production, hitherto latent, came into action more openly and with greater force. The old bonds were loosened, the old exclusive limits broken through, the producers were more and more turned into independent, isolated producers of commodities. It became apparent that the production of society at large was ruled by absence of plan, by accident, by anarchy; and this anarchy grew to greater and greater height. But the chief means by aid of which the capitalist mode of production intensified this anarchy of socialised production was the exact opposite of anarchy. It was the increasing organisation of production, upon a social basis, in every individual productive establishment."<sup>4</sup>

It is not, as we can now see, the relations of production that are anarchistic, but rather the production itself in society generally that is anarchistic. "The contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation now presents itself as an antagonism between the organization of production in the individual workshop and the anarchy of production in society generally."<sup>5</sup>



If we understand the role of the bourgeois state in systematically protecting the capitalist relations of production and the conscious and overriding aim of the capitalists to maintain those relations of production, then we will see the incorrectness of describing capitalist relations of production as anarchistic. Further, Marxist-Leninists who are going to take on the responsibility of overthrowing bourgeois property relations and building socialism have to have a clear conception of the laws of development of societies.

Lastly, we would like to clarify just one other point. The "Letter" states that "Communists must fight to organize under the slogans of socialism and a dictatorship of the proletariat, not under the banner of bourgeois trade unionism which aims to betray the working class to fascism." (page 40) It is true that Lenin's demand that communists "wage the struggle against the 'labor aristocracy' in the name of the masses of the workers and in order to win them to our side; we wage the struggle against the opportunists and social chauvinist leaders in order to win the working class to our side" (quoted from Left-Wing Communism, in "Letter") is binding on all communists. And it is true that any communist who fails to do that in his propaganda can't help but identify himself with the labor aristocracy and hence with imperialism. But this by no means restricts us from fighting under banners other than socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Communists don't put up these banners as a condition for them to fight. Our task is to participate in the objective struggle of the working class in order to unite it into the class struggle of the proletariat against capitalism. As is stated in the Communist Manifesto, communists are distinguished from other working class parties only in that they must uphold proletarian internationalism and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Unless we want to become a small and isolated sect, there are going to be very few times that we will be able to fight under this banner. We felt that this point should be clarified especially at this time, when it is essential that communists throw themselves into the struggle against fascism. For only in this way can they lead the revolutionary struggle of the working class from the defensive position of the struggle against fascism to the offensive onslaught against capitalism, to the seizure of power by the proletariat.

B.G.

Footnotes

- 1) Address to the CC of the Communist League, Marx and Engels, Handbook of Marxism, page 180)
- 2) ibid. page 185.
- 3) Engels, Socialism: Utopian and Scientific. Moscow, Progress Publishers, page 62-63.
- 4) ibid. page 64.
- 5) ibid. page 65.